THIS WEEK IN WALL STREET REFORM

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Grassroots Activities

Occupy Oakland Protest: Police Fire Tear Gas And Beanbag Rounds, Clear Out Encampment
Terry Collins (AP)
October 25, 2011

"Dozens of police in riot gear and hundreds of protesters supporting the Occupy Wall Street movement engaged in a game of cat-and-mouse in downtown Oakland on Tuesday, with authorities using tear gas to respond to demonstrators' repeated agitations. The latest such skirmish came around 11:15 PDT in front of City Hall, where a haze of chemical smoke still hung in the air following several similar clashes at the site over the course of the night." Click here for more.

'Occupy' protesters hold vigils for injured vet
AP
October 28, 2011

"Anti-Wall Street demonstrators held vigils for an Iraq War veteran seriously injured during a protest clash with police in California as some Occupy encampments came under growing pressure from authorities to abandon sites in parks and plazas. A crowd of at least 1,000 people, many holding candles, gathered Thursday night in Oakland in honor of 24-year-old Scott Olsen, who is hospitalized with a fractured skull." Click here for more.

Tea Party vs. Occupy Wall Street: Is there room for both movements?
CNN
October 14, 2011

*"The Occupy Wall Street movement had a huge breakthrough this morning when the Zuccatti Park owners backed down from their original promise to make protesters leave the park for the parks cleaning. Tea Party groups have launched an attack against the Occupy Wall Street protests, challenging the line that the anti-corporate uprising is the "the Tea Party of the left." Both movements are saying that the media has villified their groups. This morning on American Morning, Carol Costello talks to Amy Kremer, chair of the Tea Party Express and **Dan Cantor, Executive Director of the Working Families Party**." Click here for more.*

Occupy Wall Street Seeks Winter Residence
John Carney (CNBC.com)
October 26, 2011

"Plans are underway to rent an enormous space capable of housing up to 300 people so that Occupy Wall Street can continue through the winter. Many of the Occupy Wall Street protesters have been sleeping in Zuccotti Park since the protests began six weeks ago. But as the weather grows colder, sleeping outdoors will become less practical. Each year, people freeze to death on the streets of New York City." Click here for more.

Sucher - How N.Y. Fed's Dudley Can Be Occupy Wall Street's Hero
Joel Sucher (for American Banker)
October 26, 2011

"It was an 'I feel your pain' moment for William Dudley, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. He had just finished a speech at Fordham University in the Bronx and was giving a reporter a few sound bites, saying he understood why the Occupy Wall Street crowd was so angry about the bank bailouts. However, he continued (sounding a bit apologetic), the bailouts were the 'least bad choice.' Dudley then left Fordham to tour the surroundings, pointing out the fact that the borough had enjoyed a bit of a growth spurt, adding 10,000 jobs since the recession. But that happy face faded as quickly as snow in the Sahara when he noted that most Bronx households consisted of renters, not homeowners and, by extension, not vulnerable to drowning via pair of concrete overshoes otherwise known as mortgage debt with negative equity. Suggestion to the New York Fed Chief: Walk out the front entrance of your office on Liberty Street; turn right, walk a half a block and simply cross Broadway (keep an eye out for speeding cabs). There you'll find a whole bunch of people camped in Zuccotti Park who'll surely hang on your every word. Think of the photo op! If I were to suggest an agenda for a speech, perhaps you could talk about the miserable failure of Treasury's Home

Affordable Modification program, which fell well below the administration's expectations of saving four million homeowners from inevitable foreclosure." *Click here for more.*

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Attacks on Regulations and Pushback

Lamar Smith bill requiring lawmakers to vote on regulations passes House panel
Puneet Kollipara (Houston Chronicle)
October 25, 2011

"The House Judiciary Committee cleared a bill today that would require Congress to sign off on federal regulations that Republicans say threaten job creation and cost millions to comply with." *Click here for more.*

Click here to view the press statement from the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards, which includes statements from Union of Concerned Scientists, OMB Watch, Natural Resources Defense Council, AFL-CIO, Public Citizen, US Public Interest Research Group, National Employment Law Project, Americans for Financial Reform, Alliance for Justice, and Demos. Click here to view our individual press statement.

Obama Wrote Fewer Rules Than Bush, Cost More
Mark Drajem and Catherine Dodge (Bloomberg)
October 25, 2011

"President Barack Obama's 'tsunami' of new government regulations looks more like a summer swell. Obama's White House has approved fewer regulations than his predecessor George W. Bush at this same point in their tenures, and the estimated costs of those rules haven't reached the annual peak set in fiscal 1992 under Bush's father, according to government data reviewed by Bloomberg News. The average annual cost to businesses under Obama is higher than under his predecessors, the Bloomberg review shows. The increase is estimated to total as little as $100 million or as much as $4.1 billion, or at most three one-hundredths of a percent of the total economy." *Click here for more.*

Is Regulatory Uncertainty a Major Impediment to Job Growth?
Dr. Jan Eberly (U.S. Department of the Treasury)
October 24, 2011

"Last week at a Senate hearing Secretary Geithner said, 'I'm very sympathetic to the argument you want to be careful to get the rules better and smarter, but I don't think there's good evidence in support of the proposition that it's regulatory burden or uncertainty that's causing the economy to grow more slowly than any of us would like.' Economists from across the political spectrum have also weighed into this debate and reached the same conclusion. Bruce Bartlett, a senior advisor in both the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations, said that 'no hard evidence' has been offered for claims that regulation is the 'principal factor holding back employment.' And in a recent Wall Street Journal *survey of economists, 65 percent of respondents concluded that a lack of demand, not government policy, was the main impediment to increased hiring."* *Click here for more.*

Dodd - Five myths about Dodd-Frank
Christopher J. Dodd (Washington Post)
October 21, 2011

"After a worldwide financial meltdown — and a $700 billion taxpayer-funded bailout — the need for common-sense financial reforms was clear. But now, even though the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 (known as Dodd-Frank, after Rep. Barney Frank and me, its sponsors) is only beginning to take effect, critics are launching false attacks against the law in an effort to undermine it. Whether they are intentionally misleading or just misguided, they are wrong about the law's purpose and impact." *Click here for more.*

The Dodd-Frank Effect
Glen Fest (American Banker cover story – subscription required)
November 1, 2011

"Barney Frank was running late. Bankers, lawyers, regulators and press milled around the Washington Marriott, waiting for him to deliver the keynote address to an American Banker regulatory symposium. After a 15-minute delay, the Massachusetts Democratic congressman arrived, looking only slightly disheveled as he stepped up to the podium and flew into his presentation. Using neither notes nor a net, the co-author of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act provided an emphatic defense of the landmark, 2,300-page bill, including a lengthy critique of efforts to neuter its 5 percent risk-retention rule for lenders." Click here for more.

