



**Americans for Financial Reform**  
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May 4th, 2011

Dear Senator,

As the Financial Services Appropriations Subcommittee begins consideration of fiscal year 2012 agency funding decisions, we want first to thank you for recognizing the role that the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) play in ensuring the market stability and integrity on which our nation's financial well-being depends. Due to your leadership, these agencies were spared the dangerous budget cuts for the balance of fiscal year 2011 approved by the House of Representatives and instead received sorely needed funding boosts.

We urge you to build upon the commonsense funding decisions contained in the final 2011 spending bill and fully fund these agencies in 2012 so that they are in a position to carry out the vital regulatory reform functions entrusted to them in the Dodd-Frank Act.

As you know, the Dodd-Frank Act greatly expanded the responsibilities of both the SEC and CFTC particularly with regard to oversight of previously unregulated derivatives markets. Among the most important new tasks given the SEC, for example, is oversight of the market in security-based derivatives, such as credit default swaps like those that led to the failure and bailout of the American International Group (AIG) in 2008. This segment of the derivatives market is one of the most complex, important, and fastest growing areas of the financial markets. Similarly, Dodd-Frank charges the CFTC with oversight of approximately \$280 trillion in previously unregulated domestic swaps markets, representing a more than seven-fold increase in the notional size of the market the CFTC must supervise. Strengthening regulation of over-the-counter derivatives is a key step in bringing the "shadow markets" that helped crash the economy under sensible regulation. For these agencies to carry out these new responsibilities effectively, they must receive increased funding.

In order to enable this tiny agency to carry out its vastly expanded responsibilities, the President's 2012 budget request would increase CFTC funding to \$308 million. This increase of roughly \$105 million over recently approved 2011 funding levels is very small when compared to the scope of the CFTC's new responsibilities. Moreover, the President has recommended that this increase be funded in a deficit-neutral manner by imposing a very small fee on users of CFTC-regulated derivatives markets. We support this proposal to offset CFTC funding through user fees. Given the vast size of the markets the CFTC regulates and the tiny budget of the agency, user fees could be set at a level so low as to be all but invisible to market participants. Regardless of whether Congress ultimately ends up adopting the user fee proposal, however, we believe it is absolutely critical to provide the CFTC with the full \$308 million called for in the President's budget.

We also support the President's budget request of \$1.4 billion for the SEC. As you know, SEC funding is entirely offset through fees it collects, and, beginning in fiscal year 2012, fees must be set at a level designed to match agency funding. As a result, giving the SEC the funding it needs to police the marketplace will add nothing to the deficit and, since any decrease in funding would have to be matched by a decrease in fees, cutting the agency's funding would do nothing to reduce the deficit. Indeed, because these fees currently bring in substantial excess revenue, these fees are likely to be reduced in 2012 even if the SEC is fully funded at the level authorized in the Dodd-Frank Act.

Fiscal year 2012 funding for the SEC and CFTC must be at levels that allow the agencies to fulfill their vital role reining in Wall Street excess. With millions still out of work as a result of the recent financial crisis, we cannot afford a budget that undercuts regulation necessary to protect the economic well-being of all Americans.

Sincerely,

Americans for Financial Reform

## **Following are the partners of Americans for Financial Reform.**

*All the organizations support the overall principles of AFR and are working for an accountable, fair and secure financial system. Not all of these organizations work on all of the issues covered by the coalition or have signed on to every statement.*

- A New Way Forward
- AARP
- AFL-CIO
- AFSCME
- Alliance For Justice
- Americans for Democratic Action, Inc
- American Income Life Insurance
- Americans for Fairness in Lending
- Americans United for Change
- Calvert Asset Management Company, Inc.
- Campaign for America's Future
- Campaign Money
- Center for Digital Democracy
- Center for Economic and Policy Research
- Center for Economic Progress
- Center for Media and Democracy
- Center for Responsible Lending
- Center for Justice and Democracy
- Center of Concern
- Change to Win
- Clean Yield Asset Management
- Coastal Enterprises Inc.
- Color of Change
- Common Cause
- Communications Workers of America
- Community Development Transportation Lending Services
- Consumer Action
- Consumer Association Council
- Consumers for Auto Safety and Reliability
- Consumer Federation of America
- Consumer Watchdog
- Consumers Union
- Corporation for Enterprise Development
- CREDO Mobile
- CTW Investment Group
- Demos
- Economic Policy Institute
- Essential Action
- Greenlining Institute
- Good Business International

- HNMA Funding Company
- Home Actions
- Housing Counseling Services
- Information Press
- Institute for Global Communications
- Institute for Policy Studies: Global Economy Project
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters
- Institute of Women's Policy Research
- Krull & Company
- Laborers' International Union of North America
- Lake Research Partners
- Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
- Move On
- NASCAT
- National Association of Consumer Advocates
- National Association of Neighborhoods
- National Community Reinvestment Coalition
- National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low-income clients)
- National Consumers League
- National Council of La Raza
- National Fair Housing Alliance
- National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions
- National Housing Trust
- National Housing Trust Community Development Fund
- National NeighborWorks Association
- National People's Action
- National Council of Women's Organizations
- Next Step
- OMB Watch
- OpenTheGovernment.org
- Opportunity Finance Network
- Partners for the Common Good
- PICO
- Progress Now Action
- Progressive States Network
- Poverty and Race Research Action Council
- Public Citizen
- Sargent Shriver Center on Poverty Law
- SEIU
- State Voices
- Taxpayer's for Common Sense
- The Association for Housing and Neighborhood Development
- The Fuel Savers Club
- The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
- The Seminal
- TICAS
- U.S. Public Interest Research Group
- United Food and Commercial Workers

