

Watch payday lending measure

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I wanted to raise public awareness regarding upcoming Senate legislation that should be of concern to all Arkansans. Senate Bill 900 seeks to overturn the decision made by Arkansas voters when they enacted Amendment 89 to the state Constitution. Under SB 900, consumer loan interest rates, currently capped at 17 percent annual percentage rate under Amendment 89, would, if SB 900 is passed, be set "as defined" by the Arkansas legislature. Logically, there is no reason to enact SB 900 except to increase interest rates. SB 900 would allow out of state and other lenders to offer loans with outrageous interest rates and fees, which would create an increasing volume of debt that would victimize Arkansas consumers. Less than four years ago, so-called "payday lending," which made it difficult to escape an ever-escalating cycle of debt, was legislated out of Arkansas. SB 900, if passed, will allow something akin to payday lending to sneak in through the back door. Don't let this happen again. I urge all Arkansans to contact their senator and request a "No" vote on SB 900.

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