

Tax-credits To Resolve Consumer Privacy Protection

Posted by Mark Reed on August 16, 2014 ·

Repeated violations of financial privacy via retail and online commerce seems to be the news item of 2014. Efforts to remedy and restore the security of transactions by Albertson's for their patrons is exactly the responsibility the store should take.

I am not a proponent of the Federal Government using situations, such as financial privacy violations, to encroach further into the free-flow of commerce. I do believe the example of Albertson's actions and remedy is the preferred path; and consumers and retailers will agree it has more merit than extensive and restrictive legislation, especially in a struggling economy for retailers.

Local long-term incumbent Congressman Sherman has sent an invitation to a tax-payer sponsored townhall with details of his accomplishments (campaigning at the expense of taxpayers). He mentions he has co-sponsored the Commercial Privacy Bill of Rights Act of 2014. Signing on to a bill requires only a signature, not necessarily participation in drafting it!

So what is the Congressman's track record for addressing the privacy issues via legislation? There is no successful protection of privacy legislation initiated or passed by Brad Sherman. Nor did he participate in 2011 in any of the legislation initiated for this same purpose. Ironically, Senate bill S799, Commercial Privacy Bill of Rights Act of 2011, was a joint effort, an across-the-aisle initiative by then Senator John Kerry and Senator John McCain. It, too, died in committee, despite a Democrat majority. The current bill is S2378, introduced in the Senate on May 21st.

The Commercial Privacy Bill of Rights Act of 2014, the 113th Congress, is now in committee; Brad Sherman is not on the committee considering the legislation: the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade, which is a subcommittee of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. Considering the lack of jobs and manufacturing in his district, one would think Congressman Sherman would serve on the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade. Instead he has opted to serve on Committees which address the needs of his donors and investors.

Therefore, realistically, his participation is great material for PR and that's about all we will see from him on this issue.

Let me reiterate, the path Albertson's has chosen (working with their third-party IT Provider and offering customers, whose payment cards may have been affected, 12 months of complimentary consumer identity protection) **is preferred over complicated and restrictive legislation which would add additional expense to retailers in a down economy.**

Perhaps a nominal and short term tax-credit should be given to retailers who provide an avenue for a discounted consumer identity protection program to their customers.

Mark Reed: An American running for Congress in California's 30th District: Change We Can Trust