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***Consumer Financial Protection Agency: How You Can Help***

Two years ago, I proposed a new agency designed to regulate financial products sold to consumers. To learn more about why I have supported this agency, you can read through the attached document. You can also learn more about this by reading an article called *Making Credit Safer*. That article is available here: <http://www.harvardmagazine.com/2008/05/making-credit-safer.html>. Recently, President Obama announced his support for the new agency. Now, the ball is in Congress's court.

If you care about this issue, the best thing you can do is push Congress to pass the President's plan for financial regulatory reform. You can do this in three primary ways:

- 1) Call and write your Member of Congress and your Senators and ask them to support a new consumer agency. Ask directly: How will you vote? And keep asking. Call every week until Congress votes. These calls mean a lot to someone in Congress.
  - a. Find your Representative: <http://www.house.gov/zip/ZIP2Rep.html>
  - b. Find your Senators: [http://www.senate.gov/general/contact\\_information/senators\\_cfm.cfm](http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm)
- 2) Write a letter to the editor or op-ed supporting the new consumer agency to your local newspaper. Local newspapers *really* like to hear from local people. Post a blog or comment.
- 3) Contact Americans for Financial Reform and offer to help. That group is working night and day to push forward this important issue. You can learn more about their efforts here: <http://www.ourfinancialsecurity.org>.

When you call or write these three basic talking points might come in handy:

- 1) It is time for basic safety standards for credit – just like we have for toasters and aspirin. No more tricks and traps buried in the fine print where no one can really see them.
- 2) Loans need to be clear enough to compare. No more 30-plus page credit card contracts and stacks of papers at a mortgage closing. Families should be able to read and shop before they buy.
- 3) High risk, high profit loans brought down our economy. This crisis started one household at a time, one bad mortgage and one terrible credit card at a time, but now it affects everyone. We all benefit from a safer consumer credit market.

Thank you for caring about this issue and for your help. Ordinary Americans have the power to drown out the lobbyists and special interests in Washington – but only if their voices are heard loud and clear.