

cddoc@lhtek.com on 07/30/2008 01:00:11 PM

Subject: Regulation AA

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for this opportunity to voice concerns regarding credit card company practices.

I am a licenced attorney, but I have served as a Family Law Associate Judge for the past 16 years. I am 49 years of age, and I am a single mother raising two (2) teenage boys. I have been on my own since the age of 17, attending college, then law school. I have always "done the right thing", paying my own way in life - paying my own bills... until recently.

In May, two (2) credit card companies through which I hold cards raised their interest rates from 9.99% to 24.99% and 29.99%. I immediately contacted their companies, both by telephone, then by letter, advising that I could not possibly make the payments they were now expecting. I was advised by a young man from Washington Mutual that that was not their problem, and he then suggested I call Consumer Credit Counseling, giving me an 800 number to call. I wrote numerous letters to FIA Card Services, explaining that I could not possibly make the payments expected, and that I would gladly sign a judgment for whatever is owed, with the reasoning that I would likely be given a better interest rate through the court system than the 29.99% interest rate they were imposing. I have yet to hear from anyone by written correspondence, but instead, I have received numerous calls at my place of employment. Both companies have left detailed messages on the voice mail system at work, most of which have been retrieved by my administrative assistant.

As a consequence, I recently requested help and advice from a fellow lawyer. He attempted to return a call from someone who left their name and number at my office, and they would not speak to him. When he stated his name and purpose, they hung up on him.

Until recently, I have been paying an amount I could afford, but I will cease all payments to these companies as of this next month. There is no need for me to continue to pay a minimal amount, when finance charges are being added, and the interest rates are too high for anyone to EVER overcome. If I attempt to negotiate a lump sum settlement amount, it is my understanding that I will then be taxed for the "deficit gain", if any, when reported to the IRS by the credit card company.

While I have always been opposed to delinquency in paying bills, as well as the filing of bankruptcy, I see no clear options. I am currently at the mercy of the credit card companies. I cannot pay because I can no longer afford the interest rates and charges. I do not qualify for bankruptcy, and I would not be able to bring myself to file even if I did. A settlement of some sort would require assistance from someone in authority from the card company, which would still likely result in a financially burdensome tax consequence. My only option is to cease paying, which will likely result in a lawsuit being filed against me, and a poor credit rating being assessed.

I obtained a good education. I have always paid my bills and taken care of my family. I have never been on government assistance of any kind. I have never asked for a "hand out". While others around me received a stimulus check this past year, I did not. As President Bush is signing a bill into law that is intended to give certain people and/or companies and banks some relief from the mortgage crisis, I am timely making my house payment each month. Like most of us, I am continuing to watch fuel and food costs rise. Based on my political views, I never thought in my 49 years I would ask or expect our government leaders to come forward and do something, but something's got to give!

Again, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to voice my concerns and frustration. As a citizen, I so appreciate YOUR government leadership in researching this issue, and I am hopeful that you will have the wisdom and knowledge to provide us all with much needed answers and/or relief.

Diane Dockery
Associate Judge
900 7th Street, Room 150
Wichita Falls, Texas 76301
(940) 766-8110