Dear Neighbor,

Thank you for contacting me to share your views on S. 2155, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief and Consumer Protection Act. As you may be aware, I support many provisions included in S. 2155 that directly help local community banks and credit unions. However, after careful consideration, I voted against this legislation because I could not support provisions that would weaken prudential standards for large financial institutions that helped cause the 2008 financial crisis or undermine some of the critical consumer protections that were put in place after the Great Recession.

Despite my opposition, the Senate passed the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief and Consumer Protection Act in March 2018. This legislation includes many positive reforms. For example, it improves small community lenders' ability to offer lines of credit to communities desperately in need of loans that help home-owners and small businesses succeed. The bill also institutes important consumer protections such as increasing consumers' access to credit freezes and thaws, particularly to consumers who were impacted by the Wells Fargo and Equifax scandals. Finally, it includes an amendment I introduced that would improve consumer access to credit bureaus and an amendment I supported that updates regulations to protect children from the risk of lead exposure.

I could not support this bill because the commonsense policies I advocate for that help community banks and strengthen consumer protection were packaged with provisions that increase systemic risk. I oppose weakening liquidity standards and other vital rules governing large national and international financial institutions. Unlike community banks and credit unions, the failure of these large Wall Street entities drove the 2008 financial crisis that devastated hardworking families in Illinois and throughout the country. For example, this legislation would increase the asset threshold for banks defined as systemically important financial institutions (SIFI) from $50 billion to $250 billion in assets. This means that many large financial institutions, including entities that received taxpayer bailouts, would no longer be subject to enhanced prudential standards, including stress tests, living wills and enhanced liquidity requirements.

This bill could also incrementally increase the risk of even greater discrimination in mortgage lending by exempting thousands of institutions from the enhanced Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) reporting requirements. This enhanced reporting regime was established by the

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau under authority provided by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act. Although the vast majority of home mortgages would still be covered by the enhanced requirements, Congress should focus on taking action to end discrimination in mortgage lending before reducing the quality of data collection over mortgage lending.

As your Senator, my priority is working on behalf of hard-working Illinois families, seniors and Veterans. This includes protecting my constituents from reckless Wall Street behavior and unscrupulous business practices that hurt Veterans, seniors and middle-class families, while making sure community banks and credit unions are able to support affordable housing initiatives and small businesses throughout their communities. Please be assured that I will continue to work on legislation that helps to strengthen local economies and continue to protect consumers in the weeks, months and years to come.

Thank you again for contacting me on this important issue. If you would like more information on my work in the Senate, please visit my website at www.duckworth.senate.gov. You can access my voting record and see what I am doing to address today's most important issues. I hope that you will continue to share your views and opinions with me and let me know whenever I may be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Tammy Duckworth

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator