

Small businesses and the community banks that finance them are the lifeblood of the economy in many parts of the country. The 23rd district of Texas, which I represent, is home to many small towns that depend heavily on small banks to finance ranching, agriculture, construction, and other vital functions that make our economy run. It is these banks that we must focus special attention on protecting from onerous regulations. Dodd-Frank has not only taken aim at large institutions, but small banks as well, and sent them scrambling to find a way to survive in its wake. This has serious implications for our economy.

One major focus of the Dodd-Frank bill was “consumer protection” – while this is a noble and worthwhile goal, the bill missed the mark and will result in higher prices and less choices, all in the name of protecting consumers. In a free and open economy, there is no greater way to advocate for the consumer than ensuring they have choices when it comes to finding a bank that is willing to extend a loan to a small business that will in turn create jobs and grow our economy.

I look forward to hearing from our panel today on what we in this Congress can do to help their businesses turn this ship around.