Consumer Protection

Defend The Consumer Bureau

The Great Recession made it clear: We need a watchdog agency on Wall Street, devoted to creating and enforcing fair, clear and transparent rules to protect consumers.

That’s why we helped create the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—to be our consumer cop on the financial beat. In just six years, it’s been a huge success, returning nearly $12 billion to more than 29 million people who were ripped off by companies that broke the law.

But with the Trump administration and some in Congress looking to weaken or eliminate the Consumer Bureau, CoPIRG sprang into action. With your support, we’re holding the line to defend the Consumer Bureau.

In June, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a massive package of cuts and rollbacks to financial protections for everyday people. We’re calling it the Wrong CHOICE Act, and if it becomes law, it would put our economy at risk and dismantle the Consumer Bureau as we know it.

Our Watchdog On Wall St.

That's why we’re doing everything we can to stop this bill in the Senate. Already, we’ve generated more than 45,000 messages to senators from members like you asking them to defend the Consumer Bureau.

Mounting scientific evidence has shown that the combination of chemicals in Monsanto’s Roundup can cause cancer and other serious health problems. These chemicals are even starting to show up in our food, air and water.

And thanks to your support, CoPIRG has been knocking on doors across Colorado, speaking face to face with thousands of people and asking them to make sure our senators vote against these urgent threats.

We don’t simply need the Consumer Bureau to exist—we need to make it even stronger. Together, let’s defend the Consumer Bureau and keep our watchdog on Wall Street.

Ban Roundup

Calling On Communities To Ban Monsanto’s Roundup

The CONSUMER BUREAU PROTECTS VETS—Consumer Program Director Ed Mierzwinski joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars and other allies to release “Protecting Those Who Serve,” CoPIRG Foundation’s report into how the Consumer Bureau protects service members and veterans from abuse in the financial marketplace.

In the absence of federal action, cities and states must take the lead to protect our health and well-being. We were glad to see California add glyphosate to the state’s list of cancer-causing chemicals, and cities like Boulder and others across the country are already in the process of restricting glyphosate in their public spaces. Now, we’re calling on more communities to follow their lead, and ban the use of Roundup.

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That’s why CoPIRG launched a campaign to ban Roundup unless and until independent research proves it’s safe. But Monsanto and others are doing everything they can to discourage decision makers from doing a full and honest assessment of the risks of Roundup. Monsanto has even “ghostwritten” studies affirming Roundup’s safety, asking scientists to “just sign their names” to the studies.

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**Pledge To Be Toxic-Free**

**Finding Out What Is In Our Personal Care Products**

Over the past year, your support has helped us make great strides in our efforts to get the makers of personal care product to either disclose or remove toxic ingredients from their products.

After CoPIRG helped push Procter & Gamble and Unilever to take steps to improve ingredient transparency, SC Johnson—maker of products like Glade—responded to our call for change. The company agreed to remove galaxolide, a toxic chemical associated with developmental problems, from its products.

Then for Mother’s Day, CoPIRG joined coalition partners to deliver more than 15,000 petitions to L’Oréal, calling on the company to remove chemicals of concern and disclose fragrance ingredients, which can include dangerous chemicals like phthalates and styrene.

**Democracy**

**Red And Blue States Agree On Modernizing The Vote**

A simple, effective way to make our elections more modern, convenient and accurate is being adopted in red and blue states across the country, from Connecticut to Alaska.

It’s called automatic voter registration, and it works like this: Whenever a citizen interacts with a specific government agency, often the DMV, they’re automatically added to the voter rolls unless they opt out.

More and more states are adopting the policy. Thanks to the hard work of our colleagues at Illinois PIRG, this summer Illinois became the tenth state to approve automatic voter registration, passing the bill into law with unanimous, bipartisan support. Now, CoPIRG is working with our members to modernize the vote in Colorado and across the country.

