

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 14, 2025

Acting Director Russell Vought
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
1700 G St. NW
Washington DC 20552

Dear Acting Director Vought,

On April 30, 2025, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) asked a court to vacate the agency's recently released rule to remove medical debt from consumer credit reports. We write to request the information you relied on in making that determination, including any communications with debt collection agencies that stand to profit from this change. Millions of Americans are struggling to make ends meet, and that problem is compounded by the inclusion of burdensome and often inaccurate medical debt on their credit reports. CFPB's change in policy will mean more families face economic hardship because of medical events.

Medical debt collections information is often inaccurate, and [studies](#) show that it is not useful in determining a consumer's ability to repay other debts. One major credit scoring company, VantageScore, has [stopped](#) using medical debt in its newer models entirely. Almost [half](#) of all medical bills contain at least one error, and almost [half](#) of nonprofit hospitals have routinely and mistakenly billed patients who were eligible for free or discounted care. People often receive collection notices for debts they did not owe, in the wrong amount, or that should have been covered by insurance—but still end up experiencing long-lasting damage to their credit scores. Listing medical debt on a person's credit report drives down their credit score, which hurts their ability to purchase a car, buy a home or rent an apartment, get utility service, start a business, or access other banking services. This has profound effects on families that can last generations. To make matters worse, medical debt is the [most common](#) reason debt collectors contact consumers; the debt collection industry makes [one-fourth](#) of its annual revenue from health care debt. Including medical debt on credit reports makes consumers more vulnerable to predatory debt collection practices.

Medical debt on credit reports also blocks working families from access to credit that they would be able to repay. The CFPB found that people who had all their medical debts completely removed from their credit reports experienced an average credit score increase of [20 points](#), in some cases elevating families into a higher credit score tier.

In response to growing data that medical debt is not a good indicator of creditworthiness, states across the country have acted to ban the inclusion of medical debt on credit reports. And on January 7, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) issued a final [rule](#) to remove medical debt from consumer credit reports. The rule would remove an estimated \$49 billion in medical bills from the credit reports of 15 million of Americans, prohibit credit reporting

companies from sharing medical debt information with lenders, and bar lenders from considering medical debt in underwriting decisions. It was designed to help the millions of Americans who are struggling to make ends meet, by lowering costs and increasing access to affordable credit for working families without affecting the predictive value of their credit reports. The rule would also help reduce the effects of structural racism and other prejudices. People of color are disproportionately harmed by the inclusion of medical debt on credit reports. Meanwhile, adults with a disability and new moms are more than twice as likely to carry medical debt.

Despite the critical importance of the medical debt rule, on April 30, the CFPB [filed](#) a joint motion with the industry groups that oppose the rule, petitioning the court to vacate it—lining the pockets of corporations off the backs of American consumers. Given the substantial evidence that the CFPB's rule was well-considered and would help consumers without reducing the accuracy of their credit scores, we write to request that the CFPB make public all information relied on by the agency in its decision to drop the rule, including any communications with the debt collection industry, by July 28, 2025. We specifically request that CFPB publicly publish all data about how medical debt relates to key economic indicators, including:

- **Barriers to home and car ownership**, including challenges getting loans or not being approved to rent or lease,
- **Paying higher premiums** for auto, homeowner's and other types of insurance,
- **Losing job opportunities** as a result of credit reporting on background checks,
- **Obstacles to starting small businesses** because of challenges with securing loans,
- **Paying more for everyday services** such as household utilities or cell phone contracts

We are particularly concerned about the outsize impact that medical debt has on the credit scores of seniors, veterans, new parents, people with disabilities, cancer patients and survivors, and small business owners.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



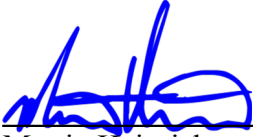
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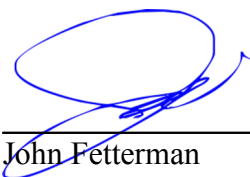
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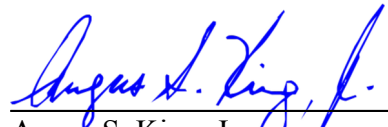
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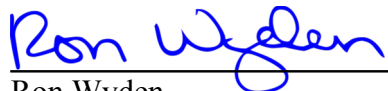
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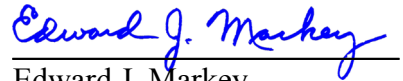
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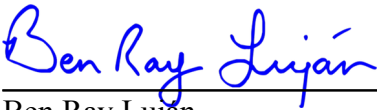
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