



February 17, 2025

The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
S-221 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
S-230 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
H-232 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
H-204 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Please Pass the Credit Card Competition Act

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson and Minority Leader Jeffries:

The Yemeni American Merchants Association (YAMA) strongly urges you to pass the Credit Card Competition Act. Like most Main Street businesses, the swipe fees our members pay to accept credit cards have grown at a remarkable rate. These fees increase inflation and reduce the buying power of our community, and the situation has become untenable. Not only that, but when merchants take the small actions they can to try to offset these fees, the major credit card companies threaten them with fines that could break their businesses. Something must change and we need your help.

YAMA represents more than 5,000 Yemeni-owned small businesses across New York. Our members run bodegas and other small shops that are the lifeblood of their communities. They are places to feed families, meet friends and neighbors, and bring our communities together.

These local small businesses, however, are increasingly burdened by credit card swipe fees that have grown out of control. The fees have increased by more than 60% since 2020 alone.

If we stay on this path, some of these local businesses will not make it.



Last year, swipe fees on Visa and Mastercard credit cards alone topped \$100 billion for the first time. Altogether, credit and debit card swipe fees cost merchants and their customers a record \$172 billion in 2023, driving up prices by over \$1,100 for the average American family.

The market is broken, with Visa and Mastercard setting rates that all financial institutions that issue cards under their brands agree to charge. The market desperately needs competition to improve not only fees but service and the security of everyone's financial data.

The Credit Card Competition Act would help. It is a modest reform that would only apply to the nation's largest banks and ensure that they provide at least two network options on their credit cards. Not a single community bank and only one giant credit union would be affected. While modest and narrowly targeted, the impact would be important. Finally providing small businesses like our members some modicum of market choice and competition would spur a cycle of competitors working to get better at earning our business. That dynamic is sorely lacking today.

One key thing we would note is that the criticisms of the Credit Card Competition Act simply are not accurate. The credit card industry has cynically and repeatedly claimed that the Credit Card Competition Act is just about big retailers. That is false and insulting. Our members know all too well that the credit card system is rigged against them today and they need relief. We need help more than big businesses do because Visa and Mastercard make sure we pay much higher fee rates than those big businesses do today. That undermines our ability to compete every day.

And, these high fees hurt people in our communities who shop at our members' stores. With profit margins so low for bodegas and other small businesses, ultimately it is their customers that pay the fees. The least fortunate among our family members and friends get the worst deal of all as the [New York Times has pointed out](#).

We need the Credit Card Competition Act and we need it fast. Please pass the bill.

Sincerely,  
Yousef Mubarez

Director of Public Relations  
Yemeni American Merchants Association