US Chamber Watch - The Institute for Legal Reform: The Chamber's Corporate Conduit
Lauren Levenstein (US Chamber Watch)
October 27, 2011

"When it comes to the U.S. Chamber, nothing really is as it seems. Today - on the day of the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Legal Reform's (ILR) annual summit - U.S. Chamber Watch is releasing a report showing that the ILR has grown into an elite lobbying arm of the Chamber, serving the needs of its biggest corporate members and their executive pocketbooks. Our report explains how the Chamber has taken the ILR far beyond its mandate as an advocate for legal or tort reform. And no one better to confirm our findings than Republican House Speaker John Boehner, who spoke at today's ILR Summit (along with Republican Governors Nikki Haley (R-SC) and Bob McDonnell (R-VA)) where, according to ABC News, he 'did not specifically address tort or any kind of legal reform.' … Recently, the ILR has lobbied on a litany of controversial issues, from pushing Congress to make it easier for corporations to bribe foreign officials by gutting the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, to slowing the implementation of the Dodd-Frank financial reform bill and opposing political spending disclosure requirements from companies that have contracts with the federal government. The ILR has contributed millions to Republican political operations, and has even gotten into the newspaper business in five states and online, publishing 'legal records' that perpetuate its pro-tort reform agenda with scant traces of the Chamber's ownership." Click here for more.

EPI - A quick guide to the evidence on regulations and jobs
Isaac Shapiro (EPI)
October 24, 2011

"The intense debate this year over the effects of regulatory efforts on jobs and the economy, driven (inaccurately) from the start by the mantra of 'job-killing' regulations, has become even more heated in recent weeks as anti-regulatory efforts have passed the House, have been proposed in the Senate, and have been embraced by Republican presidential candidates. EPI has issued a series of reports on this topic this year, including reports which underscore three key points." Click here for more.

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CFPB and Consumer Issues

Date - Student Loans: Know Before You Owe
Raj Date (Huffington Post)
October 28, 2011

"It's college application season and students around the country are busy filling out forms for college. As they send off their applications, many worry not just about getting into the right school, but also about paying for it once they do. For many students today, the dream of going to college can only be realized by borrowing money... lots of money. The problem is that far too often, students are signing on the dotted line for loans they don't fully understand. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), established last year by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, wants to help students and their families better understand their loan options. It's time to create a student loan market where costs and risks are clear."Click here for more.

Ambrose - CFPB: Simplifying federal student loans
Eileen Ambrose (Baltimore Sun)
October 28, 2011

"The new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has been working to design mortgage documents that makes it clear to homebuyers the cost of their loan and other important details. It has posted sample documents, asking consumers to weigh in on which form is best. Now, it's working with the Department of Education to do the same on federal student loans. The CFPB posted a sample loan form, requesting comment. But that's not all. The Bureau also launched a tool to help borrowers struggling to repay loan to understand their options. The tool is handy because there are so many options available to borrowers to avoid falling behind on their federal loans." Click here for more.

Click here to view the CFPB press release

Note: See "Student Lending" section for more news and events.

Overdraft Fees: The Dough Keeps Rolling In
Karen Weise (Business Week)
October 20, 2011

*"Banks have spent much of the past year howling about revenue lost after financial reforms limited consumer fees, especially the billions they reaped from charges for covering overdrafts on debit cards. Those programs, though, remain highly profitable. While fee revenue will be down about 16 percent this year from its peak in 2009, it will top $16 billion, predicts Moebs Services, a banking consultancy. 'Consumers are still getting hit really hard by overdraft fees,' says **Rebecca Borné, an attorney at the Center for Responsible Lending, a consumer advocacy group."** Click here for more.*

Drum - Americans are Clueless About Their Credit Card Debt
Kevin Drum (Mother Jones)
October 20, 2011

"Here's an interesting little chart that requires a bit of explanation. For five different categories, it compares the number of households who think they have outstanding loans (solid lines labeled 'SCF') vs. the number of loans that lenders think they've given out (dashed lines labeled 'Panel'). It provides this comparison for six different age groups. Needless to say, the lender data is highly accurate, so any difference between the two lines means that borrowers are kidding themselves about whether they have any outstanding debt. For example, the blue lines represent auto loans, and they're pretty close to each other for all age groups. This means that households have a pretty good idea of whether they owe any money on their cars. Ditto for mortgage loans, home equity loans, and student loans. But then there's credit card debt, represented by the red lines. They're way *far apart. In the four working age categories, about 50% of households think they have outstanding credit card debt, but the credit card companies themselves think about 80% of households have outstanding balances. And this shows up in the aggregates, too. Households think they have a total of about $390 billion in credit card debt, while credit card companies think that households owe them about $820 billion." Click here for more.*

Rich Cordray Nomination

PFAW - Oversee Wall Street
Marge Baker, Executive Vice President of People For the American Way (The Hill)
October 27, 2011

"The Occupy Wall Street protests have performed a huge service by focusing the attention of elected officials on the real frustration and real concerns felt by millions of Americans. Not only do a majority of Americans support the protests, but most agree with many protestors' most prominent goal: greater accountability for Wall Street. Unfortunately, many on the right are ignoring this stark reality, marginalizing the concerns of millions of voters by demonizing a handful of demonstrators. Nowhere is this clearer than in the Senate, where all but three Republican senators are refusing to take the simplest and easiest step toward Wall Street accountability: confirming a head for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau." Click here for more.

Elizabeth Warren's Successor; "Pay to Play" Cordray Seeks to #OccupyConsumerProtectionBureau
Capitol Confidential (Breitbart's 'Big Government')
October 26, 2011

"The #OccupyWallStreet movement has an agenda and has made it available for all to see. Among their demands is that government eviscerate existing contracts by "eliminating all debt, everywhere." Imagine there was a government agency with the power to make decisions like that. With a sleight of hand, one person could vitiate contracts and overturn years of business decisions, destroying marketplaces through government intervention. You don't have to imagine very long. If President Obama and his progressive supporters get their way, the Director of the newly created regulatory agency called the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) will have similar powers. …Richard Cordray has a history of abusing power. As Attorney General of the state of Ohio, Cordray allowed a series of lawsuits to move forward – some of which were dismissed – that allowed the state Democrat Party to profit. The Wall Street Journal observed that, "Out-of-state plaintiffs' law firms gave little cash directly to Mr. Cordray's campaign, but in 2007 and 2008 they contributed $830,000 to the Ohio Democratic Party candidates' fund, which passed about $2 million to support Mr. Cordray. …Senator Richard Shelby has organized a majority of Republicans to join him and block Cordray—or any nominee—from confirmation until structural reforms are made to the CFPB. But even if they succeed in forcing accountability into this agency, "Pay to Play Cordray" should never be confirmed as it Director." Click here for more.

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Shadow Markets and Systemic Risk

AFR and CFA: Oppose Small Company Regulatory Relief Act
Click here to view the letter AFR and Consumer Federation of America sent to congress opposing weakening of Sarbanes-Oxley protections against accounting fraud.

AFR: Oppose Crapo Amendment 814
Click here to view the letter AFR sent to Senators urging them to oppose Senator Crapo's Amendment 814 to the bill HR 2112, a bill that would severely damage if not eliminate the ability of financial regulators to oversee the "shadow markets" in derivatives that were a central contributor to the catastrophic financial crisis of 2008.

