



Banking Committee  
March 12, 2018  
Testimony of AARP CT in Support of  
**H.B. No. 5492 and S.B. No. 472**

Submitted by Nora Duncan, State Director

AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization with an age 50+ membership of nearly 38 million nationwide, and approximately 600,000 members here in Connecticut. AARP supports livable communities for all ages, aging in place initiatives and financial opportunity and resiliency for everyone as they work, age and retire. We are before the General Assembly every year on a multitude of bills that support these issues.

I am here to express AARP's support of both House Bill No. 5492, AAC Consumer Credit Reports, Credit Reporting Agencies and Certain Employer Credit Inquiries and Senate Bill No. 472, AAC Fees For Security Freezes on Credit Reports, Notification of a Consumer's Decision to Place or Remove a Security Freeze on a Credit Report and the Duration of Certain Identity Theft Prevention Services Required After a Data Breach.

These bills would give consumers not already covered by the law greater control of their credit reports by allowing them to freeze and unfreeze their credit without paying fees to credit reporting agencies. It is an important step in ensuring that Connecticut consumers are protected from identity theft. Consumers should have the right to control their credit report without cost.

With credit reporting firm Equifax recently revealing that hackers stole financial and consumer data on at least 143 million customers in the U.S., including at least 1.5 million residents of Connecticut, it's quite possible that the personal information — including birth date, Social Security number, driver's license number and address — of many of us in this room has fallen into the hands of criminals.

A security freeze allows an individual to voluntarily restrict access to their credit report so that new lines of credit cannot be opened. Enacting such a freeze can make it more difficult for criminals to steal an identity and open up new credit accounts or loans in someone else's name. A credit report security freeze does not affect a person's credit score, and can be removed at any time. Currently, firms like Equifax can charge many consumers whenever they freeze or unfreeze their credit report, and consumers trying to protect their identities would have to pay each of the 3 credit agencies every time they freeze or unfreeze their credit.

This system of charging consumers just to protect themselves from criminals has to end. Consumers in Connecticut shouldn't have to pay to control access to their credit reports. AARP urges passage of the bills.

I would like to note that AARP is doing its part to prevent fraud and identity theft. We have a volunteer lead community program called the AARP Fraud Watch Network. Our team of volunteers present a program called: The Con Artist Playbook. This program takes a look at the psychology behind ID theft, fraud and scams through actual footage of scammers, insights and advice. This program helps participants arm themselves with the tools they need to keep themselves and their families safe. Many of you have participated with AARP volunteers in one of these sessions and if you haven't I would encourage you to do so.

Nora Duncan  
AARP Connecticut, State Director  
(860)548-3161, [nduncan@aarp.org](mailto:nduncan@aarp.org)