

By: Bernal

H.B. No. 242

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to credit services organizations and extensions of consumer credit facilitated by credit services organizations; increasing a criminal penalty.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 393.001, Finance Code, is amended by amending Subdivision (3) and adding Subdivisions (2-a), (3-a), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), and (10) to read as follows:

(2-a) "Credit access business" means a credit services organization that obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in obtaining an extension of consumer credit.

(3) "Credit services organization" means a person who provides, or represents that the person can or will provide, for the payment of valuable consideration any of the following services with respect to the extension of consumer credit by others:

(A) improving a consumer's credit history or rating;

(B) obtaining an extension of consumer credit for a consumer in the form of a single-payment deferred presentment transaction, a multiple-payment deferred presentment transaction, a single-payment motor vehicle title loan, or a multiple-payment motor vehicle title loan; or

(C) providing advice or assistance to a consumer with regard to Paragraph (A) or (B).

1 (3-a) "Deferred presentment transaction" means a
2 single-payment or multiple-payment transaction defined as a
3 deferred presentment transaction by Section 341.001 in connection
4 with which the consumer is not required to provide real or personal
5 property as security.

6 (5) "Motor vehicle title loan" means a single-payment
7 or multiple-payment loan in which an unencumbered motor vehicle is
8 given as the only security for the loan. The term does not include a
9 retail installment transaction under Chapter 348 or another loan
10 made to finance the purchase of a motor vehicle.

11 (6) "Multiple-payment deferred presentment
12 transaction" means a deferred presentment transaction that is not a
13 single-payment deferred presentment transaction.

14 (7) "Multiple-payment motor vehicle title loan" means
15 a motor vehicle title loan that is not a single-payment motor
16 vehicle title loan.

17 (8) "Refinance" means a rollover, renewal, or other
18 type of transaction in which all or a portion of the principal,
19 fees, or interest due under an outstanding extension of consumer
20 credit becomes due on a later date. The term includes a new
21 extension of consumer credit that:

22 (A) consists of debt arising from principal,
23 fees, or interest that was not paid in full under an outstanding or
24 previous extension of consumer credit; or

25 (B) is made on or before the seventh day after the
26 date a previous extension of consumer credit that a credit access
27 business obtained for a consumer or assisted a consumer in

1 obtaining was paid in full.

2 (9) "Single-payment deferred presentment transaction"
3 means a deferred presentment transaction for which the entire cash
4 advance, interest, and fees are required under the terms of the
5 transaction to be payable in a single payment.

6 (10) "Single-payment motor vehicle title loan" means a
7 motor vehicle title loan for which the entire principal, interest,
8 and fees are required under the terms of the loan to be payable in a
9 single payment.

10 SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 393, Finance Code, is
11 amended by adding Section 393.004 to read as follows:

12 Sec. 393.004. EFFECT ON MUNICIPAL ORDINANCES. (a) This
13 chapter does not preempt a municipal ordinance regulating a credit
14 access business or any form of an extension of consumer credit that
15 a credit access business is authorized to obtain for a consumer or
16 assist a consumer in obtaining as provided by Section 393.308.

17 (b) If a municipal ordinance described by Subsection (a)
18 conflicts with a provision of this chapter regulating a credit
19 access business or an extension of consumer credit described by
20 Subsection (a), the more stringent regulation controls to the
21 extent of the conflict.

22 SECTION 3. Section 393.201(c), Finance Code, is amended to
23 read as follows:

24 (c) A contract with a credit access business [~~as defined by~~
25 ~~Section 393.601,~~] for the performance of services described by
26 Section 393.602(a) must, in addition to the requirements of
27 Subsection (b) and Section 393.302:

1 (1) contain a statement that there is no prepayment
2 penalty;

3 (2) contain a statement that a credit access business
4 must comply with Chapter 392 and the federal Fair Debt Collection
5 Practices Act (15 U.S.C. Section 1692 et seq.) with respect to an
6 extension of consumer credit [~~described by Section 393.602(a)~~];

7 (3) contain a statement that a person may not threaten
8 or pursue criminal charges against a consumer related to a check or
9 other debit authorization provided by the consumer as security for
10 a transaction in the absence of forgery, fraud, theft, or other
11 criminal conduct;

12 (4) contain a statement that a credit access business
13 must comply, to the extent applicable, with 10 U.S.C. Section 987
14 and any regulations adopted under that law with respect to an
15 extension of consumer credit [~~described by Section 393.602(a)~~];

16 (5) disclose to the consumer:

17 (A) the lender from whom the extension of
18 consumer credit is obtained;

19 (B) the interest paid or to be paid to the lender;
20 and

21 (C) the specific fees that will be paid to the
22 credit access business for the business's services; and

23 (6) contain the name and address of the Office of
24 Consumer Credit Commissioner and the telephone number of the
25 office's consumer helpline.

