



June 20, 2016

The Honorable Fred Upton  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy & Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy & Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2322A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Upton and Ranking Member Pallone,

On behalf of our nation's venture capital investors and the entrepreneurs they support, I write in support of the *Consumer Review Fairness Act of 2016* (H.R. 5111), which was introduced by Congressmen Leonard Lance and Joseph Kennedy and is currently being considered by the Committee on Energy & Commerce.

American consumers benefit significantly from an active online community that shares customer experiences through websites that enable seamless sharing of information. Since 2006, 147 Internet companies whose services primarily focus on ratings or reviews have received approximately \$3 billion in venture capital funding. In fact, venture capital firms have partnered with startup founders to build iconic American review websites such as Yelp, Glassdoor, Angie's List, Manta, Avvo, and Zomato.

This rich compendium of consumer experiences depends on the ability of users to freely share information. Unfortunately, in recent years the ability to share these experiences has been under threat by bad actors who have turned to consumer gag clauses as a way to stifle criticism. The *Consumer Review Fairness Act* would squarely address this issue and protect the freedom of speech of millions of Americans by prohibiting business from using gag clauses to prevent consumers from sharing their honest customer experience.

The *Consumer Review Freedom Act* (S. 2044), which has identical text to H.R. 5111, unanimously passed the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation in December 2015 and passed the full Senate unanimously later that month. This strong showing of bipartisan support should be followed by the Energy & Commerce Committee and the entire House of Representatives.

The entrepreneurial ecosystem thanks Congressmen Lance and Kennedy for their leadership on this important issue and urges the Committee membership to support passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobby Franklin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bobby Franklin  
President and CEO