



NEW YORKERS FOR RESPONSIBLE LENDING

NEWS RELEASE

NEW YORK STATE FAIR LENDING COALITION PRESENTS SENATOR THOMAS WITH AWARD AND ANNOUNCES 2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

*160 Groups Call on Albany Lawmakers to Pass Consumer Protection Legislation that
Helps Small Businesses and All Consumers,
Including Student Loan Borrowers, Car Owners, and Homeowners*

Albany, November 2023 – New Yorkers for Responsible Lending (NYRL), a statewide coalition of 160 organizations that promotes access to fair and affordable financial services and the preservation of assets for all New Yorkers and their communities as a matter of racial and economic justice, held its annual meeting in Albany. At the meeting, **NYRL presented the Bob Martin Consumer Justice Award to Senator Kevin Thomas** and discussed its 2024 legislative platform. **The coalition’s number one priority is the passage of the Consumer and Small business Protection Act (CSPA) (S.795/A.7138)**, which is the most important basic consumer protection bill of the last four decades, according to NYRL.

The Bob Martin Consumer Justice Award was given to Senator Thomas in memory of Robert (Bob) A. Martin (1953-2022), who was a fierce defender of consumer rights, a champion of racial justice, and a beloved member of the economic justice community. The award was created to recognize an entity or a person who furthers economic justice for marginalized communities. As a former consumer attorney with NYRL-member New York Legal Assistance Group and as Chair of the Committee on Consumer Protection, Senator Thomas has championed many consumer protection and economic justice issues over the years. Senator Thomas has successfully passed several bills that NYRL has strongly supported, including the Consumer Credit Fairness Act, the Fair Consumer Judgment Interest Act, and the Transcript Withholding Ban, and he is the sponsor of many pending bills that NYRL supports, including the Property Tax Foreclosure Bill of Rights and the Consumer Debt Uniformity Act, among others.

In presenting Senator Thomas with the award, Carolyn Coffey of NYRL-member Mobilization for Justice praised Senator Thomas for his work to protect New Yorkers’ private information from exploitation, for his legislative successes that help New York consumers and homeowners, and for his work to combat the growing student loan debt crisis. In accepting the award, Senator Thomas said “I am deeply honored to receive the Bob Martin Consumer Justice Award from New Yorkers for Responsible Lending. It’s a privilege to stand with such dedicated advocates in the pursuit of greater protections for New York consumers. Together, we will continue championing economic justice and fairness for all. I remain committed to advancing legislation that safeguards consumer rights, protects homeowners, and addresses the pressing issues surrounding student loan debt. Thank you for this meaningful recognition.”

NYRL’s top 2024 legislative priority is to pass CSPA--which Senator Thomas strongly supports— which will strengthen New York’s basic consumer protection law to prohibit unfair and abusive business practices and catch New York State up with 43 other states that already ban such conduct.

NYRL’s other 2024 legislative priorities include protecting consumers from predatory lending products, including earned wage advances; assisting distressed homeowners by continuing to fund the Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP); extending consumer protections in debt collection lawsuits to cover all consumer debts; ensuring basic rights for homeowners subjected to property tax foreclosures, and providing a private right of action under New York’s mortgage servicing rules.

New Yorkers for Responsible Lending (NYRL) (www.nyrl.org and @[NYRLCoalition](https://twitter.com/NYRLCoalition)) is a statewide coalition that promotes access to fair and affordable financial services and the preservation of assets for all New Yorkers and their communities as a matter of racial and economic justice. NYRL is committed to fighting predatory practices in the financial services industry through policy reform, education and outreach, research and direct services. NYRL’s 160 members represent community financial institutions, community-based organizations, affordable housing and first-time homebuyer groups, advocates for seniors, legal services organizations, and community reinvestment, fair lending, and consumer advocacy groups.

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