

Washington, D.C. - Today, Congressman John Barrow (GA-12) voted to bring common sense reform and consumer protections to the credit card system. The Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights (H.R. 627) will end the unfair practices of the credit card industry and protect consumers from the abusive tactics that continue to drive so many Americans deeper and deeper into debt.

Barrow was a cosponsor of the legislation which passed 357-70.

"So many families are struggling to make ends meet right now," said Barrow. "The consumers who play by the rules deserve to be treated fairly by their credit card companies.

That's what the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights is all about, fairness."

The bill applies common sense regulations that would ban most retroactive interest rate hikes on existing balances (except when payments are more than 30 days late), double-cycle billing, and due-date gimmicks. It's part of a long-term plan to rebuild our economy in a way that is consistent with our values of responsibility and hard work, not high-flying finance schemes.

"The folks in my district work hard and play by the rules. They deserve fair treatment from their credit card companies.

But lots of them still face excessive fees, interest rates hikes at any time and for any reason, and unfair, incomprehensible agreements that are revised at will.

The Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights gives Americans the information and rights they need to

make decisions about their financial lives."

Specifically, the bill protects cardholders against arbitrary interest rate increases, empowers them to set limits on their credit, and requires card companies to fairly credit and allocate payments. It prohibits charging fees just to pay a bill by phone, charging over-the-limit fees unless a consumer opts-in in advance, and issuing credits cards to minors.

"Our economic recovery depends on a shared prosperity," added Barrow.
"That's why we sided with the American people today, over a credit card industry that has profited through unfair, abusive practices."

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