

Meeting Outline for Consumer Advocacy Week 2025

Last update: March 4, 2025

Roles

Facilitator

Speakers, including a storyteller, for each section

Notetaker

Correspondent: The correspondent sends two-pagers ahead of time and follows up after the meeting with a thank-you and any additional materials.

Introductions

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us. We are here today as part of Consumer Advocacy Week. More than 430 advocates like us from 45 states and DC are meeting with Congressional offices this week in support of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's (CFPB) mission and its recent rules.

[Do a round of introductions: Name, role, and organization. Note if you're a constituent or from the same state. Highlight what your organization provides in your state (e.g., affordable housing, financial counseling, legal aid, community organizing, civil rights defense) and mention who your members include (e.g., labor, faith, military, etc).]

What's in your portfolio? What's on your plate these days? [Ask if they don't bring it up in intros.]

The CFPB has helped people and families across the country, in every district. We want to ensure the Bureau can continue to fulfill its mission and protect consumers.

And we want to make sure three key rules—currently at risk due to **Congressional Review Act** (CRA) resolutions—stay in place to protect consumers: the **overdraft fees rule**, the **payment app oversight rule**, and the **medical debt reporting rule**.

Support for the CFPB

Talking Points:

[If the representative signed the February 28th amicus brief in support of the CFPB, please thank them. [The list of signatories](#) begins on page 2.]

The CFPB was created after the financial devastation of the 2008 economic crash when millions of Americans lost their homes, jobs, cars, and life savings due, in large part, to the financial industry's tricks and deceptive practices. The bank regulators did not pay enough attention to

consumer protection, and to fix that, the CFPB has a key mission: to protect consumers. It also promotes fair competition and supports honest businesses.

Over its 13+ years, the CFPB has delivered for consumers. It has secured [\\$21 billion](#) in relief for millions of people, including in your district/state.

The Bureau has processed 8 million consumer complaints. [Mention how many complaints are from [your state](#)]. 98% of all complaints receive timely responses from the company involved.

The CFPB ensures that the mortgage market is safe and people have options to save their homes. It makes credit bureaus [correct mistakes](#) on credit reports, holds lenders accountable for [cheating military servicemembers](#), and provides consumers tools like an [unbiased credit card shopping tool](#) and the ability to [file complaints](#) when financial companies wrong them.

Given its track record, it's no surprise that a [recent poll](#) shows that 81% of voters across the political spectrum support the CFPB's mission.

[Provide stories if you have any.]

Now more than ever, the CFPB's role is critical to ensuring that people are protected in our ever-evolving financial landscape. People need a CFPB that uses its available resources and has the ability to carry out its mission.

Make the Ask:

- We are urging members of Congress to oppose any changes to the CFPB's funding, structure or other changes that would weaken its ability to protect consumers.
- Can we count on Rep./Sen. XX to oppose such attacks? Will you oppose bills like HR 814 (Rep. Self) and S. 303 (Sen. Cruz), which prevent the CFPB director from requesting any funding?

Overdraft Rule

Talking Points:

We'd like to talk about the CFPB's overdraft fees rule.

A Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution was introduced by Rep. French Hill ([H.J. Res 59](#)) and Sen. Tim Scott ([S.J. 18](#)) to overturn the rule. It was voted on in the House Financial Services Committee on March 5th.

[Thank members of the House Financial Services Committee who voted against the CRA.]

Let me explain the problem: Banks raked in \$5.8 billion in 2023 from punitive, often compounding overdraft fees -- mostly penalizing people who have the least money to lose. Wells Fargo and Chase reap the lion's share of those fees - \$1 billion/year each.

[Provide stories if you have them.]

Despite some banks changing practices under the CFPB's closer watch, many still charge fees as high as \$35, sometimes multiple times a day, trapping people in a cycle of more overdrafts and fees.

How familiar are you with the rule?

How the Rule Works:

- The CFPB's rule would only apply to financial institutions with assets over \$10 billion.
- The CFPB's rule makes overdraft fees more reasonable and in line with the actual costs to banks and credit unions. They could charge a flat \$5 fee or "show their math" to charge fees that recoup their costs for covering an overdraft.
- They must treat overdraft fees like credit. So, if they want to charge higher fees to make a profit, the rule allows for that, but they'll be required to follow existing credit laws. This includes disclosing fees and assessing the customer's ability to repay.

Do you have any questions about the rule?

Make the Ask:

- Will Rep./Sen. XX support reducing overdraft fees on families and vote against the CRA resolutions [H.J. Res. 59](#) and [S.J. Res. 18](#)?
- Will Rep./Sen. XX publicly support the rule? [Suggest options like a social media post, op-ed, press release, floor speech, etc.] We can help with those action steps and provide sample language for a Tweet or a Bluesky post. Can we follow up with our samples? [If yes, please include our samples in your post-meeting thank you email.]

Payment App User Protection Rule, aka Larger Participants Rule

[Only discuss this rule with House offices. The Senate already voted on this CRA on March 4th. Thank senators who voted against the CRA and skip to the medical debt rule.]

Talking Points:

We want to discuss the CFPB's rule that protects people from fraud and errors on digital payment platforms like Apple Pay, PayPal, Venmo, and Cash App. How familiar are you with the rule?

The CFPB finalized this critical rule to ensure oversight of payment apps, requiring big tech companies to follow the same rules as banks and credit unions. This rule aims to ensure these companies comply with privacy laws and consumers' rights to dispute incorrect or fraudulent transactions.

If this rule is nullified, millions of people could be left vulnerable.

[Tell a story if you have one]

Do you have any questions about the rule?

Make the Ask:

A Senate resolution was voted on to overturn the payment app rule, and we expect a House resolution soon.

- Will Rep. XX support the rule by voting against the CRA resolution?
- Will Rep. XX support the rule publicly? [Suggest options like a social media post, op-ed, press release. We can help with these action steps.]

Medical Debt Reporting Rule

Talking Points:

We'd like to talk about the CFPB's medical debt reporting rule, which was finalized in December. How familiar are you with the rule?

The CFPB's medical debt rule will help 15 million people with unjustly lowered credit scores, easing the impact of medical debt and relieving pressure to pay wrongful bills.

Many medical bills have errors, and it takes time to fight those bills. Meanwhile, many of those disputed bills are sent to collections. We are worried that people may be paying medical debt they do not owe, just to protect their credit scores. And other people may be prevented from important life opportunities—like buying a home or getting a job—simply because they got sick or had a terrible accident and couldn't afford the cost of their treatment.

How the Rule Works:

- The rule will prohibit credit reporting companies like Equifax, TransUnion, and Experian from sharing medical debt information with lenders, and it prevents lenders from considering medical debt.
- The rule recognizes that medical debt is often unavoidable and doesn't reflect a person's willingness to [repay](#) loans. Owed medical bills will still appear on people's credit reports, where landlords or employers who request a copy can see it.

[Option to add: You can include some basic stats on medical debt or some state-level data.]

[Tell a personal story or a story on behalf of a constituent if your group has one.]

Do you have any questions about the rule?

Make the Ask:

As you might know, Rep. Ralph Norman and Sen. Mike Rounds introduced CRA resolutions to overturn the rule.

- Will Rep./Sen. XX support the rule by voting against the CRA resolution?
- Will Rep./Sen. XX support the rule publicly? [Suggest options like a social media post, op-ed, press release. We can help with those action steps.]

Closing

Thank you for your time today!

[Be sure to also thank them for any support or consideration they provided, and let them know you'll follow up accordingly. If they requested any additional information, be sure to send it and note those fulfilled requests in your post-meeting survey.]