

## BFA Sues Equifax Over Data Breach

Bleichmar Fonti Auld, LLP ("BFA") has filed suit in the Northern District of Georgia to address the most troubling, and tragically avoidable, data breaches in U.S. history. Equifax, a company that reported more than a \$1 billion profit in 2016, collects and stores private and personal information on hundreds of millions of U.S. consumers. As has been widely reported, unidentified hackers stole private and personal information for 145.5 million U.S. customers stored by Equifax. As a credit reporting agency, Equifax has a responsibility to accurately report and maintain the personal and private financial data entrusted to it. Equifax failed to do so. BFA is seeking to recover damages and comprehensive credit monitoring services for victims of the data breach.

Equifax failed on multiple grounds to protect the privacy of the information that had been entrusted to it. First, Equifax failed to fix a security flaw on its web-portal that had been publicly announced—and identified to it by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Months after the flaw and a fix for the problem were announced, hackers continued to breach Equifax's computer systems and steal data. Second, Equifax did not encrypt any of the stolen data, meaning that thieves could read in plain text the personal and private information that Equifax collected and stored. Third, Equifax's internal monitoring systems failed to detect the vulnerability, and Equifax delayed publicly announcing the problem for many weeks.

What's more, Equifax is profiting from its failures. Equifax has signed up 7.5 million users to its TrustedID service (which is free for a year, then requires a subscription to renew) following the data breach, and many other services for which it provides the essential technological services. BFA will seek to ensure that the credit services provided are comprehensive and long-lasting for all affected consumers.

Consumers interested in protecting their rights should contact Lesley Weaver, Matthew Weiler, or Emily Aldridge at BFA.