SEC waters down, adopts disclosure rules for money managers
David S. Hilzenrath (Washington Post)
October 26, 2011

"The Securities and Exchange Commission adopted a new set of disclosure rules for hedge funds, private equity funds and other private money managers Wednesday, but it backed off on several of the tougher requirements it had originally proposed. The agency also exempted many firms from the new rules, saying they will apply only to those with at least $150 million under management." Click here for more.

Bank of America Derivatives Transfer Draws Lawmaker Scrutiny
Phil Mattingly and Bob Ivry (Bloomberg)
October 27, 2011

"Congressional Democrats are asking regulators whether they explored possible risks connected to Bank of America Corp.'s moving of derivatives from Merrill Lynch into its deposit-taking unit after a credit downgrade. Eighteen lawmakers signed onto letters from Representative Brad Miller and Senator Sherrod Brown seeking information about whether agencies consulted on the transfer considered the potential impact on the bank's health and customer accounts." Click here for more.

Click here to view the letter from the New Bottom Line to President Obama, Fed Chair Bernanke, Treasury Secretary Geithner and FDIC Chair Gruenberg "protesting a secretive decision to allow Bank of America's holding company to transfer risky derivative assets from Merrill Lynch to its FDIC-insured bank."

Volcker Rule

Charlie Rose interview with Paul Volcker, Former Chairman, U.S. Federal Reserve
The Charlie Rose Show
October 24, 2011

Click here to view the interview.

Analysis: Volcker pay curbs spark fears of Wall St. exodus
Dave Clarke (Reuters)
October 26, 201

"The Volcker rule has created a new battlefield over Wall Street pay that banks fear will send their star traders and hedge fund advisers fleeing. The roughly 300-page proposal that was released earlier this month is fuzzy at best, but it makes clear that banks cannot pay their in-house top talent any type of bonuses that could encourage proprietary trading. Proprietary trading, which includes speculative bets banks make with their own capital, would be banned under the rule, while trades for client interests would still be allowed. The idea of rolling up pay with the enforcement mechanism is unlikely to elicit much sympathy from an American public still smarting over big payouts on Wall Street while unemployment is at painfully high levels. However, it is sending chills through banks who fear they may lose key talent. … 'The question is whether just saying that compensation arrangements cannot encourage proprietary risk taking is enough or whether they have to be more specific,' said ***Marcus Stanley, policy director for the group Americans for Financial Reform****."*
Click here for more.

Click here to view AFR's press statement on the Volcker Rule.

Excerpt:

> *"The Volcker Rule, with its clear ban on both proprietary trading and conflicts of interest, is one of the short list of places where the Dodd-Frank Act imposes an outright ban on Wall Street practices central to the financial crisis. Unfortunately, the proposal issued today falls well short of what the Volcker Rule could and should achieve. It is too weighted toward preserving bank freedom of action, rather than creating the changes in bank practice and culture required by the statute," said* ***Lisa Donner****,* ***executive director of Americans for Financial Reform****. "We strongly urge major improvements in the final rule. The serious and widespread economic pain caused by the failures of our financial system, and the growing expressions of public outrage – with more and more people taking to the streets –help make it clear how important it is to get this right," she added.*

From AFR (see *'Upcoming Events'* for more details):

Evaluating The Volcker Rule

Save the Date: Wednesday, November 9th, 9:30 to 1:00
Location – Hart Senate Office Building, Room 902

Commodity Speculation and Position Limits

Betting On Food Prices May Sell The Hungry Short
Marilyn Geewax (NPR – Weekend Edition Sunday)
October 16, 2011

"Speculators in the agricultural commodities markets are forcing grocery prices to rise too quickly and erratically, according to some top economists marking World Food Day on Sunday. 'Excessive financial speculation is contributing to increasing volatility and record food prices, exacerbating global hunger and poverty,' wrote 461 economists, from more than 40 countries, in an open letter. They called upon the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission to crack down on speculators who have been buying large

amounts of corn, wheat, soy and other commodities, hoping to make a profit. The economists argue that increased trading is a significant part of the reason grocery prices are higher this year." Click here for more.

International

Labor and Consumer Letter to Ambassador Deputy U.S. Trade Representative and Permanent Representative to the WTO Ambassador Michael Punke

Click here to view the letter from the AFL-CIO, AFR, Citizens Trade Campaign, Consumer Watchdog, Public Citizen, and U.S. PIRG stating concern about how current and any future expanded financial liberalization under the current WTO rules may affect financial reregulation efforts here at home and in other countries.

Analysis: Europe's bailout an unexpected bargain for China
Nick Edwards (Reuters)
October 28, 2011

"China might just be about to strike the deal of the decade. For a fraction of the trillion euros needed to clean up Europe's debt mess, Beijing could score huge diplomatic kudos for helping end the crisis while satisfying a domestic agenda of reducing dollar dominance in world trade and further loosening its currency straitjacket." Click here for more.

President Obama - A firewall to stop Europe's crisis spreading
Barack Obama (FT – registration required)
October 27, 2011

"When leaders of the largest economies meet next week in France, our citizens will be watching for the same sense of common purpose that allowed us to rescue the global economy two years ago from a financial crisis that was sparked by years of irresponsibility. Because of the co-ordinated action the G20 took then, the global economy began to grow again. Emerging economies rebounded. In the US, we've had 19 straight months of private sector job growth and added more than 2.5m private sector jobs. … Our challenge is clear. We must stay focused on the strong, sustainable and balanced growth that boosts global demand and creates jobs and opportunity for our people. This requires action in several areas." Click here for more.

Johnson - European Debt: The Big Picture
Simon Johnson *(*The Baseline Scenario)
October 23, 2011

"For everyone struggling to get their arms around the debt crisis in Europe, Bill Marsh in today's New York Times offers literally a compelling picture, with graphic illustration for the key issues. The picture is big, 18×21 inches. Either you need a very large computer screen or a hard copy of the paper (pp. 6-7 in the SundayReview section, "It's All Connected: A Spectator's Guide to the Euro Crisis). The main debt linkages across borders for which we have data are all here – and the graphic pulls your eye appropriately to the centrality of Italy in whatever happens next. (On why eurozone policy towards Italy now matters so much – and what are the options – see my recent paper with Peter Boone, 'Europe on the Brink'.)" Click here for more.

Global regulators map tougher home loan standards
Huw Jones (Reuters)
October 26, 2011

"Lenders should verify a borrower's ability to pay back a home loan and impose prudent limits on money lent out, global regulators said in draft guidelines on Wednesday. The Financial Stability Board (FSB), a global regulatory task force for the world's 20 leading economies (G20), said the financial crisis revealed how weak lending standards in one country can spread across national borders." Click here for more.

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Foreclosures and Housing

US mortgage bonds at six-month low
Robin Harding in Washington and Michael Mackenzie and Shahien Nasiripour in New York (FT)
October 24, 2011

"Prices for billions of dollars in mortgage bonds fell to their lowest levels in six months on Monday as traders bet that new measures to help distressed homeowners would lead to a wave of early repayments. The price declines hit mortgage-backed securities sold with coupons – the return paid to investors – that are higher than current interest rates. Such bonds gained value earlier this year as investors sought higher-yielding assets, pushing their prices well above 100 cents on the dollar." Click here for more.