- United States Student Association
- USAction
- Veris Wealth Partners
- Western States Center
- We the People Now
- Woodstock Institute
- World Privacy Forum
- UNET
- Union Plus
- Unitarian Universalist for a Just Economic Community

*Partial list of State and Local Signers*

- Alaska PIRG
- Arizona PIRG
- Arizona Advocacy Network
- Arizonans For Responsible Lending
- Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development NY
- Audubon Partnership for Economic Development LDC, New York NY
- BAC Funding Consortium Inc., Miami FL
- Beech Capital Venture Corporation, Philadelphia PA
- California PIRG
- California Reinvestment Coalition
- Century Housing Corporation, Culver City CA
- CHANGER NY
- Chautauqua Home Rehabilitation and Improvement Corporation (NY)
- Chicago Community Loan Fund, Chicago IL
- Chicago Community Ventures, Chicago IL
- Chicago Consumer Coalition
- Citizen Potawatomi CDC, Shawnee OK
- Colorado PIRG
- Coalition on Homeless Housing in Ohio
- Community Capital Fund, Bridgeport CT
- Community Capital of Maryland, Baltimore MD
- Community Development Financial Institution of the Tohono O'odham Nation, Sells AZ
- Community Redevelopment Loan and Investment Fund, Atlanta GA
- Community Reinvestment Association of North Carolina
- Community Resource Group, Fayetteville A
- Connecticut PIRG
- Consumer Assistance Council
- Cooper Square Committee (NYC)
- Cooperative Fund of New England, Wilmington NC
- Corporacion de Desarrollo Economico de Ceiba, Ceiba PR

- Delta Foundation, Inc., Greenville MS
- Economic Opportunity Fund (EOF), Philadelphia PA
- Empire Justice Center NY
- Enterprises, Inc., Berea KY
- Fair Housing Contact Service OH
- Federation of Appalachian Housing
- Fitness and Praise Youth Development, Inc., Baton Rouge LA
- Florida Consumer Action Network
- Florida PIRG
- Funding Partners for Housing Solutions, Ft. Collins CO
- Georgia PIRG
- Grow Iowa Foundation, Greenfield IA
- Homewise, Inc., Santa Fe NM
- Idaho Nevada CDFI, Pocatello ID
- Idaho Chapter, National Association of Social Workers
- Illinois PIRG
- Impact Capital, Seattle WA
- Indiana PIRG
- Iowa PIRG
- Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
- JobStart Chautauqua, Inc., Mayville NY
- La Casa Federal Credit Union, Newark NJ
- Low Income Investment Fund, San Francisco CA
- Long Island Housing Services NY
- MaineStream Finance, Bangor ME
- Maryland PIRG
- Massachusetts Consumers' Coalition
- MASSPIRG
- Massachusetts Fair Housing Center
- Michigan PIRG
- Midland Community Development Corporation, Midland TX
- Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corporation, Detroit Lakes MN
- Mile High Community Loan Fund, Denver CO
- Missouri PIRG
- Mortgage Recovery Service Center of L.A.
- Montana Community Development Corporation, Missoula MT
- Montana PIRG
- Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project
- New Hampshire PIRG
- New Jersey Community Capital, Trenton NJ
- New Jersey Citizen Action
- New Jersey PIRG
- New Mexico PIRG
- New York PIRG
- New York City Aids Housing Network
- NOAH Community Development Fund, Inc., Boston MA
- Nonprofit Finance Fund, New York NY
- Nonprofits Assistance Fund, Minneapolis M

- North Carolina PIRG
- Northside Community Development Fund, Pittsburgh PA
- Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing, Columbus OH
- Ohio PIRG
- OligarchyUSA
- Oregon State PIRG
- Our Oregon
- PennPIRG
- Piedmont Housing Alliance, Charlottesville VA
- Michigan PIRG
- Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center, CO
- Rhode Island PIRG
- Rural Community Assistance Corporation, West Sacramento CA
- Rural Organizing Project OR
- San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority
- Seattle Economic Development Fund
- Community Capital Development
- TexPIRG
- The Fair Housing Council of Central New York
- The Loan Fund, Albuquerque NM
- Third Reconstruction Institute NC
- Vermont PIRG
- Village Capital Corporation, Cleveland OH
- Virginia Citizens Consumer Council
- Virginia Poverty Law Center
- War on Poverty - Florida
- WashPIRG
- Westchester Residential Opportunities Inc.
- Wigamig Owners Loan Fund, Inc., Lac du Flambeau WI
- WISPIRG

