

October 23, 1976

INTRODUCTION TO SPEECH FOR ASSOCIATED CREDIT BUREAUS

I KNOW THAT A LOT OF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE VARIOUS PROPOSALS THAT CAME UP IN THE 94TH CONGRESS, THAT WOULD HAVE HAD A GREAT EFFECT ON THE DEBT COLLECTION INDUSTRY. THERE WERE SEVERAL VERSIONS OF THE BILL, ALL KNOWN AS THE DEBT PRACTICES ACT. NOW, WHEN THE FIRST ONE OF THESE CAME UP IN THE HOUSE, THEY HELD HEARINGS ON IT, AND ONE OF THE SPEAKERS WAS YOUR NATIONAL PRESIDENT, MR. JOHN L. SPAFFORD.

A LOT OF TIMES, WHEN HEARINGS ARE HELD ON BILLS THAT WOULD HAVE ANY EFFECT ON AN INDUSTRY, YOU GET A VAST POLARIZATION OF THE WITNESSES. ALL THE WITNESSES FROM THE INDUSTRY ARE AGAINST THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION, AND ALL OF THOSE WHO ARE NOT IN THAT INDUSTRY ARE FOR IT. WELL, IN THIS CASE, IT WAS DIFFERENT.

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MR. SPAFFORD OUTLINED THE POSITION OF THE COLLECTION  
INDUSTRY, AND IT WAS VERY MUCH IN KEEPING WITH WHAT I WOULD  
HAVE SAID. HE SAID NO HONEST DEBT COLLECTOR NEED HAVE ANY FEAR  
OF A LAW THAT REINFORCED THE INDUSTRY'S OWN ETHICS OF CONDUCT  
AT THEIR BEST. HE SAID THAT HE WAS AS MUCH OPPOSED TO HARASSMENT,  
CHARACTER ASSASSINATION, VIOLENCE, COERCION, AND MISREPRESENTATION  
AS ANYBODY, AND I BELIEVE HE WAS, AND THAT YOU ARE TOO.

THE HONEST MEMBERS OF A PROFESSION ARE HURT THE MOST, AND FEEL  
THE HURT MOST DEEPLY, WHENEVER THE ABUSES OF A FEW CROOKS AND THUGS  
BRING DOWN THE INDIGNATION OF SOCIETY UPON AN HONORABLE PROFESSION.

BUT THEN, MR. SPAFFORD TOLD THE HOUSE SUB-COMMITTEE  
ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS WHAT HE, AND THE INDUSTRY OBJECTED TO IN THE  
BILL. HIS MAIN OBJECTION WAS TO A PROVISION THAT SAID THE

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION WOULD HAVE THE POWER TO WRITE REGULATIONS TO ENFORCE THE ACT. HE SAID THE OPPOSITION OF THE COLLECTION INDUSTRY WOULD BE UNSWERVING, AND IT WAS, AND THE PROVISION WAS DROPPED FROM SUBSEQUENT VERSIONS OF THE BILL.

WHEN THE 95TH CONGRESS CONVENES, THIS BILL, IN SOME VERSION WILL BE INTRODUCED--FOR CERTAIN. BUT I DOUBT THAT YOU WILL SEE THE REGULATION SECTION RE-APPEAR, AND I SINCERELY HOPE IT WON'T.

REGULATION HAS BECOME AN ISSUE IN OUR SOCIETY, AND A CONCERN OF THE CONGRESS, AND I WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE BACKGROUND OF THIS ISSUE. YOU KNOW THE FOREGROUND: FILLING OUT PAPERS AND TRYING TO FOLLOW A LOT OF RULES--BUT LETS LOOK BACK AT THE HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT REGULATION.