Rein In Wall Street

Protecting Our Consumer Cop

Consumers in Colorado 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.

CoPIRG 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.

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.
Denver Recycles

CoPIRG Pushes For More Action On Recycling

In November, CoPIRG and Eco-Cycle showed that, despite Denver’s green reputation, the city only recycled or composted 18 percent of the waste it collected from residents in 2015. While that percentage crept up to 20 percent in 2016, it still lagged behind many neighboring communities in Colorado, as well as peer cities across the country like Austin, Texas, Fresno, Calif. and Seattle.

Unfortunately, while every Denver resident has access to a trash bin at home, many don’t have access to a purple recycling bin and only 4 percent have a green compost bin—which is a problem in many cities across the state. So CoPIRG is working to ensure every Coloradan gets purple and green bins, and to eliminate financial penalties for recycling or composting.

Make VW Pay

Colorado Receives $61M From Volkswagen

Volkswagen (VW) misled 9,668 Coloradans into buying so-called “clean” diesel vehicles that were actually equipped with emission cheating software and emitted up to 40 times the legal limit of NOx, a major smog-forming pollutant. In a settlement, the Department of Justice required that VW dedicate $61 million to Colorado for pollution reduction strategies.

CoPIRG and the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project released an analysis identifying that the best use of the money in Colorado would be to build out an electric vehicle charging station grid and upgrade dirty diesel buses to cleaner electric technology. Investing just 15 percent of the money in fast charging stations would cover our interstates and many of our rural state highways, which would eliminate the primary barrier for owning an electric vehicle—worrying you will run out of juice in the mountains.

Because of your support, CoPIRG was able to use our report to lobby the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment, which will make a final decision this summer. Because of your support, CoPIRG was able to use our report to lobby the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment, which will make a final decision this summer.

Consumer Protection

Debt Collectors Are No. 1 Consumer Complaint

Debt collection companies buy the right to collect your debt from companies that no longer want to try to collect it themselves. To make money, they need to get you to pay using any means necessary.

They call incessantly and even contact your friends, family and employers. They threaten legal action hoping to get you to settle. It is no surprise that complaints against debt collectors are the number one complaint made to the Colorado Attorney General. That’s why we’re working to pass the Colorado Fair Debt Collection Practices Act to ensure the Colorado Attorney General has the authority to watchdog the industry and protect consumers from harassment and inaccurate debt collection. As this goes to print, CoPIRG is building and mobilizing a diverse coalition and testifying in order to pass this bill before May when the legislative session ends.

Transportation

New Car-Free Options To The Slopes

This winter, CoPIRG worked to educate Coloradans on the growing number of personal car-free options that exist to get to the ski slopes. In a new guide co-written with Snowriders International, we highlighted 16 options including the Winter Park Express ski train, the state bus system Bustang, and numerous carpool connecting websites.

Our current reliance on personal vehicles is inefficient and pours unnecessary amounts of pollution into the air, hurting the very places Coloradans are driving to to enjoy. As summer arrives, CoPIRG is building the political will to invest in better bus and train options.

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 1-800-841-7290 x312 or email plannedgiving@copi.org
It’s Time To Invest In Better Transportation

Colorado’s transportation system isn’t working. Years of neglecting investments in transit, safe walking and biking infrastructure, and services fuels congestion on state highways and local roads and pollution that contributes to asthma, climate change, and so much more.

You shouldn’t need to drive to access a grocery store or feel safe getting your kid to the school. In order to have safe and affordable transit, walking and biking options, we need to buck the almost 60-year trend of investing limited transit dollars in car-only infrastructure.

Diverse Experts Push For Better Options

For the last six months, and with your support CoPIRG Foundation staff traveled the state to build diverse local coalitions to meet with Transportation Commissioners, the appointed “board of directors” for the Colorado Department of Transportation.

In the meetings, we had transit experts, disability advocates, senior center directors, mayors, public health leaders, school officials and more make the case for deep investments in things like more rural shuttle services that connect seniors to medical appointments, safe routes to schools, and safer rural highway shoulders for bicyclists.

Taking Transit, Walking, Biking Case To The Capitol

In January, leaders at the Capitol called for a focus on transportation funding in the 2017 session. The bills that were introduced were more of the same—roads, roads and more roads.

Thanks to you, CoPIRG led a coalition of transit, walking and biking advocates to make the case for dedicated funding for multi-modal services. The coalition brought in local government leaders and businesses as well.

While the initial bipartisan bill introduced in March, HB17-1242, did make basic investments in transit, walking and biking, powerful special interests called for multiple modes of transit support to be dropped from the bill as soon as it passed its first hearing. As this goes to print, CoPIRG is fighting to ensure the Legislature does not undermine our future transportation system by catering to the road-lobby interests who are responsible for where we are today.

Thanks To You

Dear CoPIRG member,

Summer is a special season here at CoPIRG. 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 Colorado and across the country.

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

VICTORY: KFC Takes Action On Antibiotics

In April, CoPIRG won a major victory for public health when KFC, a company better known for its “finger-lickin’ good” fried chicken than its public health initiatives, committed to stop serving chicken raised on medically important antibiotics by the end of 2018.

For more than a year, CoPIRG and our partners have called on KFC to follow the lead of chains like Subway and McDonald’s and do their part to stop the spread of antibiotic-resistant super bugs. This is huge news, as some estimates suggest this commitment could mean a majority of U.S. chicken is no longer raised with the routine use of antibiotics.

And thanks to members like you, we made it happen. Nearly 475,000 people signed our petition to KFC. Our members made 5,000 personal phone calls to KFC giving a voice to the urgency and importance of this issue. And our followers spoke up on social media to educate friends and family and get them involved.

We’re thrilled to see KFC take this step, and it wouldn’t have been possible without your support. But we know there’s still work to be done to convince more restaurants and our decision-makers to do what it takes to stop the overuse of antibiotics.