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May 9, 2019

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
United States Senate
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
United States House of Representatives
229 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Sanders and Representative Ocasio-Cortez:

The Credit Union National Association (CUNA) represents America's credit unions and the 115 million members that they serve. On behalf of our members, we are writing in response to a recent proposal to protect Americans from bad actors in the financial market by expanding the duties of the United States Postal Service (USPS) to include the offering of financial products and services.

While credit unions support the goal of protecting consumers, the key to increasing consumer access to affordable financial services is not to stretch the USPS beyond its expertise and introduce needless risk to its balance sheet. Rather, the best options for consumers are already providing high-quality financial services in their communities – local credit unions.

There is no need to pass legislation requiring the USPS to provide products and services it wasn't designed to provide. Instead, we urge you and others in Congress to use your public platform to encourage all consumers, especially the most vulnerable among us, to seek out financial services from a community-based, not-for-profit credit union. As the nation's original consumer protectors, credit unions have a long history of providing affordable, responsible access to banking services. In fact, membership in a credit union provides a consumer with all the protections you are pushing for in your recent proposal:

- **Usury Cap:** The Federal Credit Union Act (FCU Act) and National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) Board has set a usury cap of 18 percent for most financial products, including credit cards. In addition, many state-chartered credit unions are bound by state-established usury caps.
- **Broad Access for Consumers:** The Shared Branching Network and other arrangements have established a wide-ranging, surcharge-free ATM network that allows credit union members to use the branches of other credit unions. This cooperative network ensures members have access their money almost anywhere.
- **Affordable Products and Services:** Credit unions often provide products and services at lower rates and with fewer fees than their bank counterparts. For example, as of December 2018, credit unions' average interest rate for classic credit cards stood at 11.61 percent compared to banks' average interest rate of 13.47 percent.

Congress and credit unions can work together to increase awareness among the unbanked that options for affordable financial services are available and convenient through the credit union system. A part of that effort would be getting the truth out about credit unions: while everyone cannot join the same credit union, there is a credit union for everyone to join.

CUNA has advocated for solutions to help consumers access credit unions, including reduced regulatory burden, increased authority for credit unions to expand product offerings, and increased ability to expand fields of

membership into areas in need of high-quality financial services. If the door to a credit union was open a bit wider, then the underserved and unbanked would be a lot better off.

Again, rather than ask the Postal Service to do something that it was not intended to and is not set up to do, we urge you to use your public platform to highlight the consumer-friendly options credit unions already provide consumers.

On behalf of America's credit unions, thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Nussle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and end.

Jim Nussle
President & CEO