

March 18, 2015

The Honorable Lee Beyer  
Senate Committee on Business and Transportation

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 275

My name is Donna Routh. I am a retired nurse / nursing instructor who lives in Washington county.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of SB 275. I want to share my experience with the company that currently holds the mortgage on our home. We originated our homeowners mortgage with GMAC in 2010, which included an escrow account so that GMAC would pay our homeowners insurance and property taxes. Our mortgage was purchased by OCWEN Loan Servicing LLC in Feb. 2013. We did not choose OCWEN and have never signed any agreement with them. After the first 2 conversations with OCWEN, I asked each person where they were located, and what they could and could not do to assist me. I asked to speak to a supervisor during these 2 conversations, was told that I would get a return call which did not occur and that I could not have a phone number for a supervisor. I then began keeping a log of communication with OCWEN.

Following is a brief summary of our experience with OCWEN during 2014.

- Homeowners insurance premium was due 8/23/2014. On 8/11 when I was notified by our insurance agent that OCWEN had not provided to Safeco Insurance company, mortgage information so that a premium notice could be sent to OCWEN. I called and faxed OCWEN informing them about what Safeco needed from them (mortgage clause, loan number and fax number for billing). Between 8/11 and 8/21 Safeco did not receive the required information from OCWEN.
- There are only 2 phone numbers that OCWEN clients can use -- one for customer care center and one for insurance. Each time you call, you get a different person, who has very little information. The calls are answered by a call center in India.
- On 8/21 my insurance agent informed me that the insurance premium had not been paid and if it lapsed, not only would we be without coverage, but a lapsed policy affects subsequent underwriting and would probably result in an increased premium next year.
- During a call to OCWEN on 8/21, I said I would only speak to representatives in the USA and eventually was give the contact information of the Ombudsmens office at OCWEN. I told the ombudsman that I wanted the insurance paid and the escrow account closed. He said he needed a fax with that notice in writing. I sent it to him. He also told me that the escrow dept. is in India, and he did not have the authority to require anyone in the company to do anything, could only pass on information.
- OCWEN did eventually pay the insurance premium.
- Since I now thought our escrow account was closed, I paid only the principle and interest for September. on 9/19 we received notice that we had a "shortage" in the escrow account. I called them. They said they had denied our "request" that the escrow account be closed, but we did not receive a notice of that fact. Since the payment was 2 days early and did not include the escrow payment, they credited it to principle, and said we owed them the September payment. I paid the escrow amount for September and for October. I contacted the Dept. of

consumer and Business Services, Division of Finance and Corporate Securities to find out what my options were, and began the process for a formal complaint. This Oregon dept. said that they had no jurisdiction over Mortgage servicing companies, but that OCWEN does originate loans in Oregon, so they could process my complaint.

- Between 9/19 and 10/27, I had 9 phone conversations with OCWEN attempting to close our escrow account and attempt to get them to credit our mortgage account with the payments that we had made to them. Each time I talked to a different person, but followed up with the ombudsman. When I asked the person in the OCWEN Special Handling Dept. what they were going to do with our issues, she told me that OCWEN was a DEBT COLLECTING AGENCY and that was her concern!

Our problems with OCWEN were finally resolved because of the intervention by the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services. Our escrow account with OCWEN has been closed, the funds in that account sent to us and our mortgage account is correct.

The company (GMAC) with whom we originally signed a mortgage contract would have been regulated by the state of Oregon. Luckily the company who bought our mortgage as a result of GMAC's bankruptcy also originates loans in Oregon, so they are under the jurisdiction of the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services, and I was able to file a complaint with that department. I am sure that I would still be fighting with OCWEN to close the escrow account with them and to have our payments to OCWEN straightened out if this Oregon state department had not intervened. I think all Oregonians should have the ability to have the assistance of our state government when they face problems with mortgage servicing (or debt collection) agencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment and to urge you to support SB 275. If I can answer questions, or provide any additional information or documentation, please contact me.

Sincerely,



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