

## **EQUIFAX BREACH CLASS ACTION LAWSUIT FILED ON BEHALF OF NATION'S 28 MILLION SMALL BUSINESSES**

***First Complaint Focusing on Breach's Damages to Small Businesses Highlights Cost of Credit Reports and "Doubly Whammy" Facing Small Business Owners Judged on Personal Credit Standing.***

**ATLANTA, GA – September 20, 2017** – The estimated 28 million small business operators in the U.S. face special risk of suffering multiple damages arising from the latest Equifax data breach, according to a class-action lawsuit complaint filed by attorneys with The Doss Firm LLC. Updates about the complaint are available online at [www.smallbusinesssequifaxclass.com](http://www.smallbusinesssequifaxclass.com).

Filed in the U.S. District Court for the North District of Georgia/Atlanta division, the class action complaint titled *O'Dell Properties, LLC, O'Dell & O'Neal, P.C., Jellie Donuts, LLC, et. al. v. Equifax, Inc.*, alleges that Equifax unduly put small business operators at risk in terms of the cost of Equifax business reports, the availability of credit and exposure to business identity theft, which often is directly linked for small business owners to their personal credit.

As the complaint notes: **"Unlike consumers who are entitled under federal law to obtain one free credit report annually, businesses must pay for their credit reports (\$99 from Equifax) ... Many of the 143 million individuals whose PII was hacked are also owners of small businesses that heavily rely on personal and business credit to operate and provide for families across this country."**

Attorney Jason Doss said: **"This is a real double whammy situation for small business owners whose access to credit can often live or die in terms of their personal creditworthiness. The breach could either damage the business directly through identify theft or it could cripple access to small business credit by damaging the 'linked' credit of the individual who owns the enterprise."**

The complaint notes: **"... [A]bout 60 percent of small businesses use loans to finance their operations, and use the loan capital for a variety of purposes, ranging from maintaining cash flow and working capital to purchasing equipment and financing real estate purchases. The ability of small businesses to obtain loans and other forms of credit is dependent on the creditworthiness of the business owner."**

For example, the United States Small Business Administration requires all businesses applying for an SBA loan to submit a personal financial statement for the business owner as part of the loan application process.

The plaintiffs named in the complaint include real estate firms, a law firm, and a consulting firm.

The class-action lawsuit seeks to recover damages (included time spent monitoring financial accounts for signs of ID theft or other criminal activities) and legal costs.

**ABOUT THE DOSS FIRM**

Our Atlanta securities attorneys have a combined 45 years of experience in representing individuals and businesses in a variety of matters, including financial fraud litigation, securities arbitration, business and commercial litigation, employment disputes, class action litigation and securities and commodities industry regulatory defense matters. The attorneys at our firm have recovered millions of dollars for hundreds of thousands of people. Our attorneys successfully represented and recovered millions of dollars on behalf of over 750,000 Georgia consumers of natural gas who were overcharged by their natural gas sellers. Jason Doss is a past president of the Public Investors Arbitration Bar Association (PIABA) and has been an adjunct professor of law with the Georgia State University College of Law.

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