Obama Promotes Mortgage Plan Where Foreclosures Highest
Kate Andersen Brower (Bloomberg)
October 24, 2011

"President Barack Obama told residents of Nevada, which has the highest foreclosure rate in the U.S., that the administration is reworking rules to help homeowners refinance mortgages on houses that have fallen in value. With his jobs proposals stalled by Republicans in Congress, Obama this week is outlining measures the administration can take through executive action to deal with sluggish economic growth." Click here for more.

Mortgage Plan Touted by Obama Could Help 900,000 Borrowers
Lorraine Woellert (Bloomberg)
October 25, 2011

"A U.S. government plan to help borrowers get lower-interest mortgages for their devalued homes drew praise from banks including Wells Fargo & Co. while bond traders braced for a wave of refinancings. The Federal Housing Finance Agency said yesterday it would allow qualified homeowners to refinance no matter how much their homes have declined in value, expanding the terms of the 2009 Home Affordable Refinance Program. The agency, which oversees Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, said it would also eliminate some fees, reduce others and waive some risk for lenders." Click here for more.

Investors show interest in foreclosure plan
Margaret Chadbourn (Reuters)
October 26, 2011

"Big investors are showing interest in an evolving Obama administration plan to sell off foreclosed homes, although the government will have to make the offer sweet enough to coax private funds. Officials want private partners to take over as much as $30 billion in single-family properties that are currently on the books of government-run Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and the Federal Housing Administration." Click here for more.

Expansion of Mortgage Program Is Limited in Scope
Binyamin Appelbaum (NYT)
October 24, 2011

"The federal government's expansion of a mortgage refinancing program could reduce the monthly payments of up to one million homeowners, but analysts said the modest scope of the plan meant it would probably do little to heal the housing market or help the broader economy." Click here for more.

Barack Obama targets mortgages -- and Mitt Romney
Jennifer Epstein & Glenn Thrush (Politico)
October 2, 2011

"President Barack Obama flew into America's foreclosure capital Monday in a desperate bid to revive the housing market — and to make Mitt Romney pay for embracing a hands-off approach to the crisis during a recent debate here. But Obama's latest plan to reconcile the economy's most irreconcilable economic issue and help millions of underwater homeowners drew mixed reviews even before Air Force One's landing gear hit the tarmac in a ravaged metropolis where roughly one in 118 homes is in foreclosure. … On Monday, administration officials announced they are moving to scrap restrictions that prevented millions of troubled mortgage-holders from taking advantage of existing programs designed to reduce monthly payments. The

key to the new approach, hashed out by Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan in recent weeks: allowing homeowners to refinance at lower rates regardless of how far their home values have fallen, while reducing or eliminating prohibitive refinancing fees." *Click here for more.*

Obama's efforts to aid homeowners, boost housing market fall far short of goals
Zachary A. Goldfarb (Washington Post)
October 23, 2011

"It was a critical plan to jump-start the economy. President Obama pledged at the beginning of his term to boost the nation's crippled housing market and help as many as 9 million homeowners avoid losing their homes to foreclosure. Nearly three years later, it hasn't worked out. Obama has spent just $2.4 billion of the $50 billion he promised. The initiatives he announced have helped 1.7 million people. Housing prices remain near a crisis low. Millions of people are deeply indebted, owing more than their properties are worth, and many have lost their homes to foreclosure or are likely to do so. Economists increasingly say that, as a result, Americans are too scared to spend money, depriving the economy of its traditional engine of growth. The Obama effort fell short in part because the president and his senior advisers, after a series of internal debates, decided against more dramatic actions to help homeowners, worried that they would pose risks for taxpayers and the economy, according to numerous current and former officials. They consistently unveiled programs that underperformed, did little to reduce mortgage debts owed by ordinary Americans and rejected a get-tough approach with banks." *Click here for more.*

Vulture Investors Buy Discounted FHA Loans
Clea Benson and Lorraine Woellert (Bloomberg)
October 24, 2011

"Four years after the housing bubble popped, 11 million homeowners owe more on their mortgages than their houses are worth. On the theory that easing the debt burden for those underwater borrowers would boost consumer spending and lift the overall economy, the U.S. government is experimenting with a program to sell delinquent loans to investors at a discount that encourages them to lower the mortgage principal. The Federal Housing Administration is auctioning thousands of defaulted mortgages at prices marked down by as much as 65 percent. If the pilot works…the government mortgage insurer will cut its losses by avoiding foreclosures while giving borrowers a better chance of remaining in their homes." *Click here for more.*

Summers - Why the housing burden stalls America's economic recovery
Lawrence Summers (FT op-ed – registration required)
October 23, 2011

"The central irony of financial crisis is that while it is caused by too much confidence, too much borrowing and lending and too much spending, it can only be resolved with more confidence, more borrowing and lending, and more spending. Most policy failures in the US stem from a failure to appreciate this truism and therefore to take steps that would have been productive pre-crisis but are counterproductive now with the economy severely constrained by lack of confidence and demand. Thus even as the gap between the economy's production and its capacity increases, fiscal policy turns contractionary, financial regulation focuses on discouraging risk-taking and monetary policy is constrained by concerns about excess liquidity. Most significantly US housing policies especially with regard to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, institutions whose purpose is to mitigate cyclicality, have become a case of disastrous procyclical policy." *Click here for more.*

Bernstein - Why Obama Needs to Take Immediate Control of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac
Jared Bernstein (TNR)
October 21, 2011

"When historians look back at this benighted moment in time, they may find themselves puzzled by how we refused to take the necessary steps to improve our economic situation. Depending on what happens in coming months, they may find that the best solutions—aggressive fiscal and monetary stimulus here in the United States, bank recapitalization and debt restructuring in the EU—were left on the table, while millions unnecessarily suffered. A footnote in that history may be the decision of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac not to do more to help the housing market recover. Faced with a flailing market and an alarming amount of underwater mortgages, Fannie and Freddie have nonetheless refrained from implementing bold plans to help out homeowners, citing their fiduciary duty to taxpayers as the reason. But by encouraging more refinancing

and principal reductions of the mortgages these institutions either hold directly or insure, our government-sponsored housing giants could simultaneously improve both housing security and the overall economy." *Click here for more.*

Freddie Mac Said to Name Lynch Chairman as Koskinen Steps Down
James Sterngold (Bloomberg)
October 26, 2011

"Freddie Mac, the mortgage finance firm controlled by the U.S., will name Christopher S. Lynch to replace John Koskinen as non-executive board chairman…" Click here for more.

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Executive Compensation

CEOs Compensated Correctly, Vast Majority Of Shareholders Say
Harry Bradford (**The Huffington Post**)
October 24, 2011

"Despite growing income inequality, and global protests criticizing the wealth gap, CEO compensation now exceeds pre-recession levels, totaling billions of dollars. But the majority of corporate shareholders don't seem to mind that CEOs are netting such high pay. Only 36 of 2,225 companies reported that shareholders voted against the pay rates of CEOs at the firms they hold stock in, Forbes reports (h/t Mogulite). The say-on-pay votes that were authorized by the Dodd-Frank financial reform legislation are non-binding, but they indicate little criticism of executive pay that in at least 25 cases exceeded the value corporations pay in total income taxes, a recent study by executive compensation research firm Equilar found." Click here for more.