**Zero Waste Colorado**

**Report Finds Compost Key To Denver Sustainability**

Denver’s 20 percent recycling rate is at the bottom of the bin, far behind the national average of 34 percent. But a new report from CoPIRG Foundation and Eco-Cycle found that offering citywide compost collection services could make Denver a recycling leader.

According to the report, Denver residents send more than 190,000 tons of trash to the landfill every year, and more than half of that trash is biodegradable materials like leaves, grass clippings and wasted food, making groundwater pollution and climate change worse as a result.

The report recommended that Denver roll out household compost collection and green compost bins to every Denver household, expand restaurant composting to reduce wasted food at businesses, and include recycling and composting at all apartment buildings.

**Transportation**

**Buses, Walking and Biking Make Progress at Capitol**

For years, Colorado has put nearly no state funding toward providing multi-modal transportation options for Coloradans. But this year, the Colorado House of Representatives passed a bill to invest as much as $200 million in public transit, walking and biking as part of a larger transportation package. To secure that kind of money, CoPIRG built a broad coalition in rural and urban areas, bringing together advocates for the environment, health and aging; bike riders; disability groups; business leaders and others.

“This bill would boost the money Colorado has to maintain our roads and fix our bridges,” said CoPIRG Director Danny Katz, “and make basic investments into critical mobility infrastructure to make our transportation system cleaner, safer, more accessible and more efficient.”

Although the bill died in the Senate, we’re hopeful that the House bill will serve as a model for future transportation investments.

**Be An Advocate For Colorado’s Future**

CoPIRG and CoPIRG 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 1-800-841-7299, ext. 310, or email plannedgiving@copirg.org.
Thanks To You

Dear CoPIRG member,

In the current moment, looking at the American scene feels like using a big cracked mirror. The events of the day emphasize the differences between Americans—between the people living on our coasts and the residents of the great center of our country, between different ethnic groups, between economic strata, between red and blue. But the problems we’re working on here at CoPIRG—the problems that your support helps us address—don’t respect those lines. They affect all of us. And the solutions we strive for would make all of our lives better.

We all need to know that antibiotics are going to be available for us if we’re facing a deadly infection. We all need to be assured that the world’s enormous financial institutions, with their seemingly endless power in the age of digital information, will be held to account for their actions when they endeavor to place profitability ahead of fair practices. We need to make our transportation system make sense, economically and environmentally. We need to evolve from a throwaway society to a reduce/reuse society, cutting way back on the stuff we “need” to begin with.

And we need to be able to look ahead with anticipation, not fear, to the potential for better lives in a safer, healthier world that makes wise use of its unparalleled resources—natural, intellectual and human.

Thanks for being a part of our community.

Danny Katz, Director
info@copirg.org
Stop The Overuse Of Antibiotics

More States & Restaurants Act On Antibiotics

Thanks to the support of our members, CoPIRG has been able to change the marketplace, shifting some of the country’s biggest restaurants—like McDonald’s, Subway and KFC—away from selling meat raised with the routine use of medically important antibiotics.

Now, other chains are responding to keep up with their competitors. We celebrated in June when we learned that Burger King, the fourth-largest restaurant chain in the United States, committed to no longer serve chicken raised on antibiotics important to human medicine by the end of 2018.

Action on this public health threat isn’t limited to the marketplace. Thanks in part to the hard work and leadership of our colleagues at Maryland PIRG, Maryland became the second state in the country (after California) to ban the routine use of antibiotics on livestock and poultry. This is a huge victory that was only possible thanks to our members laying the groundwork of support it took to win. Now, we’re calling on Colorado and other states to follow Maryland and California’s lead, and take action to stop the overuse of antibiotics.

CoPIRG’s Mission
When consumers are cheated or the voices of ordinary citizens are drowned out by special interest lobbyists, CoPIRG speaks up and takes action. We uncover threats to public health and well-being and fight to end them, using the time-tested tools of investigative research, media exposes, grassroots organizing, advocacy and litigation. CoPIRG’s mission is to deliver persistent, result-oriented public interest activism that protects consumers, encourages a fair, sustainable economy, and fosters responsive, democratic government.

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