



CURRENCY

Committee on Financial Services

Michael G. Oxley, Chairman

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Peggy Peterson at 226-0471

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

Subcommittee to Examine Ways to Encourage Use of E-signatures

The House Financial Services Domestic Monetary Policy, Technology and Economic Growth Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Peter T. King (NY), will hold a hearing -- at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, June 28 in room 2128 Rayburn House Office Building -- on encouraging the use of electronic signatures in financial services transactions.

Last year Congress enacted legislation -- the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, known as E-SIGN -- to allow the use of electronic signatures in interstate commerce and to ensure adequate consumer protections.

"Understandably, there is no other sector of the economy more interested in the efficiency of the E-SIGN law than financial services providers and their customers. Consumers and businesses need certainty when conducting electronic financial transactions, and it is the role of Congress to support, and not hinder, the potential the electronic world presents," said King. "This is the first of many hearings this Subcommittee will hold specific to 'high-tech' financial services."

The Subcommittee will hear how the consumer consent provisions of E-SIGN impact the delivery of financial services as well as hear from witnesses on a report expected from the Commerce Department and Federal Trade Commission evaluating the benefits and burdens of E-SIGN's electronic commerce provisions.

"As we pioneer new territory, many issues remain to be worked out in electronic commerce," said Committee Chairman Michael G. Oxley. "I look forward to hearing what Congress, and the financial services industry, can do to facilitate - rather than impede - greater consumer benefits through the use of electronic signatures in financial transactions."

A common form of electronic signature is the password or personal identification number (PIN), which is used by many Internet retailers. Other forms include smart cards, biometrics devices -- which read human characteristics such as fingerprints or voice patterns, and digitized signatures written with a special computerized pad and pen.

Witnesses scheduled to testify are:

- Eileen Harrington, Associate Director for Marketing Practices, Federal Trade Commission
- Christopher Roe, Vice President, Fireman's Fund Insurance Companies on behalf of the American Insurance Association
- Thomas E. Crocker, Partner, Alston & Bird L.L.C.
- Jeremiah S. Buckley, General Counsel, Electronic Financial Services Council
- Louis F. Rosenthal, Executive Vice President, ABN AMRO Information Technology Services Company on behalf of the Financial Services Roundtable
- Margot Saunders, Managing Attorney, National Consumer Law Center

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