



Treasury Secretary Bessent, tapped to run CFPB, orders staff to halt work

UPDATED FEBRUARY 3, 2025 · 3:47 PM ET



Laurel Wamsley



Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has been tapped by President Trump to be acting director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Here, he appears before the Senate Finance Committee on Jan. 16.

J. Scott Applewhite/AP

Scott Bessent, who was [confirmed as Treasury secretary](#) last week, has been named acting director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Bessent replaces Rohit Chopra, who was [fired on Saturday](#).

In an internal email shared with NPR, staff members were instructed to immediately cease much of the bureau's work, including issuing or approving proposed or final rules or guidance, and suspending the effective dates of all final rules that have been issued but have not yet become effective.

Staff members were also instructed not to commence or settle enforcement actions, nor to issue any public communications of any type, including research papers. The directive was made "[i]n order to promote consistency with the goals of the Administration," the email said.

Bessent, a wealthy hedge fund manager, was already expected to be a business-friendly choice to lead the Treasury. Now he will lead the CFPB, the federal consumer watchdog, at least for a time.



BUSINESS

CFPB sues Berkshire Hathaway-owned mortgage lender for alleged predatory practices

"I look forward to working with the CFPB to advance President Trump's agenda to lower costs for the American people and accelerate economic growth," Bessent said in a statement.

CFPB has had several lawsuits underway, including enforcement actions against [Capital One](#), [Walmart](#), and [Zelle and its parent banks](#).

Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., who had a key role in the formation of the agency and who serves on the Senate Banking Committee, criticized Bessent's order halting the bureau's work.



BUSINESS

In a lawsuit, CFPB says 3 top U.S. banks failed to protect consumers from Zelle fraud

"Shutting down CFPB enforcement actions that are on the verge of delivering money into the pockets of working people is at odds with President Trump's claim that he wants to lower costs for families," Warren said in a statement.

Chopra had led the bureau since 2021 and frequently took on big banks. Under his leadership, the CFPB issued a number of regulations, including limiting overdraft fees, capping credit card late fees and banning medical debt from appearing on credit reports.

The Consumer Bankers Association, which represents retail banks, cheered the choice of Bessent and suggested he should rescind certain rules promulgated during the Chopra era.



POLITICS

Trump uses mass firing to remove inspectors general at a series of agencies

But consumer advocates decried the tapping of Bessent.

"While [Trump] parades a crowd of corporate lobbyists, billionaire donors, and Wall Street insiders like Scott Bessent to lead our country, we're looking at the end of basic protections for American consumers," said Tony Carrk of Accountable.US, a corruption watchdog group, in a statement.

The CFPB is an independent bureau within the Federal Reserve System. It's funded outside of the congressional appropriations process, and its funding comes from the Fed. The bureau was created in 2010 by the [Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act](#).

That legislation was passed following the 2008 financial crisis, and it was intended to protect consumers from overreach by financial institutions and help prevent another crisis.

cfpb consumer protection



READ & LISTEN

[Home](#)

[News](#)

[Culture](#)

[Music](#)

[Podcasts & Shows](#)

CONNECT

[Newsletters](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Press](#)

[Public Editor](#)

[Corrections](#)

[Contact & Help](#)

ABOUT NPR

[Overview](#)

[Diversity](#)

[NPR Network](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Ethics](#)

[Finances](#)

GET INVOLVED

[Support Public Radio](#)

[Sponsor NPR](#)

[NPR Careers](#)

[NPR Shop](#)

[NPR Events](#)

[NPR Extra](#)

[terms of use](#)

[privacy](#)

[your privacy choices](#)

[text only](#)