

Tom Pentecost . Amish Country Originals . 17805 State Route 9 SE . Snohomish, WI 98296

Feb 11, 2011

Secretary Jennifer Johnson
Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
20th Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20551

Dear Secretary Johnson,

As the owner of a store that has been struggling for a few years, I am encouraged that the Federal Reserve is considering passing a twelve-cent limit on debit card swipe fees. My business is called Amish Country Originals, and annual sales here have fallen from a high of \$250,000 prior to 2009 to just above \$100,000. On top of those losses, I have to deal with losing a percentage of each sale to the processing company when my customers use a debit or credit card. I know that I am not the only small business owner paying too much in fees, and this is why this ruling is so important.

I do not have any fulltime workers in my employ although I do bring on part-time help when necessary, typically during the busy summer season. Therefore, I handle all aspects of the business, including sales, inventory and accounting. I was keenly aware that my processing company was overcharging on the debit and credit card fees. When my three-year contract expired, I decided to switch to a new company. This company offered lower rates and a more secure machine. What I did not realize was that in the tiny print of my contract, I would have to pay my old company \$500 because I had not switched during the required sixty-day window.

This is just an example of the outlandish fees these companies are currently getting away with charging. There is simply nothing small companies like mine can do to combat this problem, as everyone wants to pay with plastic these days. Please endorse the twelve cent ruling and continue to monitor the practices of the credit and debit card processing companies.

Regards,

Tom Pentecost

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Pentecost". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "T".