

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce Chair Janice D. Schakowsky

Markup of 6 Bills

June 10, 2021

Today, this Committee will markup my subcommittee Vice Chair Cárdenas' bill, the Consumer Protection and Recovery Act.

I was proud to pass this bill out of the Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee just two weeks ago.

This legislation is urgently needed to ensure the Federal Trade Commission can protect consumers by putting money back in the pockets of victims of fraud, scams, and other illegal activity.

This is exactly what Congress originally intended and what the people demand.

The authority under section 13(b) of the Federal Trade Commission Act has been the FTC's most effective law enforcement tool for over 40 years.

Since 2018 alone, the FTC has used its 13(b) authority to recover 1.2 billion dollars for consumers.

Nearly half of that went to consumers who live in my Republican colleagues' states.

Just to name a few, that includes over \$100 million for Texas residents, over \$81 million for Florida residents, over \$49 million for Pennsylvania residents, and over \$30 million for Michigan residents.

Unfortunately, this authority was stripped from the FTC last month by a decision of the United States Supreme Court.

Only criminals and scammers benefit from this decision, while consumers lose.

We are here today to right this wrong.

For decades, the FTC used section 13(b) to recover billions of dollars for millions of consumers in a wide variety of cases, including telemarketing fraud, data security and privacy, anticompetitive pharmaceutical practices, scams that target seniors and veterans, and deceptive business practices.

June 10, 2021

Page 2

Under section 13(b), companies that committed violations of the FTC Act could not only be forced to stop their bad acts, but also to pay back ill-gotten gains.

We must provide the FTC the means to quickly make consumers whole when they've been victimized.

That is why we are moving forward today with this legislation to give the FTC back its 13(b) authority.

H.R. 2668, the Consumer Protection and Recovery Act, was introduced with the support of every Democratic Member of my subcommittee.

But this is not a partisan issue. This is simply an issue of protecting Americans from fraud and scams.

Vice Chair Cardenas' legislation is an urgently needed step that Congress must take to protect our consumers.

Lawbreakers must pay, literally, what they owe.

I hope my colleagues will work with us to put consumers first.