Why America's Highest Paid CEOs Are Insanely Overpaid
Richard B. Finger (For Forbes)
October 25, 2011

"*The following is a guest column by Richard B. Finger, a private investor with Ariadne Capital LLC, in Houston, Tex. The opinions expressed are his own. With its recent list of America's 25 Highest Paid CEOs, Forbes has catalogued one of the great malignancies of our society. A monstrous canker so metastasized that it stretches credulity to comprehend the full absurdity. Two of the men on this list I honestly admire and are exempt from my following criticisms. They are Ralph Lauren, a self-made man, creator of his fashion label, employer of some 24,000 worldwide. Ralph comes in second-place at $66.7 million. The other, Larry Fink, co-founder of BlackRock (in 16th place at $39.9 million), has in two decades built one of the largest asset management firms from scratch, employing 9,700. These men are entrepreneurs, visionaries, creators of jobs. They deserve their annual haul. The rest, for the most part, are to be classified as merely managers, or caretakers of their shareholders' property. Yet they, inexplicably, are compensated as if they were visionaries. This is wrong. This is what the Occupy Wall Street crowd should be railing against. (See my previous column: Some Tips For The Simpletons of Occupy Wall Street)." Click here for more.*

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Student Lending

The Institute for College Access & Success and **Americans for Financial Reform** hosted a conference call with reporters and bloggers on **Tuesday, October 25th** at **12:00 PM EDT** to discuss private student loan debt and what the impact of delaying the confirmation of a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Director means for students and families. Click here for replay instructions.

No CFPB Director Means More Money Problems For Students
Mandi Woodruff (Business Insider)
October 25, 2011

*"As members of Congress dance around affirming President Obama's nominee to head up the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, students are among those that stand to be hit the hardest, some groups say. Without a leader, the agency can't fully regulate consumer practices across all sectors, including private student lenders, according to **The Institute for College Access & Success**. … The CFPB would be instrumental in enforcing these regulations and collecting data on institutions that are funneling students to private lenders, but it can't do so until a new director is appointed, according to **Lisa Donner, executive director of Americans for Financial Reform**…'Without a director in place...it's just that much harder to do the job of standing up for consumers and standing up to industry specialists,' **Donner** said." Click here for more.*

Officials target college financial aid letters
Candice Choi (AP)
October 25, 2011

*"Financial aid award letters can be misleading. In one common practice, for example, colleges highlight the total 'out of pocket' cost for attending. The figure is intended to give students an estimate of how much they'd have to pay after outright awards, such as grants and scholarships are factored in. …On Tuesday, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Department of Education announced a plan to simplify the aid letters so that families can assess a school's true cost and make comparisons more easily. Officials are asking for feedback on a draft of the form, available at http://tinyurl.com/3ve57mt, …The push to standardize financial aid award letters comes at a time when student loan volumes have reached record levels. **The Institute for College Access & Success** estimates that two-thirds of graduates have student loans, with an average debt of about $24,000." Click here for more.*

CFPB Unveils Model Disclosures for Student Loans
Kate Davidson (American Banker – subscription required)
October 25, 2011

"The bureau has teamed up with the Department of Education on a financial aid shopping sheet that would help students compare offers from different schools, distinguish between scholarships and loans, and estimate their monthly debt payments after graduation." Click here for more.

Obama plan to provide relief to student loan borrowers helps a familiar voting bloc
Associated Press
October 26, 10:37 AM

"President Barack Obama is outlining a plan Wednesday to allow millions of student loan recipients to lower their payments and consolidate their loans, in hopes of easing the burden of the No. 2 source of household debt. The move to assist struggling graduates and students could help Obama shore up re-election support among young voters, an important voting bloc in his 2008 campaign, and appeal to their parents, too. Student loan debt also is a common concern voiced by Occupy Wall Street protesters." Click here for more.

Click here to view the press statement from TICAS.

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FTT

AFR Letter: Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction Should Support Financial Transaction Tax

Click here to view the letter urging the Joint Select Committee to examine a small levy on financial speculation as a revenue-raising measure.

AFR Letter: Urge the Super Committee To Support FTT

Click here to view the letter requesting that President Obama and Secretary Geithner urge the Joint Select Committee to examine a financial transaction tax and click here to view the press release.

Protesters Rally Around Trading Tax
Eliza Newlin Carney (Roll Call)
October 27, 2011

"After weeks of waving signs and chanting with no clear policy objective, Occupy Wall Street protesters finally have an issue to rally around: a tax on Wall Street. Known in Occupy movement parlance as the 'Robin Hood tax,' taxes on trades of stocks, bonds and derivatives are getting a fresh look on Capitol Hill and may draw thousands of protesters to Washington, D.C., next week. Helping lead the charge are an unlikely breed of tax activist: registered nurses. … 'There [are] people in the streets angry about economic inequality, and angry about what Wall Street has gotten away with,' said ***Lisa Donner, executive director of Americans for Financial Reform,*** *which supports both bills. 'The European community is moving ahead with a serious proposal.' … A DeFazio aide acknowledged that legislation to impose a tax on stock trades and other financial services transactions is virtually dead in the water in the GOP-controlled House. But he noted that the budget deficit is not going away, and that such a tax is a logical place to look for revenue sources. A Friday Capitol Hill briefing on the transaction tax turned into a standing-room-only event. 'It was twice as many people as we were expecting,' said Nicole Woo, director of domestic policy at the Center for Economic and Policy Research, a nonprofit that has helped buttress the academic case for a transaction tax. 'To me, that is a sign that people are taking this pretty seriously.'" Click here for more.*

Transaction Tax On Financial Speculation Gets Boost From Occupy Wall Street
Ryan Grim (Huffington Post)
October 26, 2011

"Boosted by the Occupy Wall Street movement, two Democrats in the House and Senate are renewing a push for a transaction tax on speculative trades. The tax would be set at a nominal rate designed to have little impact on pension funds that buy and hold securities for the long term or on individual investors who don't make hundreds or thousands of trades a day. 'This proposal will not only curb some risky trading activities, but will also raise greatly needed revenue in a way that does not negatively impact middle-class Americans,' said Kate Cyrul, a spokeswoman for Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), who plans to introduce Senate legislation when the upper chamber, which is now in recess, returns. … ***Americans for Financial Reform****, a coalition of progressive and labor organizations focused on reforming Wall Street, threw its weight behind the tax in a letter to the super committee:" Click here for more.*

Anderson - The Costs of Wall Street Greed
Sarah Anderson (originally published in The Nation
October 27, 2011

"Bank of America had impeccable timing when it decided recently to charge a $5 monthly fee for the privilege of using its debit cards. The notorious bailout baron, having just announced 30,000 job cuts, decided to stick it not to the platinums, not to the golds, but to the debit card masses. Occupy Wall Streeters could not have asked for a more perfect target. They've melted the bank's debit cards, organized 'mass account closures' and rallied outside numerous branches around the world. … At a rally in Washington on November 3, National Nurses United will be working to right this imbalance by sending the banks a bill of their own. As part of global actions tied to the G-20 summit, the union and its allies are pressing for a Wall Street tax on each trade of stocks, derivatives and other financial instruments that could generate massive revenues." Click here for more.

