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Comments:

I hold a Masters' degree and majored in Business for my Bachelors'. I used to work for a major N.A. bank. I have technical knowledge of banking systems more so than my peers or the general public, and even some highly-paid bank executives. I am more aware of gimmicks than the layperson and have never, ever had an overdraft in my 12 years of banking with at least seven different National Association banks, Federal Savings Banks, and Credit Unions. So how is it possible that such an extra-ordinarily banking-systems savvy person such as myself was scammed of over \$800 in overdraft fees by CharterOne Bank (now Citizens Bank) from a new checking account I opened in Albany, New York when I used my debit card for all of my purchases during the infamous "Black Friday" shopping day after Thanksgiving? I used the card for small, \$2 transactions for batteries to groceries and other items over \$100. Because I assumed every bank processes debit card authorizations the same way by decreasing the available account balance by the amount authorized immediately, at the point-of-sale/merchant authorization. The purchases I was making with my debit MasterCard were not making any immediate impact to my AVAILABLE checking account balance, as they usually did with every other bank I've used. To my horror

when most debit transactions posted on Monday night/Tuesday, I had overspent my account balance by just a few dollars. CharterOne manipulated the order of these electronic debit card transactions so as to maximize their \$39 fee for EACH swipe of my debit card - so that the \$2 batteries I bought on sale ended up costing me \$41. The fees added up to an amount I could not deposit right away until the next payday... meanwhile CharterOne Bank added more fees for every four days the account was in overdrawn status. I was horrified that I would not be able to get out of this "hole" for the next 2-3 bi-monthly paychecks. I immediately got a cash advance from my credit card to cover all the overdrafts and bank fees to stop the vicious cycle of fees. When I deposited the cash advance into my overdrawn checking account, the teller advised me that it was normal business practice for CharterOne Bank to approve transactions even when funds are not available or the account is negative up to a certain amount. He told me that if I used my ATM card to withdraw \$20 cash at that moment while my account was overdrawn, I would get the \$20 cash... with another \$39 "overdraft" fee. This is lending at its most basic definition, and thus overdraft business practices must be, at minimum aligned with the same usury laws for credit cards and installment loans. Thankfully, I had the option to borrow the overdrawn amount and fees from a credit card with more reasonable rates than what the \$39 "fee" for the \$2 battery debit purchase would equate to in APR. Clearly, this is parallel with shark loans and borderlines extortism - something everyone assumes doesn't exist anymore in legal business entities. Clearly, there is nothing stopping these banks from essentially charging interest rates of over 100%.