26 SECTION 4. Section 393.203, Finance Code, is amended to
27 read as follows:

Sec. 393.203. ISSUANCE OF CONTRACT AND OTHER DOCUMENTS.

(a) A credit services organization shall give to the consumer, when the document is signed, a copy of the completed contract and any other document the organization requires the consumer to sign.

(b) The contract and other documents provided by a credit access business to a consumer under this section in relation to an extension of consumer credit must be:

(1) provided before signing wholly written:

(A) in English; and

(B) if the contract negotiations are not conducted in English, in the language in which the contract is negotiated; and

(2) before signing, read in their entirety in the language in which the contract is negotiated to any consumer who cannot read.

SECTION 5. Section 393.223, Finance Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (b-1) to read as follows:

(a) Before performing services described by Section 393.602(a) [~~393.221(1)~~], a credit access business must provide to a consumer a written disclosure adopted by rule of the Finance Commission of Texas [~~that discloses the following~~] in a form prescribed by the commission that:

(1) discloses the interest, fees, and annual percentage rates, as applicable, to be charged on a deferred presentment transaction or on a motor vehicle title loan, as applicable, in comparison to interest, fees, and annual percentage

1 rates to be charged on other alternative forms of consumer debt;

2 (2) discloses the amount of accumulated fees a
3 consumer would incur by renewing or refinancing a deferred
4 presentment transaction or motor vehicle title loan that remains
5 outstanding for a period of two weeks, one month, two months, and
6 three months; ~~and~~

7 (3) provides information regarding the typical
8 pattern of repayment of deferred presentment transactions and motor
9 vehicle title loans; and

10 (4) references nonprofit agencies that provide
11 financial education and training or cash assistance to borrowers.

12 (b-1) The disclosure and notice required by this section
13 must be:

14 (1) available in English and Spanish at each location
15 at which the credit access business performs services described by
16 Section 393.602(a); and

17 (2) provided to a consumer wholly written, and read in
18 their entirety at the time provided to any consumer who cannot read,
19 in the language in which the contract is negotiated.

20 SECTION 6. Subchapter D, Chapter 393, Finance Code, is
21 amended by adding Section 393.308 to read as follows:

22 Sec. 393.308. PROHIBITION ON OBTAINING CERTAIN EXTENSIONS
23 OF CONSUMER CREDIT. A credit services organization may not obtain
24 for a consumer or assist a consumer in obtaining an extension of
25 consumer credit in any form other than in the form of a
26 single-payment deferred presentment transaction, a
27 multiple-payment deferred presentment transaction, a

1 single-payment motor vehicle title loan, or a multiple-payment
2 motor vehicle title loan.

3 SECTION 7. Section 393.501, Finance Code, is amended by
4 adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

5 (c) Each day of a continuing violation of a provision of
6 Subchapter C-1 or G constitutes a separate offense.

7 SECTION 8. Section 393.602(a), Finance Code, is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 (a) This subchapter applies only to a credit services
10 organization that obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in
11 obtaining an extension of consumer credit [~~in the form of:~~

12 [~~(1) a deferred presentment transaction; or~~

13 [~~(2) a motor vehicle title loan~~].

14 SECTION 9. Section 393.604(a), Finance Code, is amended to
15 read as follows:

16 (a) An application for a license under this subchapter must:

17 (1) be under oath;

18 (2) contain the applicant's name and the street
19 address, mailing address, facsimile number, and telephone number of
20 the applicant at the location for which the license is sought;

21 (3) give the approximate location from which the
22 business is to be conducted;

23 (4) [~~(3)~~] identify the business's principal parties in
24 interest;

25 (5) [~~(4)~~] contain the name, physical address, and
26 telephone number of all third-party lender organizations:

27 (A) with which the business contracts to provide

1 services described by Section 393.602(a); or

2 (B) from which the business arranges extensions
3 of consumer credit [~~described by Section 393.602(a)~~]; and

4 (6) [~~(5)~~] contain other relevant information that the
5 commissioner requires for the findings required under Section
6 393.607.

