

April 27, 2020

The Honorable President Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
US House of Representatives  
H-323, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear President Trump, Majority Leader McConnell, and Speaker Pelosi,

As leaders of groups representing millions of consumers, taxpayers, and entrepreneurs, we sympathize with businesses struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and support policies to bring them regulatory and tax relief. We object, however, to policy actions proposed in the name of “relief” that benefit some businesses by massively raising costs on other businesses and consumers.

Specifically, we are concerned by the push by lobbyists for restaurants and other retailers to expand Dodd-Frank’s Durbin Amendment price controls to credit cards as well as debit cards. The Durbin Amendment is not only one of the costliest provisions of the Dodd-Frank financial overhaul of 2010, it is one of the most regressive.

In 2009, the year before Dodd-Frank was enacted, 76 percent of checking accounts were free of charge. By 2011, that share had fallen to 45 percent, and by 2012 to 39 percent, according to [Bankrate.com](http://Bankrate.com). A 2014 George Mason University study calculates that the Durbin Amendment contributed to 1 million Americans losing access to the banking system—becoming “unbanked”—by 2011.

Extending this policy error to credit cards, particularly during this time of economic fragility, would cause further devastation. Consumers collect roughly \$40 billion in annual rewards from credit cards (\$167 per cardholder according to CFPB), and banks and credit unions’ ability to both provide free credit cards to consumers and consumer rewards could be imperiled. This would harm small entrepreneurs as well, as they use business credit cards as a prime source of financing. And everyone would be hurt if banks and credit unions are forced to forgo investments in cybersecurity due to the sudden revenue shortage these price controls would cause.

We therefore urge you to bring true tax and regulatory relief to Americans in future stimulus bills and not afflict Americans with more destructive red tape in these perilous times.

Sincerely,

Iain Murray  
Vice President  
Competitive Enterprise Institute

Grover Norquist  
President  
Americans for Tax Reform

Pete Sepp  
President  
National Taxpayers Union

James L. Martin  
Founder/Chairman  
60 Plus Association

Saulius “Saul” Anuzis  
President  
60 Plus Association

Phil Kerpen  
President  
American Commitment

Brent William Gardner  
Chief Government Affairs Officer  
Americans for Prosperity

Norm Singleton  
President  
Campaign for Liberty

Andrew F. Quinlan  
President  
Center for Freedom and Prosperity

Tom Schatz  
President  
Council for Citizens Against Government  
Waste

Matthew Kandrach  
President  
Consumer Action for a Strong Economy

Adam Brandon  
President  
FreedomWorks

James Taylor  
President  
The Heartland Institute

Carrie Lukas  
President  
Independent Women's Forum

Heather Higgins  
CEO  
Independent Women's Voice

Paul Gessing  
President  
Rio Grande Foundation

RJ Lehmann  
Director, Finance, Insurance, and Trade  
Policy  
R Street Institute

Steve Pociask  
President/CEO  
The American Consumer Institute

Ashley Baker  
Director of Public Policy  
The Committee for Justice