

**Opening Remarks**  
**Honorable Maxine Waters D-35<sup>th</sup> CA**  
**House Committee on Financial Services**  
**Hearing: "Improving Federal Consumer Protection in Financial Services"**

**Wednesday, June 13, 2007**  
**10:00AM**  
**2128 Rayburn House Office Building**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I want to thank Chairman Frank and Ranking Member Bachus for holding today's hearing on Improving Consumer Protection in Financial Services. Given the recent regulatory and judicial actions affecting the application of state consumer protection laws to national banks and state thrifts, it is very proactive that the Committee would hold this hearing.

The number of consumer complaints related to financial services and lending practices as well as to unfair and deceptive practices in the financial services marketplace raises issues about the appropriate role of the states in the consumer protection and regulatory equation; it also calls into question a number of federal statutes --- Truth in Lending Act (TILA) and the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), not to mention the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA). We all know that consumer protection is different depending on the state and the practice in question.

I am pleased to say that some of the best practices related to consumer protection were pioneered in my State of California and remain a model for other states as well as the federal government today. However, I am afraid that during the past several years, some of the consumer protections have not been as vigorously enforced as they could have been; just look at the identity theft issue and current protections for the consumer as an example. We all know that the statutes governing consumers are at the core of credit in a world where credit is often a key to financial success.

As we witness a continued increase in the number of seniors and first time credit applicants from diverse backgrounds, we will want to make sure that the vast array of tools to protect these individuals work rather than make them into victims. I look forward to today's witnesses sharing their perspectives on these important consumer related issues. Thank you.