7 SECTION 10. Section 393.620, Finance Code, is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 Sec. 393.620. TRANSFER OR ASSIGNMENT OF LICENSE PROHIBITED.
10 A license may not be transferred or assigned [~~only with the approval~~
11 ~~of the commissioner~~].

12 SECTION 11. Sections 393.622(a) and (b), Finance Code, are
13 amended to read as follows:

14 (a) The finance commission may:

15 (1) adopt rules necessary to enforce and administer
16 this subchapter;

17 (2) adopt rules with respect to the quarterly
18 reporting by a credit access business licensed under this
19 subchapter of summary business information relating to extensions
20 of consumer credit the business obtained for a consumer or assisted
21 a consumer in obtaining [~~described by Section 393.602(a)~~]; and

22 (3) adopt rules with respect to periodic examination
23 by the office relating to extensions of consumer credit the
24 business obtained for a consumer or assisted a consumer in
25 obtaining [~~described by Section 393.602(a)~~], including rules
26 related to charges for defraying the reasonable cost of conducting
27 the examinations.

1 (b) The finance commission may adopt rules under this
2 section to allow the commissioner to review, as part of a periodic
3 examination, any relevant contracts between the credit access
4 business and the third-party lender organizations with which the
5 credit access business contracts to provide services described by
6 Section 393.602(a) or from which the business arranges extensions
7 of consumer credit [~~described by Section 393.602(a)~~]. A contract or
8 information obtained by the commissioner under this section is
9 considered proprietary and confidential to the respective parties
10 to the contract, and is not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552,
11 Government Code.

12 SECTION 12. Sections 393.625, 393.626, and 393.627, Finance
13 Code, are amended to read as follows:

14 Sec. 393.625. MILITARY BORROWERS. An extension of consumer
15 credit [~~described by Section 393.602(a)~~] that is obtained by a
16 credit access business for a member of the United States military or
17 a dependent of a member of the United States military or that the
18 business assisted that person in obtaining must comply with 10
19 U.S.C. Section 987 and any regulations adopted under that law, to
20 the extent applicable.

21 Sec. 393.626. DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES. A violation of
22 Chapter 392 by a credit access business [~~with respect to an~~
23 ~~extension of consumer credit described by Section 393.602(a)~~]
24 constitutes a violation of this subchapter.

25 Sec. 393.627. QUARTERLY REPORT TO COMMISSIONER. A credit
26 access business shall file a quarterly report with the commissioner
27 on a form prescribed by the commissioner that provides the

1 following information relating to extensions of consumer credit
2 [~~described by Section 393.602(a)~~] during the preceding quarter:

3 (1) the number of consumers for whom the business
4 obtained or assisted in obtaining those extensions of consumer
5 credit;

6 (2) the number of those extensions of consumer credit
7 obtained by the business or that the business assisted consumers in
8 obtaining;

9 (3) the number of refinancing transactions of the
10 extensions of consumer credit described by Subdivision (2);

11 (4) the number of consumers refinancing the extensions
12 of consumer credit described by Subdivision (2);

13 (5) the number of consumers refinancing more than once
14 the extensions of consumer credit described by Subdivision (2);

15 (6) the average amount of the extensions of consumer
16 credit described by Subdivision (2);

17 (7) the total amount of fees charged by the business
18 for the activities described by Subdivision (1);

19 (8) the number of vehicles surrendered or repossessed
20 under the terms of an extension of consumer credit in the form of a
21 motor vehicle title loan obtained by the business or that the
22 business assisted a consumer in obtaining;

23 (9) the mean, median, and mode of the number of
24 extensions of consumer credit obtained by consumers as a result of
25 entering into the extensions of consumer credit described by
26 Subdivision (2); and

27 (10) any related information the commissioner

1 determines necessary.

