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Contact: **Ingrid R. Shepard, 215-278-4400, info@theonelessfoundation.org**

THE ONE LESS FOUNDATION Joins 132 Groups Urging SEC Against Opening the Floodgates to Forced Arbitration

Washington, DC – Today, 133 organizations including The One Less Foundation, sent a [letter](#) urging the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to stand by its mission and longstanding policy of empowering and protecting American investors, including retired service members, first responders, and teachers, by safeguarding their right to join together to hold law-breaking corporations publicly accountable in a court of law.

In recent months, Chairman Clayton has fueled speculation about a dramatic policy shift at the SEC that would threaten the security of hardworking Americans' retirement savings and gut their legal rights by allowing publicly traded corporations to use forced arbitration clauses against their investors. These "rip-off clauses" would force investors to give up their most effective tool to fight back against securities fraud that could decimate their savings – class action lawsuits.

"Low to moderate income communities may not be the face of the average investor; however through employee sponsored retirement accounts, which is one of the avenues that is pushed for use to build savings and to plan for retirement, they are investors and they are the ones who can least afford to be taken advantage of by corporate financial wrong-doing, without a way to hold those companies accountable," **said Ingrid R. Shepard, executive director of THE ONE LESS FOUNDATION.** "Investors as a specific group of consumers have to be allowed to have their collective voices and grievances heard and not be silenced by arbitration which often times doesn't allow for them to know the magnitude of a problem that they think has only happened to them, but has happened to numerous investors like them. We ask the SEC to provide protections for all investors, small and great."

The [letter](#) reads in part:

"Investors rely on the SEC to promote market integrity and deter and detect fraud. But the SEC cannot fulfill this role on its own. Private shareholder lawsuits serve as an essential supplement to Commission action...Recent high-profile examples of securities fraud illustrate the devastating effect this would have. In enforcement actions against Enron, WorldCom, Tyco, Bank of America and Global Crossing, for example, the SEC recovered penalties and fees totaling \$1.8 billion, while private securities class actions were able to recover \$19.4 billion for defrauded shareholders – more than ten times as much."

In addition to the letter, more than 40 national and state-based organizations, led by the Consumer Federation of America, Public Justice, and the American Association for Justice, have joined together to form the [Secure Our Savings](#) (SOS) Coalition to keep up pressure on SEC leadership.

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