



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR MARCH 1 – 4 NATIONAL CALL-IN DAYS

What is the message? As the Senate takes up financial reform legislation, we are asking our Senators to put an end to the abuses that led to the financial crisis. We are asking people to call their Senator and ask them to, *“vote to support financial reform that holds the big Wall Street Banks accountable including the creation of a strong and independent Consumer Financial Protection Agency.”*

Who are we calling? The call-in days are focused on a prioritized list of Senators on the Senate Banking and Ag Committees: Sen. Lincoln (AR), Sen. Bennet (CO), Chairman Dodd (CT), Sen. Bayh (IN), Sen. Tester (MT), Sen. Menendez (NJ), Sen. Schumer & Sen. Gillibrand (NY), Sen. Reed (RI), Sen. Johnson (SD), and Sen. Warner (VA). However, the toll-free number will work in all 50 states, and generating calls all around the country is encouraged.

How does the toll-free number work? The toll-free number, generously provided by SEIU, will ask the caller to dial-in their zip code. The caller will automatically be connected to their Senator's office. The caller does not need to know the name of the Senator who represents them.

Then they will hear the following script:

“Thank you. We’ll connect you to the office of your US Senator. Remember to tell the person who answers the phone to urge the Senator **to vote to support financial reform that holds the big Wall Street Banks accountable including the creation of a strong and independent Consumer Financial Protection Agency.**”

Thanks again for making your voice heard on this important issue! Please hold while we connect you to your Senator’s office.”

What are we up against? The financial services industry spent over \$344 million on its lobbying efforts in the first three quarters of 2009ⁱ. More than 1,500 lobbyists registered with Congress to work on the new rules to limit financial risks and impose stricter consumer protections.ⁱⁱ At least 70 former members of Congress were employed by the financial services industry, nearly half of the 150 former members that reported lobbying in 2009.ⁱⁱⁱ The US Chamber of Commerce spent \$2 million on advertising, including commercials slamming the creation of a federal consumer-protection agency.^{iv}

How many calls do we need to successfully rein in the Big Banks of Wall Street? *Every single call we can possibly get.* The big banks are spending hundreds of millions to pay lobbyists to fight against reforms that would protect us from their abuses in the future. Senators need to hear from thousands of Americans to rein in the big banks.

When is the toll-free number available to use? It will be turned on for use on March 1 and work thru March 4. Remember that people can leave messages for the Senators at their offices during off-hours.

ⁱ Newsweek, 12/05/2009

ⁱⁱ Forbes, 12/09/2009

ⁱⁱⁱ Public Citizen, 2009

^{iv} USA Today, 12/29/2009