



NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
Carri Grube Lybarker, Administrator

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 8, 2018 | Release #18-012

Contact: Kyla Capers, (803) 734-0043

SCDCA Complaint Data Featured in National Report *2,300 complaints filed with SCDCA so far in 2018*

COLUMBIA, SC... The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) recently contributed data to the Consumer Federation of America's (CFA) annual Consumer Complaint Survey Report, giving the national organization a snapshot of South Carolina's marketplace climate in 2017.

The report includes data from 38 consumer protection agencies; with those agencies taking in 908,595 complaints and saving or refunding \$2,011,152,631 for consumers. During calendar year 2017, SCDCA received **4,004** complaints and earned **\$2,511,240** back in the form of refunds, credits and adjustments for consumers.

Nationally, South Carolina matched the increasing trend of vehicle complaints, amounting to 18% of complaints received by SCDCA. Rounding out the top five complaint categories were Utilities (12%); Real Estate/Timeshare (7.5%); Contractors (7%); and Debt Collection (6.5%). So far in 2018, SCDCA has received **2,355** complaints and garnered **\$1.2** million in credits, refunds and adjustments for consumers. Vehicle complaints are holding the number complaint category spot, composing 15% of all complaints filed.

The CFA annual Consumer Complaint Survey Report also highlights two complaints received by SCDCA –one detailing a timeshare issue and the other reporting problems with a new vehicle. Elderly consumers who felt targeted by high-pressure salespeople submitted the respective complaints. Though SCDCA was able to obtain positive outcomes for these consumers, it is important to note that if a deal sounds too good to be true, requires an immediate response, or simply makes you uncomfortable, don't be afraid to walk away.

Additional consumer tips, including an SCDCA blog post on financial safety while traveling, and the full 2017 Consumer Complaint Survey can be found by visiting consumerfed.org/complaint-survey-resources/.

Consumers are encouraged to contact SCDCA directly with complaints regarding products or services purchased for family or household use. To file a complaint, visit www.consumer.sc.gov and click FILE A COMPLAINT. To see if a business has complaints against it, consumers should take advantage of the Search Complaints tool on the Consumer Information page of SCDCA's website.

About SCDCA

The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a

complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit www.consumer.sc.gov or call toll-free, 1-800-922-1594.

###