Occupy Wall Street and the Pope Agree: It's Time to Tax Speculators
John Nichols (The Nation)
October 26, 2011

"The Catholic Church has for many years raised objections to the patterns of globalization, concentration of wealth and economic equality that have encouraged the massive redistribution of wealth upward that has made the rich richer, the poor poorer and the middle class more vulnerable than at any time in generations.

And, now, as the [Occupy Wall Street]() movement raises the issue of economic inequality, the church is stepping up with a proposal to begin to address the extreme injustice of a system that taxes working people for necessities but allows speculators to avoid even the most basic responsibilities. On the eve of the G-20 leaders, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace has endorsed a series of reforms to the global economic financial and monetary systems that features as its centerpiece the development of a financial transactions tax." [Click here for more.]()

From NPA:

We need a Robin Hood Tax!

On October 29th, as the Presidents and Leaders of the Group of 20 Nations meets in France, people across the world will rise up and demand that our G20 leaders immediate impose a 1% #ROBINHOOD tax on all financial transactions and currency trades. The message is clear -- Whose Side Are You On? The side of the people and increased job creation, shared prosperity, and an economy that works for all of us or the side of the 1% ultra wealthy and Wall Street.

Check out the great [Robin Hood "trailer"]() video NPA put together in support of this week's actions in NY and around the country and world in support of a Robin Hood Tax.

From National Nurses United:

[National Nurses United day of action to tax Wall Street]()
November 3
Rally at Lafayette Square
11:30 A.M.
March to the U.S. Treasury Department
Lobby on Capitol Hill at 3:00 PM

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Interchange

Big Banks Blink on New Card Fees
Robin Sidel (WSJ – subscription required)
October 28, 2011

"A month after Bank of America got pummeled by consumers and politicians for introducing plans for new debit-card fees, most other big U.S. banks are steering clear of imposing similar charges. Following eight months of consumer testing, [J.P. Morgan Chase & Co](). has decided that it won't charge customers who use their debit cards to make purchases, according to a person familiar with the bank's plans. The New York bank's Chase retail unit is one of the largest U.S. consumer banks, with 26.5 million checking accounts and 5,300 branches." [Click here for more.]()

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Credit Ratings Agencies

Lawmakers unfazed by downgrade risk
Tim Reid, Richard Cowan and Walter Brandimarte (Reuters)
October 27, 2011

"A growing number of lawmakers do not think another downgrade of the country's AAA rating will harm America's economy, raising questions about how much pressure Congress is under to fix the intractable budget deficit. Analysts warn, however, that signs of complacency on Capitol Hill threaten efforts to cure

America's long-term fiscal health. … Ryan cited the role of the three major agencies in the buildup to the 2008 financial collapse, when they gave AAA ratings to the toxic mortgage-backed securities at the heart of the crisis. Since then, Ryan said, 'the credit rating agencies have lost a tremendous amount of credibility. The U.S. is still the safest investment to make' -- meaning another downgrade may have little influence how investors view U.S. debt." [Click here for more.]

Other

Dow gains 339 as stocks surge on European debt deal, GDP growth
LA Times
October 27, 2011

"The Dow Jones industrial average surged nearly 340 points Thursday after European leaders agreed on a deal to slash Greece's debt load and prevent the crisis there from engulfing larger countries like Italy. The Standard & Poor's 500 index is close to having its best month since 1974." [Click here for more.]

CBPP - Inequality Growing, and Government Doing Less About It
Jared Bernstein (Off the Charts – CBPP)
October 27, 2011

"The Congressional Budget Office has released a [fascinating and disturbing analysis] on the growth in income inequality among American households over the past few decades. The key findings are: Inequality increased significantly over this period (see graph). Between 1979 and 2007, incomes grew by 275 percent for the wealthiest 1 percent of households, 37 percent for the middle 60 percent of households, and 18 percent for the poorest 20 percent of households. These figures adjust for inflation and account for the impact of taxes and government transfer payments such as Social Security and unemployment benefits. The share of the nation's total income accruing to the middle 60 percent of households fell from around half in 1979 to a bit above 40 percent in 2007. Virtually all of this decline (and the decline in the share of income held by the bottom 20 percent of households) is reflected in the increase for the top 1 percent, whose share of the nation's total income more than doubled." [Click here for more.]

In Cautious Times, Banks Flooded With Cash
Eric Dash and Nelson D. Schwartz (NYT)
October 24, 2011

"Bankers have an odd-sounding problem these days: they are awash in cash. Droves of consumers and businesses unnerved by the lurching markets have been taking their money out of risky investments and socking it away in bank accounts, where it does little to stimulate the economy. Though financial institutions are not yet turning away customers at the door, they are trying to discourage some depositors from parking that cash with them. With fewer attractive lending and investment options for that money, it is harder for the banks to turn it around for a healthy profit. … The banks are also earning less on the deposits left over to invest. They typically park that money overnight at the Fed for a pittance, or invest it in ultra-safe securities, like bonds backed by the government. But with interest rates so low, the yields on those investments have been crushed. In other words, what bankers call the spread is being squeezed — they are making less money on each dollar they hold. 'It's very hard for us to take deposits and make any meaningful spread,' said William D. Parent, Hyde Park's chief executive. ***In fact, the pressure on spreads poses an even greater threat to the banks' earnings than the new [financial regulations]****. Oliver Wyman, a financial services consulting firm, estimates that the industry's deposit revenue will shrink by more than $55 billion from its precrisis levels, dwarfing the roughly $15 billion in lost fee income from debit card and overdraft restrictions."*
[Click here for more.]

Fed Ties Purse Strings of Banks
Dan Fitzpatrick and Victoria McGrane (WSJ – subscription required)
October 27, 2011

"[J.P. Morgan Chase & Co]. recently approached U.S. regulators about potentially buying back more of its shares but the giant bank was told it might not get the answer it wanted, according to people familiar with the situation. J.P. Morgan decided against submitting a formal application following the Fed's discouraging feedback. But it isn't the only big, healthy bank clashing with regulators over how it may spend its money.

MetLife Inc., whose holding company operates under a banking charter, said this week that its request to raise its dividend for the first time in four years had been rejected by the Federal Reserve. The conflicts point to rising tensions between the biggest banks and their overseers regarding how much capital is necessary at a time of economic weakness, tumultuous markets, new regulations and investor flight from bank stocks." *Click here for more.*

Regulator Flagged SAC Stock Trades
Jenny Strasburg and Jean Eaglesham (WSJ – subscription required)
October 25, 2011

"Wall Street regulators expressed mounting concern about SAC Capital Advisors' trading over a nine-year period, detailing in dozens of confidential reports suspicions that the hedge-fund firm might have profited from insider information. The reports, submitted by the regulators to the Securities and Exchange Commission, don't allege wrongdoing by SAC, one of the world's best-known hedge-funds, which is overseen by billionaire founder Steven A. Cohen." Click here for more.

