Rein In Wall Street

Protecting Our Consumer Cop

Consumers in Oregon and across the country should be confident that their assets are safe. They should be able to know that they’re not being ripped off by credit card companies or tricked into unfair financial practices.

Unfortunately, we’ve learned this isn’t always the case. That’s why we helped spearhead the creation of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, an agency tasked with just one job—protect all consumers.

Now, with your help we’ll continue to support their work and make sure some members of Congress and the Trump administration don’t dismantle the Consumer Bureau. We’re calling on our senators to stand with us, gathering and sharing consumer stories, and bringing attention to the only agency protecting consumers like us.

You Deserve Strong Financial Security

In five short years, the Consumer Bureau has returned nearly $12 billion to more than 29 million consumers harmed by wrongdoers in the financial marketplace.

From debt collectors to credit card companies, consumers across the country are at risk of becoming financially insecure because of shady practices. But with our consumer cop on the financial beat, we’re working to hold these wrongdoers accountable. What seems like a commonsense agency, one that works to protect everyone—from service members to the elderly to students—could be seriously weakened or even eliminated.

OSPIRG and members are working diligently to make sure wrongdoers can’t get away with hurting consumers by making our voices heard and defending the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Working to Protect All Consumers—The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau protects all consumers. Director Richard Cordray (left) and our Consumer Program Director Ed Mierzwinski are standing up to the Trump administration and some members of Congress who want to roll back the Consumer Bureau’s rules and protections.

Ban Roundup Now

You’re Safeguarding Our Crops, Families, Rivers

It’s absurd that the weed killer, Roundup, designed to make our lives easier and food production more efficient should be allowed to put public health at risk.

That’s why, in March, we were thrilled when a district judge dismissed Monsanto’s lawsuit against the California Environmental Protection Agency.

Based on the ruling, consumers will soon be informed of the health risks of this and other products containing glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup.

While this is a step in the right direction, millions of people still use this herbicide.

And an overwhelming majority of our farms and our produce are sprayed with Roundup. Glyphosate and a cocktail of other chemical ingredients in the herbicide are now showing up in our food, bodies and rivers. This could cause serious health risks like cancer, liver disease and reproductive disorders.

With help from our members we’ll keep working to get Roundup off the shelves.

Member Resources

IT’S TIME TO REIN IN WALL STREET
It’s simple: Sign our petition to protect our consumer cop, the CFPB.
www.ospirg.org
OSPIRG News Briefs

Pledge To Be Toxic-Free

Getting Toxic Chemicals Out Of Personal Care Products

Every time we take a shower, wash our hands, or use cosmetics, we shouldn’t be worried that toxic chemicals are entering our bodies.

That’s why, in February, we were pleased to see personal care giant Unilever take a step in the right direction and announce it will increase fragrance ingredient transparency. This decision came after OSPIRG, several other public health groups, and members like you called on Unilever to pledge to be toxic-free.

Then, Procter & Gamble also unveiled a new preservative tracker that will let consumers know which preservatives are included in products like baby wipes, skin care, and hair care products. With your support, we’ll continue our campaign to convince personal care companies to pledge to be toxic-free.

Healthcare

How We Can Make Healthcare Work Better

It’s no secret that there are plenty of problems with health care in America. But the American Health Care Act, introduced in Congress in March, had the potential to severely damage the nation’s health insurance markets, raise costs, and degrade care for millions of Americans. We were pleased to see the plan shelved.

If the President wants to make health care work better, there are a number of ways—like action on skyrocketing prescription drug costs, price transparency for health care services, improving quality of care, and more. We look forward to working with decision-makers at the federal and state levels to implement smart solutions to improve health care for all Americans.

Consumer Protection

Protecting Your Retirement Savings

You might be surprised to learn that retirement advisers don’t have to work in their clients’ best interests, and can steer them toward investments with higher fees or lower returns, just because the adviser might get a bigger payout. This can cost American families as much as $17 billion a year. That’s why, with your support, OSPIRG worked to convince the Department of Labor to propose a rule to require advisers to put their clients’ interests first. Simple, right?

But this key consumer protection is now on the chopping block. In February, President Trump signed an executive order calling for a review of the rule, delaying its implementation and giving opponents another opportunity to weaken or eliminate it. Thousands of members like you joined our call to the Labor Department telling them not to delay the rule, and move forward by implementing it as planned.

Make Volkswagen Pay

Holding VW Accountable For Emissions Scandal

Nearly 18 months after the news of Volkswagen’s (VW) emission scandal broke, the company finally admitted to criminal wrongdoing for defrauding hundreds of thousands of consumers.

Ever since the Environmental Protection Agency discovered VW had designed software to cheat emissions tests, ripping off their customers by leading them to believe they were buying and driving clean, efficient vehicles, members like you have sounded the alarm. And last summer, VW and the Department of Justice reached a $14.7 billion settlement that compensates consumers, cleans up the environment, and deters future wrongdoing.

