

From: Kecia Gifford Lifton
Subject: Electronic Fund Transfers

Comments:

Any power you can give the consumer to protect themselves against outrageous bank fees is a positive move, particularly in light of recent events in the banking industry.

Unfortunately, this measure doesn't go far enough. Banks are using deceptive practices to increase the fees they are able to charge their customers. For example, my bank, Bank of America, shows a positive balance in my account, even if I am overdrawn, because the bank transfers more money to my checking account than is necessary. I don't know I am overdrawn unless I specifically check the balance of my overdraft account, which is a separate account. This account saves me fees from bouncing checks, because it is a revolving credit line, but it has a high rate of interest. Sometimes I am not aware that I am overdrawn until I have been charged high amounts of interest - because my checking account shows a positive balance I don't even think to look at the overdraft account.

I am sure there are many other examples of policies and strategies the banks implement to take advantage of their customers...credit card late payment fees, "excessive transaction" account fees, etc. etc. Now is the time to bring real reform to all corners of this industry.

Thank you for your attention.
Kecia Gifford Lifton