Ex-Goldman Director to Face Criminal Charges
October 26, 2011
Reuters

"A former Goldman Sachs director, who also was once the global head of elite consultancy McKinsey & Co, will surrender to the FBI on Wednesday to face criminal insider trading-related charges, a person familiar with the investigation said. Rajat Gupta, one of the most prominent business executives to be caught up in the government's wide-ranging insider-trading probe, had been named by prosecutors as an unindicted co-conspirator in the criminal case against hedge fund tycoon Raj Rajaratnam earlier this year." Click here for more.

'Incensed' Moynihan Fights BofA Critics in Letter Campaign
Bloomberg
October 26, 2011

"Bank of America Corp. Chief Executive Officer Brian T. Moynihan says he's 'incensed' by public criticism of his company and is pushing back by reminding local leaders of its contributions to their economies. Moynihan, 52, told employees in a global town hall meeting last week from the firm's Charlotte, North Carolina headquarters that the 'place to win the battle' over the bank's battered public image was at the state and municipal level." Click here for more.

BNY Mellon accused of defrauding MassPRIM over forex
Douglas Appell (Pensions and Investment)
October 26, 2011

"Bank of New York Mellon was named Wednesday in an administrative complaint filed by William F. Galvin, Massachusetts' secretary of the commonwealth, alleging that the bank defrauded the $50 billion Massachusetts Pension Reserves Investment Management board, Boston, through 'undisclosed markups in foreign currency exchanges over a decade.'" Click here for more.

Prince - Trickle down tax cuts: A broken record
Lew Prince, managing partner of Vintage Vinyl, an independent music store in St. Louis (The Hill)
October 27, 2011

"I'm one of those 'job creators' members of Congress profess to admire so much. Thirty-two years ago, my partner and I started a small business with $300 worth of old records and a booth at the local farmers market. We're now the biggest independent music store in St. Louis and employ 22 people. Our annual revenue is around $2 million. We're a classic American success story. Our incomes are typical for small business owners, which means we're not in the top tax brackets. We've always been at or below the 25 percent tax bracket. So we're trying to figure out how the new tax proposal from Rep. Dave Camp (R-Mich.), chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, is supposed to help small businesses like ours create jobs. Rep. Camp wants to cut top individual and corporate tax rates from 35 percent to 25 percent. He would reward U.S. multinational corporations that have gamed the system with a 5.25 percent tax rate on U.S. profits they have disguised as "foreign" earnings. All this will be great for gigantic multinational corporations,

Wall Street and the fat cats who attend those $1,000-a-plate and up political fundraisers. It will be great for the corporate lobbyists gaming our political system every day. It won't help small business, and it won't help America." *Click here for more.*

Johnson - Mr. Hoenig Goes to Washington
Simon Johnson (Baseline Scenario)
October 27, 2011

"To fix a broken financial system – and to oversee its proper functioning in the future – you need experts. Finance is complex and the people in charge need to know what they are doing. One common problem, which is also manifest in the United States today, is that many of the leading experts still believe in some version of business-as-usual. At the height of the Great Depression, Marriner S. Eccles was summoned to Washington from Utah – where he was a regional banker. He helped remodel the Federal Reserve through the Banking Act of 1935 and then became its first independent chairman – the Fed board had previously been chaired by the Treasury Secretary. Eccles was not a fan of big Wall Street firms and their speculative stock market operations; rather he understood and identified with smaller banks that lent to real businesses. Eccles was the right kind of expert for the moment. Who has the expertise to play this kind of role in our immediate future? Tom Hoenig, formerly president of the Kansas City Fed, has long been a strong voice for financial sector reform along sensible lines. Within the official sector, he has spoken loudest and clearest on the most important defining issue: Too Big To Fail is simply too big. And last week he took a major step towards a more prominent role, when he was announced as the administration's nominee to become vice-chair at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)." *Click here for more.*

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Upcoming Events

From AFR:

Evaluating The Volcker Rule

Save the Date: Wednesday, November 9th, 9:30 to 1:00
Location – Hart Senate Office Building, Room 902

Presented By: Americans for Financial Reform

You are invited to join Americans for Financial Reform for a discussion of the recently released Volcker Rule proposal. This centerpiece rule of the Dodd-Frank Act is designed to separate risky proprietary speculation from core functions of the financial system, and will affect our largest banks in areas ranging from compensation to investment management. The discussion will feature outside experts as well as key Congressional architects of the rule. Speakers will consider potential benefits of the Volcker Rule for the stability and effectiveness of the financial system and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed rule.

Confirmed Speakers (Additional May Be Added)

Keynote address - **Senator Jeff Merkley of Oregon**

Other participants - **Anthony Dowd**: Chief of Staff, Office of Paul A. Volcker; Former General Partner, Charter Oak Capital Partners, **Nick Dunbar**: Former technical editor of "Risk" magazine and founder of "Life and Pensions"; author of "Inventing Money: the Story of Long-Term Capital Management" and "The Devil's Derivatives", **Erik Gerding:** Associate Professor, University of Colorado Law School, and author of forthcoming "Bubbles, Law, and Financial Regulation", **William Hambrecht**: Founder, Chairman, and CEO, W.R. Hambrecht & Co., Investment Banking, **Kimberley Krawiec**: Katherine Robinson Everett Professor of Law, Duke University Law School; expert on "rogue traders", and **Matthew Richardson**: Charles Simon Professor of Applied Financial Economics, New York University Stern School of Business; Editor of "Regulating Wall Street: Dodd-Frank and the New Architecture of Global Finance"

Please RSVP to Erin Kilroy (erin@ourfinancialsecurity.org) at Americans for Financial Reform

From Ad Busters.org:

OCTOBER 29 – #ROBINHOOD GLOBAL MARCH

This is a proposal for the general assemblies of the Occupy movement.

Eight years ago, on February 15, 2003, upwards of 15 million people in sixty countries marched together to stop President Bush from invading Iraq … a huge chunk of humanity lived for one day without dead time and glimpsed the power of a united people's movement. Now we have an opportunity to repeat that performance on an even larger scale.

On October 29, on the eve of the G20 Leaders Summit in France, let's the people of the world rise up and demand that our G20 leaders immediately impose a 1% #ROBINHOOD tax on all financial transactions and currency trades. Let's send them a clear message: We want you to slow down some of that $1.3-trillion easy money that's sloshing around the global casino each day – enough cash to fund every social program and environmental initiative in the world. Take this idea to your local general assembly and join your comrades in the streets on October 29.

From National Nurses United:

National Nurses United day of action to tax Wall Street
November 3
Rally at Lafayette Square
11:30 A.M.
March to the U.S. Treasury Department
Lobby on Capitol Hill at 3:00 PM

From The New Bottom Line: Schedule of Direct Actions Demanding that Wall Street "Pay US Back"

Honolulu	November 5-7	All-day conference kicking off New Bottom Line campaign in Hawaii, clergy leaders speaking at more than dozen Oahu churches. Holding events/actions during Asian Pacific Economic Conference.

