

Want to protect yourself and others from abusive overdraft lending?

Take these three steps:

1. Switch



1. If your bank or credit union engages in abusive overdraft lending, **switch**. Choose a bank that doesn't. Get out of the dark, and educate yourself about the difference between abusive overdraft lending and lower cost options. See the box below and check out the overdraft page at www.responsiblelending.org.

2. Link



2. **Link** your checking account to your savings account or to an overdraft line of credit. You may be able to get an overdraft line of credit at an 18 percent annual interest rate, which is incomparably cheaper than abusive overdraft lending.

3. Call



3. If you've been hit by abusive overdraft fees, you know how unfair the system is. **Call** your representative in the U.S. House today, and ask them to support legislation to stop abusive overdraft lending. Do it for yourself and for others who may not have the resources to fight to get unfair charges reversed. (Go to www.house.gov and enter your zip code to find your representative.)

Abusive overdraft loan *n.* A small, high-cost loan made by a bank or credit union to an account holder who is "in the red," often without the account holder's affirmative consent. The bank recoups the loan amount plus a fee averaging \$34 from the account holder's next deposit. Often marketed inappropriately as "bounce protection," the abusive fee-based overdraft loan should not be confused with cheaper sources of back-up funds for checking accounts, such as a linked savings account or line of credit. While generating fee income for banks, the abusive overdraft loan can make a small purchase, even a sandwich or doughnut, cost the unsuspecting bank customer over \$30.

For more information, go to www.responsiblelending.org.