2 SECTION 13. Subchapter G, Chapter 393, Finance Code, is
3 amended by adding Sections 393.629 through 393.637 to read as
4 follows:

5 Sec. 393.629. GENERAL LIMITATIONS ON EXTENSIONS OF CONSUMER
6 CREDIT; PAYMENT METHOD. (a) The provisions of this chapter
7 applicable to a credit access business apply to any consumer
8 physically located in this state at the time the extension of
9 consumer credit is made, regardless of whether the extension of
10 consumer credit was made in person in this state.

11 (b) A credit access business shall accept a payment made in
12 cash or by electronic transfer, cashier's check, teller's check, or
13 money order offered by the consumer or another party, to retire or
14 otherwise pay down debt incurred under an extension of consumer
15 credit that a credit access business obtained for a consumer or
16 assisted a consumer in obtaining under this chapter.

17 Sec. 393.630. ESTABLISHMENT OF INCOME. A credit access
18 business must require documentation to establish a consumer's
19 income for purposes of this subchapter. The only acceptable forms
20 of documentation are paper, facsimile, or electronic copies of:

21 (1) a payroll document;

22 (2) a paycheck;

23 (3) a bank, credit union, debit card, or other account
24 statement;

25 (4) a report from a nationally or regionally
26 recognized credit and data reporting company;

27 (5) Internal Revenue Service Form W-2 from the

1 preceding year;

2 (6) the income tax return from the preceding tax year;

3 or

4 (7) a signed letter from the consumer's employer at the
5 time the extension of consumer credit is sought.

6 Sec. 393.631. SINGLE-PAYMENT DEFERRED PRESENTMENT
7 TRANSACTION. (a) The sum of all fees, principal, interest, and
8 other amounts due under an extension of consumer credit in the form
9 of a single-payment deferred presentment transaction that a credit
10 access business obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in
11 obtaining may not exceed 20 percent of the consumer's gross monthly
12 income.

13 (b) An extension of consumer credit in the form of a
14 single-payment deferred presentment transaction that a credit
15 access business obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in
16 obtaining may not be refinanced more than three times. An amount
17 from each payment of a refinanced deferred presentment transaction
18 described by this subsection must be used to repay at least 25
19 percent of the principal amount of the original debt.

20 Sec. 393.632. MULTIPLE-PAYMENT DEFERRED PRESENTMENT
21 TRANSACTION. (a) The sum of all fees, principal, interest, and
22 other amounts due under all scheduled payments of an extension of
23 consumer credit in the form of a multiple-payment deferred
24 presentment transaction that a credit access business obtains for a
25 consumer or assists a consumer in obtaining may not exceed 20
26 percent of the consumer's gross monthly income.

27 (b) An extension of consumer credit in the form of a

1 multiple-payment deferred presentment transaction that a credit
2 access business obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in
3 obtaining and all fees associated with the debt may not be payable
4 by the consumer in more than four installments. An amount from each
5 payment must be used to repay at least 25 percent of the principal
6 amount of the debt.

7 (c) An extension of consumer credit in the form of a
8 multiple-payment deferred presentment transaction that a credit
9 access business obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in
10 obtaining may not be refinanced.

11 Sec. 393.633. SINGLE-PAYMENT MOTOR VEHICLE TITLE LOAN. (a)
12 The sum of all fees, principal, interest, and other amounts due
13 under an extension of consumer credit in the form of a
14 single-payment motor vehicle title loan that a credit access
15 business obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in obtaining
16 may not exceed the lesser of:

17 (1) three percent of the consumer's gross annual
18 income; or

19 (2) 70 percent of the retail value of the motor vehicle
20 securing the debt.

21 (b) An extension of consumer credit in the form of a
22 single-payment motor vehicle title loan that a credit access
23 business obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in obtaining
24 may not be refinanced more than three times. An amount from each
25 payment of a refinanced motor vehicle title loan described by this
26 subsection must be used to repay at least 25 percent of the
27 principal amount of the original debt.

1 Sec. 393.634. MULTIPLE-PAYMENT MOTOR VEHICLE TITLE LOAN.

2 (a) The sum of all fees, principal, interest, and other amounts due
3 under all scheduled payments of an extension of consumer credit in
4 the form of a multiple-payment motor vehicle title loan that a
5 credit access business obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer
6 in obtaining may not exceed the lesser of:

7 (1) three percent of the consumer's gross annual
8 income; or

9 (2) 70 percent of the retail value of the motor vehicle
10 securing the debt.

