



Consumer Federation of America

1620 I Street, N.W., Suite 200 * Washington, DC 20006

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Contact: J. Robert Hunter 703-528-0062
Jack Gillis 202-737-0766

STUDY FINDS SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN AUTO AND HOME INSURANCE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY STATES TO CONSUMERS

State Insurance Department Websites Vary Considerably in Usefulness

Washington, DC -- Today, the Consumer Federation of America (CFA) released a new study of auto and home insurance information provided on state insurance department websites. The study, [State Insurance Department Websites: A Consumer Assessment](#), found considerable differences in the usefulness of information such as the rates and practices of individual insurance companies. State insurance department websites in 6 states were found to be “excellent” while those in 18 states were deemed to be “inadequate.”

CFA is sending the report to all state insurance departments with a personal letter urging the 45 states whose websites are not yet excellent to make improvements. “At a time when consumers are under increasing financial pressure, state insurance departments can do their part by making available current information about the rates, solvency, and complaints of individual insurers as well as tips for consumers to use to secure fairer and faster claims settlements,” said J. Robert Hunter, CFA's Director of Insurance (and former Texas Insurance Commissioner). “And it's essential that insurance departments widely publicize the availability of their websites and related information,” he added.

By utilizing information on the best state websites, those purchasing home and auto insurance can potentially save hundreds of dollars a year in lower premiums and avoid serious problems settling claims. “The best state websites contain far and away the most objective and useful information available to consumers,” noted Stephen Brobeck, CFA's Executive Director. “Only state insurance departments have the expertise and resources to provide up-to-date information about individual insurers,” he added.

The report found that California, Georgia, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah have “excellent” websites that have complete, up-to-date information that is easy for consumers to use. Consumers accessing these websites could easily find current price, complaint and solvency information to make well informed purchase decisions and could find key information on how to get the best claim settlements as well.

But the report also concluded that 18 states – see list below – have websites that are inadequate. These websites lacked important aspects of information about purchase and claims settlement decisions in auto and home insurance.

“States with inadequate websites do not have to reinvent the wheel,” noted Hunter. “They need only use the excellent sites already in use by other states as a guide for improving their own sites,” he added.

Below is a listing of the CFA ratings of websites in all 50 states and the District of Columbia:

Excellent (6 states): California, Georgia, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Utah.

Good (12 states): Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Maine Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, and Wisconsin.

Fair (15 states): District of Columbia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, and Washington.

Inadequate (18 states): Alabama, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

Consumers seeking information on auto and home insurance from their state insurance department website can do so at:

http://www.consumerfed.org/pdfs/state_insurance_websites.pdf. It should be noted that our review was sent to the states for comment in July. There may be some links that no longer work if a state updated their web site in the last few months.

The full report is available at: http://www.consumerfed.org/pdfs/state_insurance_websites.pdf

The Consumer Federation of America (CFA) is a non-profit association of 300 consumer groups with a combined membership of more than 50 million people. CFA was founded in 1968 to advance the consumer's interest through advocacy, research, and education.