



Consumer Federation of America

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CFA APPLAUDS PRIVACY LEGISLATION **Bills Would Give Consumers Better Control of Online and Financial Privacy**

Washington, D.C. – The Consumer Federation America applauds two pieces of legislation filed today by U.S. Representative Jackie Speier (D-CA) that would give consumers better control of their personal information.

The “Do Not Track Me Online” bill would give consumers the right to tell companies not to collect and use certain information about their activities on the Internet, a practice that is increasingly used for targeted marketing and other purposes, often without consumers’ knowledge or consent. Under the legislation, the Federal Trade Commission would require disclosures and set standards for easy-to-use and effective tools that would enable consumers to opt-out of online tracking if they wish. The “Financial Information Privacy Act of 2011” strengthens consumers’ privacy rights under the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act. It would require financial institutions to get consumers’ affirmative consent before sharing their personal information with unaffiliated third parties except when necessary for narrow purposes such as providing services that consumers have requested, prohibits them from sharing consumers’ account numbers with unaffiliated third parties for marketing purposes, gives consumers opt-out rights when information is shared with affiliates, and protects consumers from discrimination such as being denied services if they choose not to have their information shared and that information is not necessary to provide the service. “These bills are aimed at putting consumers in the driver’s seat when it comes to their privacy,” said Susan Grant, CFA’s Director of Consumer Protection. “They reflect a growing recognition that consumers want more say about the collection and use of their personal information and easier ways to assert their privacy preferences.”

CFA has long advocated the concept of a “Do Not Track” mechanism for consumers and recently testified before Congress on that subject. CFA’s testimony, fact sheets about “Do Not Track,” and other information related to privacy are available at <http://www.consumerfed.org/consumer-privacy/privacy>. “We are pleased to work with Representative Speier and others in Congress who are committed to giving consumers real privacy protection,” said Grant.

The Consumer Federation of America is an association of nearly 300 nonprofit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education.