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March 31, 2017

The Honorable Ash Kalra
Chair, Assembly Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care
State Capitol, Room 2191
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 502 (Waldron) – Crime victim compensation: elder or dependent adult financial abuse -
SUPPORT**

As Introduced February 13, 2017

Dear Assemblymember Kalra:

The Consumer Federation of California writes in support of AB 502 (Waldron), which would establish a three-year pilot project in to make elderly and dependent adult victims of financial abuse eligible for limited compensation from the California Victim Compensation Fund (VCF).

Financial abuse of the elderly and persons with disabilities is a fast-growing and insidious crime. Studies show that victims have a decreased life-span, a higher rate of institutionalization, suffer emotional trauma, and often face impoverishment. The California Department of Social Services reports that statewide as many as 1,600 reports of elder and dependent adult financial abuse are under investigation in a given month by Adult Protective Services, yet almost no services are available to this population.

Many states have already begun providing Victim Compensation to elderly and dependent adult victims of financial crimes, including Colorado, Florida, Idaho, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Vermont, Pennsylvania and Wyoming. Covered services include payment for mental health counseling, assistance with travel to court, and financial counseling. California, despite having the largest over-60 population, has not yet made VCF compensation available to these victims.

AB 502 is a small pilot program that will enable the State of California to evaluate the cost of compensating these victims for essential services that can help them maintain their independence and move forward with their lives. We respectfully urge your “Aye” vote on AB 502.

Sincerely,

Richard Holober

Cc: Members of the Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care
Assemblymember Waldron