

From: Stewart P Johnson
Subject: Electronic Fund Transfers

Comments:

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as a consumer regarding the issue of mandatory overdraft fees that are charged by banks. I had a personal experience that revealed to me how unfair these fees can be. When my older daughter went off to college, she had a bank debit card and we were to put her monthly allowance in her account. She was at NYU, and New York City afforded her a few too many opportunities to spend money. She very rapidly depleted her account until nothing was left. I was not aware of this situation until I started to receive a pile of postcards in the mail announcing each overdraft. By the time, I received the first postcard and told her to stop using her debit card, she had made sixteen transactions which, with an overdraft fee of \$30 each, left me with a bill from the bank of \$480. I would much rather that she had not been afforded this "protection" and that her transactions had simply been rejected by the bank. When I told my friends of this experience, many recounted similar stories indicating that this is a widespread consumer problem which can be addressed simply by not allowing the banks to give unwanted overdraft protection. Thank you for your time.

Stewart P. Johnson, Ph.D.
Duke University Medical Center