

As news broke that legislation to derail implementation of debit card swipe fee reforms would be introduced in the House, Reps. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) and Bill Shuster (R-Penn.) vowed to redouble their efforts and fight attempts to halt the important reforms. Welch and Shuster have been the House leaders fighting to reform swipe fees.

The proposed legislation would delay for one year the implementation of the proposed Fed rule to cap swipe fees on debit card transactions at 12 cents. This rule was the result of legislation that called for limits on debit card swipe fees that are "reasonable and proportional" to the cost of conducting debit card transactions.

"Only in Washington can the word 'delay' really just be a polite way of saying 'kill the bill'," Welch said. "It's not surprising that the big banks and credit card companies are spending millions to protect their monopoly pricing power, but it is disheartening that they have found allies in Congress to help. The Fed's proposed rule is an even-handed approach that provides much-needed relief to small businesses and consumers. We worked hard to pass these reforms into law and we'll continue to fight for them."

"After 9 congressional hearings, three GAO reports and a lengthy public comment period I see no reason why swipe relief should be delayed any further," said Congressman Bill Shuster. "Every month we wait, America's small businesses are paying \$1.3 billion in debit card swipe fees. This is money that could otherwise be used to hire an extra employee or reinvest in their businesses. It is time to act on this pro-consumer, pro-business reform without delay."

In recent weeks, big banks and credit card companies have ratcheted up their efforts to defeat swipe fee reforms. According to Bloomberg, the big banks and credit card companies have pledged to spend \$11 million to fight the reforms.

Welch and Shuster are planning further action this week.