

# LCAO Income Security Committee Meeting Minutes

September 27, 2017 at 2:30 pm

WeWork, 1440 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005

Conference Room 8M

Call-In #: 641-715-3200 p/w: 635743#

1. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) inception and work: Ed Mierzwinski, Consumer Program Director, Federation of State PIRGs, U.S. PIRG
  - a. The 2007 [article](#) by (then) Professor Elizabeth Warren motivated State PIRGs and Americans for Financial Reform to mobilize and work to pass Dodd-Frank.
  - b. Following the 2008 financial crisis, and authorized by Dodd-Frank in 2010, the CFPB was created to protect consumers.
    - i. CFPB has four main populations served by its work
      1. Service members & Veterans
      2. Students
      3. Economically vulnerable consumers
      4. Older Adults and their Families
    - ii. CFPB has several tools to protect consumers
      1. Sue and seek restitution for consumers
      2. Put out new rules
      3. Supervise and seek compliance
      4. Create financial education
    - iii. The first and current CFPB Director, Richard Cordray, is an Obama Administration appointee.
      1. His term is up July 2018.
    - iv. PIRG and other groups are working to protect the consumer complaint database
      1. CFPB is able to aggregate their consumer complaint data
      2. Complaints can be self-tagged as “older consumer” amongst other categories.
        - a. U.S. PIRG will soon (target date: Oct. 10) put out a report on “Consumer Complaints from Older Consumers to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau”
          - i. If orgs or state affiliates are interested in issuing a statement or joining a state PIRG for release, contact Patrice Snow ([psnow@pirg.org](mailto:psnow@pirg.org) or 803-317-1181)
  - c. Chairman Hensarling has focused on delegitimizing and weakening the work of the CFPB since its inception.
    - i. The Financial CHOICE Act ([H.R.10](#)), passed through the House, repeals provisions of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and other laws
2. Defending Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB): Gynnie Robnett, Campaign Director for #StopTheDebtTrap, Americans for Financial Reform

- a. CFPB's work to protect Older Americans: <http://ourfinancialsecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/OlderAmericans.pdf>
  - b. Payday loans: high cost, small dollar loans that trap people in poverty
    - i. Trends are showing these are predominately older adults
      - 1. 1 in 4 borrowers report retirement savings or 30 days loans—an indicator of a monthly social security check
      - 2. Fastest growing borrowers in Florida
      - 3. Asked groups that are interested to be ready to respond when the rule comes out on payday loans.
  - c. Anticipate the use of the Congressional Review Act to challenge current protections in arbitration act, put in place by CFPB.
    - i. 60 legislation days, 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week of November
3. Work being done around older consumer focused complaints, proposals, and protections: Lauren Saunders, *Associate Director*, National Consumer Law Center
- a. The CFPB's debt collection rule.
    - i. Issue brief on [debt collection proposals](#).
      - 1. Competes with mortgages as biggest complaint collected by CFPB
        - a. Medical debt, debt buying industry enables old debts carried into retirement
      - 2. Older borrowers are often targeted by debt collection harassment
  - b. The Equifax data breach: [press release](#)
    - i. Working on a national right to freeze your credit.
      - 1. Right now, there are state-level rules around this. In many states, it is free for those 65 & older.
    - ii. Asking for better oversight of the Credit Agencies
    - iii. Rule on sharing data breach and not sitting on the information
  - c. The CFPB arbitration rule.
    - i. [Summary of the rule](#).
  - d. PACE loans, a growing problem targeting seniors, primarily in California.
    - i. An [issue brief](#) on PACE loans
    - ii. Wall Street journal reported on [this](#).
  - e. Reverse mortgages
    - i. Working to prevent people from losing their homes
4. SSI Cut in MIECHV Reauthorization ([H.R. 2792](#)): Kate Lang, Justice in Aging
- a. Cuts to SSI would be used to pay for MIECHV reauthorization.
    - i. Asking for folks to contact their House members and ask to vote “no”.
  - b. Vote to take place on Thursday morning, Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>
    - i. \*post-meeting update\* H.R. 2792 passed in the House
5. Tax Reform: planning to gain insight at the meeting on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>
- a. Meeting with Kara Getz, Chief Counsel on the Ways & Means Minority staff – September 28 at 9:30am at 411 Cannon
6. DACA: possible weighing-in by LCAO. We will revisit so that commentary is relevant.

7. Next meeting date is TBD. Both Jasmine and Breana will be out of town when the meeting is normally scheduled.

Items of interest:

- \*One-page report about the importance of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to older Americans (pdf)
- \*American for Financial Reform one pager on CFPB's work to [protect Older Americans](#)
- \*NCLC [debt collection proposals](#).
- \*NCLC [press release](#) on the Equifax data breach
- \* NCLC [summary of](#) the CFPB arbitration rule.
- \* NCLC [issue brief](#) on PACE loans, a growing problem targeting seniors

In attendance:

**Co-chairs**

Jasmine Jefferson, Social Security Works

Breana Clark, B'nai B'rith

**Speakers**

Lauren Sanders, National Consumer Law Center

Ed Mierzwinski, U.S. PIRG

Gynnie Robnett, Americans for Financial Reform

Patrice Snow, U.S. PIRG

On the Phone:

Eva Dominguez, Alliance for Retired Americans

Maggie Flowers, NCOA

Tracey Gronniger, Justice in Aging

Kate Lang, Justice in Aging

Sarah Cohen, AFT

Ross Apter, NARFE

Autumn Campbell, n4a