

CFE Coalition 2016 Policy Agenda: Policy Priorities and Recommended Agenda Items

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The Cities for Financial Empowerment Coalition (CFE Coalition) leverages the resources and regulatory power of municipalities to advance innovation financial empowerment initiatives for individuals and families, creating sustainable pathways to financial stability. Our 15 member cities, representing almost 22 million residents, support effective policies that have the potential to expand economic opportunity and inclusion for our residents and for households throughout the United States. Key policy areas include expanding access to financial products and services; improving financial capability; promoting asset building opportunities; and strengthening and expanding consumer financial protections. Specifically, the CFE Coalition seeks to advance legislative and regulatory reforms across the following policy priorities:

- **Reforming Payday Lending Regulations.** The CFE Coalition recommends:
 - Supporting *strong, transparent Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) regulations and enforcement.*
 - *Reforming payday and short-term alternative loans* to consider basic ability to repay; cycles of repeat borrowing; and misaligned loan durations.
- **Expanding Access to Safe and Affordable Financial Products.** The CFE Coalition recommends:
 - *Strengthening the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) service test* to facilitate account access; examinations should emphasize performance and CRA plans should be tailored to community's specific needs and assets.
 - CFPB establishment of *consistent, narrow standards for bank account screening consumer reporting agencies*, and issue *regulatory guidance for accuracy and error resolution.*
- **Improving Access to Quality Financial Counseling and Coaching.** The CFE Coalition recommends:
 - Federal identification of *high-quality financial counseling models*, and inclusion of *outcome requirements in federal funding streams*, to improve household financial security.
 - *Increasing federal funding of financial counseling* within existing and new programs and funding streams.
- **Combating Excessive Municipal Fines, Fees and Penalties.** The CFE Coalition recommends:
 - *Reducing or eliminating excessive fees and fines*, and *eliminating predatory and discriminatory practices* of private debt collection companies.
 - Allowing low-income individuals to *clear past debt and lift license suspensions through amnesty programs*, and *ending incarceration and license suspensions* as debt collection tools.