Now, we’re working to make sure the executives responsible for defrauding consumers and government regulators pay with jail time. The VW scandal is one of the biggest corporate crimes in history. We need to make sure executives and their companies know that crime doesn’t pay.

Be An Advocate For Oregon’s Future

OSPIRG and OSPIRG Foundation gratefully accept bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and life insurance, and gifts of securities to support our work for consumers and toward a healthy democracy in our state.

For information, call 1-800-841-7299x312 or email plannedgiving@ospirg.org
Demanding Affordable Prescription Drug Prices

Like many Oregonians, we’re increasingly concerned about extraordinary increases in prescription drug prices. The 500 percent price hike for EpiPens made headlines last year, and now once-affordable drugs like insulin have more than tripled in price in recent years. But with help from our members, OSPIRG is working to decrease the cost of prescription drug prices for consumers across Oregon.

The Rise Of Drug Prices Affects All Of Us

Rising prescription drug costs are a burden on all Oregonians—not just the patients who depend on them. Through rising health insurance premiums, rising costs for Oregon businesses, and a growing burden on state and federal budgets, we’re seeing challenges and obstacles across all markets.

Since everyone’s picking up the tab, it seems reasonable to ask why drug prices are rising so fast. Pharmaceutical corporations argue their high prices are necessary to cover the costs of researching and developing new treatments, but independent researchers have found that drug prices often have little apparent connection to research and development costs—and in fact, our tax dollars fund much of the basic research that leads to cures. Meanwhile, prices are climbing for medications that have been on the market for decades.

You’re Calling For Accountability

To get to the bottom of skyrocketing prices and hold the prescription drug industry accountable, we’re calling on Oregon lawmakers to pass legislation to help bring down patient costs, require prescription drug corporations to explain their pricing practices, hold drug companies accountable for unreasonable prices, and disclose their prices to consumers in their advertisements. With your support, we’ve put together a broad coalition of unlikely allies, including nurses, teachers, pharmacists, hospitals and the health insurance industry to push for action on drug costs. We can all agree on one thing: Prescription drug costs are simply too high.

Unfortunately, the pharmaceutical industry is lobbying hard in Salem to keep us in the dark and prevent any challenge to their pricing practices. Stay tuned for ways that you can help demonstrate public support for reasonable prescription drug costs by visiting our website at www.ospirg.org.

Thanks To You

Dear OSPIRG member,

Summer is a special season here at OSPIRG. Sure, the sun and warmer weather seem to give everyone an added spring in their step. But what gets me really excited is when we run our summer door-to-door canvass.

This year, we’ll be connecting with folks about our work to rein in Wall Street. After the 2008 economic collapse it became even more clear that we need a watchdog agency devoted to creating and enforcing fair, clear and transparent rules to protect all consumers. So in 2010 we created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which has already returned nearly $12 billion to more than 29 million consumers wronged by companies that have broken the law—that’s something worth celebrating.

But now, the Trump administration and some members of Congress want to weaken the Consumer Bureau or eliminate it altogether. We won’t stand for it, and we know you won’t either. So we’ll keep fighting for our consumer cop by putting the pressure on senators to stop any bills that weaken the Consumer Bureau.

None of this work would be possible without the support of members like you. Together, we can keep winning real results for people in Oregon and across the country.

Charlie Fisher, Advocate
info@ospirg.org

AFFORDABLE DRUG PRICES NOW—Oregonians are demanding affordable prescription drug prices and OSPIRG will continue to support that effort by calling on Oregon lawmakers to help bring down the costs and hold prescription drug companies accountable.
Progress For Antibiotics

For years, OSPIRG has been working to end the overuse of antibiotics on factory farms. This overuse of antibiotics is a big driver in the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, known as “super-bugs,” which make it harder and harder to cure even simple infections. Today, more than 70 percent of antibiotics sold in the U.S. are for use on livestock and poultry.

That’s why, in recent years, we’ve been pressuring fast food chains to phase out meat raised with routine antibiotics. Because of our work, big restaurant chains like McDonald’s, Wendy’s, Taco Bell, and most recently KFC have committed to phase out medically important antibiotics from their chicken supply. And this February, Tyson Foods announced its plan to eliminate the use of antibiotics in its chicken.

There’s still more work to do. In Oregon we’re working to pass a bill in the state Legislature that would ban the overuse of antibiotics on factory farms. In this effort, we’ve enlisted major medical players like Oregon Health & Science University and the Oregon Medical Association in addition to small farmers, health professionals, and OSPIRG members like you. And we know this is possible: California, and soon to be Maryland, have recently passed laws banning the overuse of antibiotics on farms. While the pharmaceutical industry and big farms are doing everything they can to maintain the status quo, we know we can protect our life-saving medicines with your continued support.