11 (b) An extension of consumer credit in the form of a
12 multiple-payment motor vehicle title loan that a credit access
13 business obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in obtaining
14 and all fees associated with the debt may not be payable by the
15 consumer in more than four installments. An amount from each
16 payment must be used to repay at least 25 percent of the principal
17 amount of the debt.

18 (c) An extension of consumer credit in the form of a
19 multiple-payment motor vehicle title loan that a credit access
20 business obtains for a consumer or assists a consumer in obtaining
21 may not be refinanced.

22 Sec. 393.635. REFINANCES. (a) Any refinance of an
23 extension of consumer credit that a credit access business obtains
24 for a consumer or assists a consumer in obtaining:

25 (1) must be authorized under this subchapter;

26 (2) must be in the same form as the original extension
27 of consumer credit; and

1 (3) must meet all the requirements applicable to the
2 original extension of consumer credit, including the duration,
3 transaction, and applicable income-based or vehicle value-based
4 limitations under Section 393.631(a) or 393.633(a).

5 (b) For purposes of this section, a single-payment deferred
6 presentment transaction, a multiple-payment deferred presentment
7 transaction, a single-payment motor vehicle title loan, and a
8 multiple-payment motor vehicle title loan are the different forms
9 of extensions of consumer credit that a credit access business may
10 obtain for a consumer or assist a consumer in obtaining.

11 (c) A person may not use a device, subterfuge, or pretense
12 to evade the refinance requirements and limitations imposed on a
13 credit access business under this subchapter.

14 Sec. 393.636. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS. (a) A credit access
15 business shall maintain a complete set of records of all extensions
16 of consumer credit obtained for consumers by the business or that
17 the business assisted consumers in obtaining. The record
18 pertaining to each extension of consumer credit must be retained
19 until the third anniversary of the date the extension of consumer
20 credit was obtained and must include:

21 (1) the name and address of the consumer;
22 (2) the principal amount of the cash advance or loan;
23 (3) the length of the original term of the extension of
24 consumer credit, the number of installments or refinances, if
25 applicable, and the length of the term of any refinance;

26 (4) the fees charged by the credit access business for
27 obtaining for a consumer or assisting the consumer in obtaining the

1 extension of consumer credit; and

2 (5) the documentation used to establish a consumer's
3 income under Section 393.630.

4 (b) A credit access business shall retain a copy of each
5 written agreement between the business and a consumer pertaining to
6 an extension of consumer credit, including any agreement regarding
7 refinancing an extension of consumer credit, until the third
8 anniversary of the date on which the agreement was entered into.

9 (c) A credit access business shall retain a copy of each
10 report filed under Section 393.627 until the third anniversary of
11 the date on which the report was filed.

12 (d) A record described by this section must be available for
13 inspection on request by the office during the normal business
14 hours of the credit access business.

15 Sec. 393.637. RULES. The finance commission shall adopt any
16 rules necessary to implement Sections 393.629-393.636.

17 SECTION 14. The following laws are repealed:

18 (1) Section 393.221, Finance Code; and

19 (2) Sections 393.601(2), (3), and (5), Finance Code.

20 SECTION 15. The changes in law made by this Act apply only
21 to an extension of consumer credit made on or after the effective
22 date of this Act. An extension of consumer credit made before the
23 effective date of this Act is governed by the law in effect on the
24 date the extension of consumer credit was made, and the former law
25 is continued in effect for that purpose. For purposes of this
26 section, a refinance of an extension of consumer credit is
27 considered made on the date the extension of consumer credit being

1 refinanced was made.

2 SECTION 16. (a) The change in law made by this Act to
3 Section 393.223, Finance Code, applies only to a disclosure or
4 notice provided by a credit access business on or after January 1,
5 2018. A disclosure or notice provided by a credit access business
6 before January 1, 2020, is governed by Section 393.223, Finance
7 Code, as that section existed immediately before the effective date
8 of this Act, and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

9 (b) The Finance Commission of Texas shall adopt rules
10 prescribing forms under Section 393.223(a), Finance Code, as
11 amended by this Act, not later than November 1, 2019.

12 SECTION 17. Section 393.636, Finance Code, as added by this
13 Act, applies only to a record created on or after the effective date
14 of this Act. A record created before the effective date of this Act
15 is governed by the law in effect when the record was created, and
16 the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

17 SECTION 18. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.