

Fair Access to Credit Scores Act

Why is it needed?

This legislation is based on upon the premise that free access to credit scores is necessary to maintaining good credit and that deceptive practices in the credit reporting industry should be eliminated.

- A good credit score can mean a better interest rate on mortgages, bank loans and credit cards, smaller deposits for rent or utilities, and even lower insurance premiums. Unfortunately, many Americans may find monitoring their credit scores to be difficult and expensive because gaining access to reliable and affordable information about their credit scores is not nearly as easy as it should be.
 - See the recent [FTC report](#) showing that 5% of consumers found credit reporting errors that significantly impacted their credit scores. This is ten times the error rate [claimed](#) by industry.
- While Fair Isaac (FICO) credit scores from Equifax currently cost individuals \$15.95, consumers may be tricked into buying inaccurate credit scores from competing credit agencies and/or lured by the false promise of a “free” credit score into signing up for credit monitoring services costing up to \$200 per year.
 - See the CFPB [report](#) showing that, currently, "about one out of five consumers would likely receive a meaningfully different score than would a lender" when purchasing their score, and the CFPB [advisory](#) against paying for credit monitoring.
- This bill was written with input from Consumers Union, U.S. PIRG (Public Interest Research Group), National Consumers Law Center (NCLC) and National Association of Consumer Advocates (NACA).

What does it do?

This bill would include credit scores in free annual credit disclosures already provided by the Fair Credit Reporting Act, as well as:

- **Ensure that the free annual credit score received by consumers is a reliable** score actually used by lenders, rather than an “informational score” of unknown reliability.
- **Give consumers access to all scores generated in the previous year** and stored in their credit files – information that lenders have accessed about the consumer’s individual creditworthiness – instead of consumers seeing only those scores that resulted in ‘adverse actions,’ as provided by current law.
- **Strengthen prohibitions against deceptive marketing** of free or low-cost credit reports and credit scores.
- **Fix a scrivener’s error barring consumers from suing to enforce their rights** regarding the use and disclosure of their credit information.