SEC

October 2011

When: Monday, October 31 (9 a.m.)
What: Advisory Committee on Small and Emerging Companies **-** See Sunshine Act Notice
Where: SEC Headquarters **-** 100 F Street NE, Room L-006 (Multipurpose Room) **-** Washington, DC 20549
Contact: Office of the Secretary (202) 551-5400

November 2011

When: Wednesday, November 2 (9 a.m.)
What: Open Meeing (Oral Argument) **-** See Sunshine Act Notice
Where: SEC Headquarters **-** 100 F Street NE, Auditorium **-** Washington, DC 20549
Contact: Office of the Secretary **-** (202) 551-5400

When: Tuesday, November 8 (10 a.m.)
What: Financial Reporting Series Roundtable - See Sunshine Act Notice
Where: SEC Headquarters - 100 F Street NE, Room L-006 (Multipurpose Room) - Washington, DC 20549
Contact: Office of the Secretary - (202) 551-5400

CFTC

No pertinent meetings scheduled as of 10/28/11

FTC

The Federal Trade Commission is holding a series of roundtable events to gather information on possible consumer protection issues that may arise in the sale, lease, or financing of motor vehicles. The first event took place in Detroit, Michigan on April 12, 2011. The FTC's second motor vehicle roundtable took place at St. Mary's University School of Law, One Camino Santa Maria, San Antonio, Texas on August 2 - 3, 2011. **The FTC's third motor vehicle roundtable will take place at the FTC Conference Center, 601 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., on November 17, 2011. Topics for the third roundtable will include motor vehicle leasing and other issues. Additional information for the third roundtable will be posted on this webpage, when available.**

Having access to a motor vehicle is essential for many consumers to fulfill their daily obligations. It imposes a substantial expense, however, and accordingly most consumers seek to lease or finance the purchase of a new or used car. As the nation's con

Capitol Hill

Senate

Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee

At 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 3, 2011

in Room 538, Dirksen Senate Office Building, the COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS will meet in OPEN SESSION to conduct a hearing entitled "Empowering and Protecting Servicemembers, their Families and Veterans in the Consumer Financial Marketplace". The witnesses will be: **Ms. Hollister K. Petraeus**, Assistant Director for Service Member Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau; **Ms. Bonnie Spain**, Executive and CEO, Rushmore Consumer Credit Resource Center; and **Admiral Charles S. Abbott, Retired**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. Additional witnesses may be announced at a later

Senate Committee on Finance

No pertinent hearings/markups scheduled as of 10/28/11

Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

HEARING RESCHEDULED TO NOVEMBER 3rd * Excessive Speculation and Compliance with the Dodd-Frank Act**

Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations - Watch this hearing live!

Thursday, October 6, 2011
09:30 AM
Dirksen Senate Office Building, room SD-342

In light of the CFTC announcement that it will be voting on a final rule on October 18, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations' hearing, "Excessive Speculation and Compliance with the Dodd-Frank Act," scheduled for Thursday, October 6, 2011, has been RESCHEDULED TO THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD at 9:00 a.m. in SD-342.

The Subcommittee plans to hold a hearing on speculation in the commodities markets and implementation of the Dodd-Frank Act's provisions on speculative position limits for futures, options, and swap contracts for oil and other commodities. Hearing witnesses will include a panel of experts and the Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. A final witness list will be available Tuesday, November 1, 2011.

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

No pertinent hearings/markups scheduled as of 10/28/11

House

House Committee on Financial Services

Hearing entitled "The Obama Administration's Rental Assistance Demonstration Proposal"
Insurance, Housing and Community Opportunity
November 3, 2011 2:00 PM in 2128 Rayburn HOB

Hearing entitled "H.R. ______, the Private Mortgage Market Investment Act"
Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises
November 3, 2011 10:00 AM in 2128 Rayburn HOB

Joint Hearing entitled "Fraud in the HUD HOME Program"
Insurance, Housing and Community Opportunity
Oversight and Investigations
November 2, 2011 2:00 PM in 2128 Rayburn HOB

Hearing entitled "The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau: The First 100 Days"
Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit
November 2, 2011 10:00 AM in 2128 Rayburn HOB

Field hearing entitled "Regulatory Reform: Examining How New Regulations are Impacting Financial Institutions, Small Businesses and Consumers"
Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit
October 31, 2011 10:30 AM in Wausau, WI

House Small Business Committee

No pertinent hearings/markups scheduled as of 10/28/11

Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight and Regulations

No pertinent hearings/markups scheduled as of 10/28/11

House Committee on Agriculture

No pertinent hearings/markups scheduled as of 10/28/11

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

No pertinent hearings/markups scheduled as of 10/28/11

Subcommittee on TARP, Financial Services and Bailouts of Public and Private Programs

No pertinent hearings/markups scheduled as of 10/28/11

From the Brennan Center for Justice:

Fighting Foreclosure: A Congressional Briefing on the Ongoing Need for Foreclosure Legal Assistance

Join the Brennan Center for Justice on November 4, 2011 to discuss the need for expanding legal services for distressed homeowners in foreclosure. The Brennan Center will unveil a multimedia video series entitled *Fighting Foreclosure: Why Legal Assistance Matters** along with recent data from state court systems on the volume of unrepresented homeowners facing foreclosure. The series – based on interviews conducted around the country – features the perspectives of homeowners, legal aid lawyers, housing counselors and community leaders. We hope you can join us and bring your perspective in advocating for foreclosure relief to the discussion. See below for details.

When: Friday, November 4, 2011 at 2pm

Where: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center room SVC 210

This briefing is hosted by the office of Senator Tom Harkin. RSVP to Molly Alarcon at *Molly.Alarcon@nyu.edu or 202-249-7194.*

From CFA:

1. **You are invited to attend CFA's Eighth Annual Consumer Advocates' High-Cost Credit and Payday Loan Summit on Wednesday, November 30 in Washington, DC.** This is a great opportunity to meet with state and national advocates from around the country to learn the latest on research, industry developments, enforcement, and advocacy in the fight against predatory small lending. The Summit features a town-hall meeting with Rick Hackett and staff from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau as well as expert speakers from national and state groups, enforcement agencies and law schools. Everyone contributes to the learning at the Summit. We hope you can join us.

   If you have new reports, advocacy pieces, cartoons, testimony ---- anything you would like to share with everyone, please send either the document or URL to Sean Naron at CFA, snaron@consumerfed.org. Deadline for registration and notebook submissions is Thursday November 17!

2. The Consumer Federation of America invites you to participate in our twenty-fourth annual Financial Services Conference, which will be held December 1-2, 2011, at the Embassy Suites Convention Center Hotel in Washington, DC. Congressman Barney Frank, Congresswoman Judy Biggert, SEC's Chairman Mary Schapiro and David Wessel, Bureau Chief of the Wall Street Journal, have already accepted our invitations to give keynote addresses.

   For more information about conference issues, see the attached brochure. For further information on the conference and to register online, please use the link below: Go to website