

**LETTERS**

**No Comfort For Bloggers**

Roll Call and Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Russ Feingold (D-Wis.) may be "confident" that the Federal Election Commission will continue "to allow unregulated and robust political debate on the Internet," but the millions of Americans who have been silenced by previous campaign finance "reforms" should know better.

Contrary to Roll Call's assertion ("BCRA and the Web," March 28), the FEC's proposed Internet restrictions do not provide any comfort for bloggers as the commission's own analysis asks "whether bloggers... are entitled to the statutory exemption" at all. That doesn't concern Roll Call because big media will retain the right to say anything they want in print, over the airwaves or online. It also doesn't bother McCain and Feingold because they decide who can speak, when, where and how much.

But it should worry Americans. After all, the Internet is the last bastion of truly free speech. But not for long — the government is coming!

Reid Alan Cox  
General Counsel  
Center for Individual Freedom

**Ney, Kanjorski Need to Do Better**

I found your story on how the Ney-Kanjorski bill might let Ameriquest off the hook for violations of state lending laws informative and important ("Ameriquest Could Gain From Bill," March 21). But I would like to clear up a misconception.

The bill is not a compromise between the mortgage industry and consumer advocates anxious about the rapid growth of predatory lending. Prominent consumer groups think it is a flawed bill that would not stop unscrupulous lenders. Those groups include the National

Association of Consumer Advocates, which says the bill "does little or nothing to protect the American homeowner"; the Consumer Federation of America, which says it "falls considerably short in key areas"; the National Consumer Law Center, which says it would "eviscerate" consumer protections; and ACORN and the U.S. Public Interest Research Group.

That's not counting important community development organizations like the National Community Reinvestment Coalition and the California Reinvestment Committee, which calls Ney-Kanjorski "a victory for all who profit from predatory lending." Or civil rights leaders such as NAACP Chairman Julian Bond; Rainbow/PUSH Coalition President Jesse Jackson; Shauna Smith, president of the National Fair Housing Alliance; and Wade Henderson, executive director of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. You can find their full statements on our Web site, [www.ResponsibleLending.org](http://www.ResponsibleLending.org).

The Ney-Kanjorski bill is a wolf in sheep's clothing. It weakens federal law and nullifies state laws proven effective at protecting homeowners from abuses. It even falls far short of the best practices of reputable lenders by, for instance, permitting practices such as selling unnecessary single-premium credit insurance and then tacking the charges onto mortgages. Reps. Bob Ney (R-Ohio) and Rep. Paul Kanjorski (D-Pa.) will need to do much better than the window dressing in this bill to gain the support of consumer and civil rights organizations.

Mark Pearce  
President  
The Center for Responsible Lending

**Bus Companies Are Not All Alike**

Thank you for highlighting the benefits of bus travel in your March 28 Travel & Adventure article



"Competition Gives Travelers Lots of Options." You're right, motorcoaches are an economical way to travel. In fact, the motorcoach industry is the nation's most economical and, more importantly, safest form of commercial public transportation. And, while policymakers continue to debate the merits (and expense) of supporting a national rail passenger system at a time when the federal government coffers are dwindling, the workhorse of public transportation, the motorcoach industry, moves more than 774 million passengers annually with little or no government subsidy.

But not all bus companies are alike. When some companies offer rates that are too good to be true, often they are.

Consumers who choose bargain-basement operators may be inadvertently tipping the scales toward

unsafe operators that could undercut safety and quality of service as well as giving our industry a black eye. If the consumer knew that there are some operators who do not follow federal and state requirements, have improper registration, insurance, and shoddy maintenance, and do not provide (lawfully mandated) service to disabled passengers, they might think twice about riding their buses.

Travelers can and should find safe, quality operators in their area to make sure they are getting the best value — which, in our view, means safety, comfort and affordability. If they don't know who those operators are, they can visit [www.buses.org](http://www.buses.org) for listings and consumer safety tips. The site, operated by the American Bus Association, keeps a list of members who operate under our Code of Ethics. Or they can log onto [www.safersys.org](http://www.safersys.org), a Web site

maintained by the Federal Motor Carrier Administration.

Finally, I want to acknowledge your point about the distance between Washington, D.C.'s main bus terminal and Union Station — the city's public transportation hub built with bus parking, loading and unloading in mind. We understand the frustration and inconvenience for travelers nationwide and in our nation's capital when they choose public transportation yet can't connect conveniently with other modes. We have asked Congress to authorize funds for intermodal facilities, so travelers can have seamless transitions in our nation's transportation network. That would make a big difference in your ride.

Thank you for your time.  
Peter J. Pantuso  
President & CEO  
American Bus Association

**QUOTABLES**

*"Laws provide against injury from others. God himself will not save men against their wills."*

Thomas Jefferson  
(1743-1826)  
3rd president of the United States  
in "Notes on Religion," 1776.

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# FMCSA/MCSAP Enforcement Summary FY 2005 - FY 2008

Year	FY 2005	A% '05	FY 2006	A% '06	FY 2007	A% '07	FY 2008	TOTAL
• Total Compliance Reviews	12,575	21%	15,185	6%	16,115	-3%	15,622	59,497
• Total Compliance Reviews, Buses	457	41%	646	91%	1,233	6%	1,306	3,642
• Federal Compliance Reviews	7,978	22%	9,722	5%	10,256	-6%	9,642	37,598
• Federal Compliance Reviews, Buses	340	48%	504	107%	1,041	0%	1,039	2,924
• State Compliance Reviews	4,597	19%	5,463	7%	5,859	2%	5,980	21,899
• State Compliance Reviews, Buses	117	21%	142	35%	192	39%	267	718
• Total Number of Enforcement Cases Closed	4,102	7%	4,403	20%	5,281	-3%	5,138	18,924
• Number of Enforcement Cases Closed, Passenger Carriers	73	70%	124	130%	285	-39%	175	657
• Unsatisfactory/Unfit out-of-service orders	518	-5%	494	57%	774	31%	1,015	2,801
• Total Number of Truck OOS Inspections, Driver	2,928,612	6%	3,093,996	3%	3,172,923	4%	3,287,738	12,483,269
• Truck OOS Rate, Driver	6.60%		7.00%		6.90%		6.60%	
• Total Number of Truck OOS Inspections, Vehicle	2,156,648	5%	2,273,467	0%	2,263,702	0%	2,270,174	8,963,991
• Truck OOS Rate, Vehicle	23.60%		23.70%		23.20%		23.20%	
• Total Number of Bus OOS Inspections, Driver	35,574	49%	52,959	4%	54,854	-6%	51,339	194,726
• Bus OOS Rate, Driver	4.60%		4.00%		3.70%		4.80%	
• Total Number of Bus OOS Inspections, Vehicle	43,287	143%	105,257	20%	125,926	4%	130,942	405,412
• Bus OOS Rate, Vehicle	9.40%		9.00%		7.90%		7.70%	
• Roadside Inspections, Trucks	2,966,860	6%	3,153,079	2%	3,228,268	3%	3,336,776	12,684,983
• Roadside Inspections, Buses	56,084	126%	126,626	17%	147,867	1%	149,669	480,246
• Total New Entrant Safety Audits:	34,414	15%	39,488	-3%	38,326	-2%	37,395	149,623
• Federal New Entrant Safety Audits	11,734	-13%	10,187	-44%	5,706	-30%	3,997	31,624
• State New Entrant Safety Audits	22,680	29%	29,301	11%	32,620	2%	33,398	117,999
Total MCSAP Funding	\$169,391,273	8%	\$182,652,162	3%	\$188,761,276	7%	\$201,155,148	\$741,959,859