

2017 CONSUMER ASSEMBLY

May 11 and 12, 2017 • Washington Plaza Hotel • 10 Thomas Circle, NW

General Sessions

Consumer Views on Politics and Policy Issues

A leading pollster will discuss recent survey findings and implications for consumer advocates. Are consumers concerned about the weakening of many consumer protections proposed by the new administration?

Changes in Washington and What They Mean for Consumer Advocates

With a new President and a new “populist” tone in the country, how much have things in Washington really changed? In this environment, what do consumer advocates need to consider as they choose priorities, create messages, and set strategies?

The Costs of Not Regulating

Dismantling the regulatory state and failing to implement consumer protections has significant costs. What are they? How do we measure them? Who bears these costs? How are they allocated? What are the key factors to prioritize while seeking to minimize costs to consumers?

Safety Implications in the New Administration

The safety of the food we eat, products we use, cars we drive and medications we take has already been impacted by the new Administration. What are the most significant challenges that safety advocates face? What are our best opportunities for increasing safety and best strategies for turning challenges into opportunities to protect the public?

Are the Appliances and Other Products We Use Spying on Us?

As we use more internet-connected products, from connected children’s toys to home devices that carry out verbal commands to health wearables, the data that can be collected about us is also increasing. What are the benefits of these products? What are the privacy and security concerns, and how should they be addressed?

Protecting Consumers through Litigation

As regulatory efforts to protect consumers will be under increasing threats, litigation will be even more critical. What are the most significant consumer protection cases being litigated at the state and federal level? What key issues are at stake? What are essential elements in successful litigation efforts? What are proactive and defensive steps that consumer advocates can take to preserve and promote consumer protections?

What’s New in Fraud and What’s Being Done to Fight It?

New types of fraud and variations of old scams, often enabled by new technology, present challenges to prevention and enforcement efforts. What are the latest scams, and what is their impact on victims and the public? What new tools are available to help people recognize and report fraud? How are consumer protection agencies keeping up?

Consumers Target Individual Companies

It seems likely that, as opportunities for public policy reform diminish, consumer advocates will target anti-consumer practices by individual companies. What has been learned from past “corporate campaigns” about why they succeed or fail?

The Future of Net Neutrality

The net neutrality concept embodied in Federal Communications Commission decisions is being challenged by new FCC leadership. What are the implications for universal service and consumer choice?

Challenges to Consumer Protection in States and Strategies to Preserve these Protections

Consumer advocates across the country are working hard to preserve consumer protections at the state level. What are some of the most critical efforts? What are the most significant challenges and strategies to preventing the elimination of consumer protections, and what opportunities exist to increase safeguards?

The Prospects for a Clean, Electric Energy Future

Because of factors like global warming and new technologies, the world is slowly moving to greater dependence on clean electricity at work, in the home, and on the road. How will these changes affect consumers and utilities, and how will they respond?

The Future of Investigative Reporting

The declining fortunes of traditional media have threatened support for investigative consumer reporting. Yet, some major media are beefing it up, and new digital media have prioritized this reporting. Is there any cause for optimism?

The Road Ahead for Consumer Financial Protection

While Washington politicians debate the future of the nation’s financial watchdog, the CFPB has produced tangible results for families across the country. The panel will highlight the CFPB’s work for seniors, student loan borrowers, and military families, who have been particularly vulnerable in the financial marketplace. What are the problems facing these constituencies? What has the CFPB done and what work remains? The discussion will provide a roadmap for advocates looking to form multifaceted coalitions in their communities to advance consumer protection and financial fairness.

For more information visit www.consumerfed.org