

BETTER MARKETS



Fighting to make our financial system work for all Americans again

Better Markets is a public interest 501(c)(3) non-profit based in Washington, DC that advocates for greater transparency, accountability, and oversight in the domestic and global capital and commodity markets, to protect the American Dream of homes, jobs, savings, education, a secure retirement, and a rising standard of living.

What We Do

Better Markets fights for the economic security, opportunity and prosperity of the American people by working to enact financial reform to prevent another financial crash and the diversion of trillions of taxpayer dollars to bailing out the financial system.

By being a counterweight to Wall Street's biggest financial firms through the policymaking and rulemaking process, Better Markets is supporting pragmatic rules and a strong banking and financial system that enables stability, growth and broad-based prosperity. Better Markets also fights to refocus finance on the real economy, empower the buy-side and protect investors and consumers.

How We Make an Impact

WE EXPOSE the industry's massive, endless effort to kill financial reform in court, Congress, and at the regulatory agencies by:

- Conducting extensive research and analysis into the financial markets;
- Publishing research that demonstrates weak links in the system and offers new ideas to fix them;
- Meeting with policymakers in the US and globally to share and promote our research; and
- Ringing the alarm bell through mainstream and social media every time the mega-banks and their allies try to undercut common-sense financial protection rules.

WE EXPLAIN the needlessly complex and arcane world of financial markets, clarifying it for the public, the media, and policymakers by:

- Promoting a "plain English" standard for financial activities;
- Briefing reporters, editors, and policymakers in person, online, and through social media; and
- Working with the media to decipher the esoteric language of finance and financial reform to shape the narrative.

WE ENGAGE in the policymaking, rulemaking, and advocacy cycles to fight for strong, clear rules that protect taxpayers, our treasury, and our lives from being ruined by Wall Street by:

- Testifying before Congress;
- Defending pro-consumer and pro-investor positions in court; and
- Submitting detailed and substantive comment letters; and
- Meeting with rule-writers and like-minded organizations to provide a critical balance in policymaking.



Better Markets' Theory of Change

Employing our Arc of Advocacy™ throughout the policy making cycle, Better Markets fights for the economic security, opportunity and prosperity of the American people by fighting for guardrails and gatekeepers that make the financial sector serve the real economy, producing jobs and growth, rather than enriching financiers on Wall Street, destabilizing the financial system and unleashing predators on consumers and investors.

One law, like the Dodd-Frank Act, is, a collection of dozens of statutory provisions. In many cases, those provisions do not take effect until regulatory agencies implement them through regulations, all of which need to be proposed, finalized, interpreted, and enforced to fulfill legislative intent or have their desired effect. This involves one or more relevant regulatory agencies – the SEC, CFTC, CFPB, and FDIC. The rulemaking process is often long and treacherous, providing the regulated industry an opportunity to use enormous lobbying, legal, and other resources to bend regulations to their interests, almost always to the detriment of the public interest.

Better Markets' Core Programs

Better Markets has four key programs, each of which combines a strategic mix of Better Markets' core competencies: rulemaking, litigation, media advocacy, government relations, expertise and testimony, coalition building, research and policymaking advocacy. Each program also has an aggressive, multi-platform strategy to counter Wall Street's propaganda, to rebut the claims that pro-Wall Street policies are necessarily good for Main Street, and make clear that deregulation will harm Main Street while enriching Wall Street, creating needless risks of another crash.



1) Making Finance Serve Society Program: Creating wealth and broad-based prosperity while reducing systemic threats, inequality and economic insecurity

- Get banks back into banking and supporting the productive economy, which is why they are backed by taxpayers and governments in the first place;
- Promote policies that refocus the largest, most dangerous financial institutions back to traditional banking activities that promote growth, jobs and prosperity; and
- Use financial rules to force the financial sector to refocus on its social purpose, justify its social costs, and earn its taxpayer backing.



2) Protecting Consumers, Investors, Retirees and Markets Program: Protecting markets and market participants from the predators

- Make sure American financial consumers are protected by defending America's most successful consumer protection agency, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), which has returned more than \$12 billion to more than 27 million Americans ripped off by financial institutions and predators;
- Ensure all investors, but especially retirees, get unconflicted financial advice in their best interest so that they get the best return for their hard-earned money; and
- End the conflict-ridden, predatory high-frequency trading (HFT) and other computer-driven market manipulations that have rigged too much of the country's capital markets and ripped off investors, while creating systemic risks and causing dangerous "flash crashes."



3) Financial Reform and Stability Program: Preventing financial crashes and economic collapse while protecting your pocketbook, our shared prosperity and America's limited resources

- Stop the mindless deregulation of the most dangerous and highest risk activities at Wall Street's too-big-to-fail firms, prevent future taxpayer funded bailouts, thwart attempts to dismantle or weaken the most important financial protection rules, and avoid the catastrophe of a second Great Depression; and
- Prevent the diversion of America's limited resources to bailouts to stop a financial crash, then to mitigate the resulting economic wreckage, and finally to reduce crushing deficits and debt that result in the underfunding of all other priorities for years to come.



4) Accountability Program: Returning the law to Wall Street while watching the watchdogs, defending democracy, transparency and open government

- End the Wall Street crime spree by holding lawbreakers on Wall Street and throughout finance, including individual executives and supervisors, accountable, ensuring they are meaningfully punished civilly and criminally, and that future lawbreakers are deterred;
- Ensure prosecutors and regulators are aggressively investigating, prosecuting and bringing changes whenever and wherever appropriate without fear or favor;
- Fight for full funding for the financial cops on the Wall Street beat; and
- Defend democracy by fighting for public disclosure of regulatory activities, public input in all rulemakings, and maximum transparency in government actions.