# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA ATLANTA DIVISION

CALEENA D. HALL, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated;

Plaintiff,

Civil Action No:

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

-v.-TOTAL CARD, INC., CALVARY SPV I, LLC and John Does 1-25

Defendant.

Plaintiff Caleena D. Hall (hereinafter, "Plaintiff" or "Hall"), a Georgia resident, brings this Class Action Complaint by and through his attorneys, Mason Law Group, P.C., against Defendant Total Card, Inc. (hereinafter "Defendant Total Card") and Defendant Cavalry SPV I, LLC (hereinafter "Defendant Cavalry"), individually and on behalf of a class of all others similarly situated, pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, based upon information and belief of Plaintiff's counsel, except for allegations specifically pertaining to Plaintiff, which are based upon Plaintiff's personal knowledge.

# **INTRODUCTION/PRELIMINARY STATEMENT**

1. Congress enacted the FDCPA in 1977 in response to the "abundant evidence of the use of abusive, deceptive, and unfair debt collection practices by many debt collectors." 15 U.S.C. §1692(a). At that time, Congress was concerned that "abusive debt collection practices contribute to the number of personal bankruptcies, to material instability, to the loss of jobs, and to invasions of individual privacy." *Id.* Congress concluded that "existing laws...[we]re inadequate to protect consumers," and that "'the effective collection of debts" does not require "misrepresentation or other abusive debt collection practices." 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692(b) & (c).

2. Congress explained that the purpose of the Act was not only to eliminate abusive debt collection practices, but also to "insure that those debt collectors who refrain from using abusive debt collection practices are not competitively disadvantaged." Id. § 1692(e). "After determining that the existing consumer protection laws were inadequate." Id. § 1692(b), Congress gave consumers a private cause of action against debt collectors who fail to comply with the Act. Id. § 1692k.

### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

The Court has jurisdiction over this class action pursuant to <u>28 U.S.C.</u>
 <u>§ 1331</u> and <u>15 U.S.C.</u> § <u>1692 et. seq</u>. The Court also has pendent jurisdiction over the State law claims in this action pursuant to <u>28 U.S.C.</u> § <u>1367(a)</u>.

4. Venue is proper in this judicial district pursuant to <u>28 U.S.C.</u> <u>§ 1391(b)(2)</u>, as this is where a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claim occurred.

#### **NATURE OF THE ACTION**

5. Plaintiff brings this class action on behalf of a class of Georgia consumers under §1692 et seq. of Title 15 of the United States Code, commonly referred to as the Fair Debt Collections Practices Act ("FDCPA"), and

6. Plaintiff is seeking damages and declaratory and injunctive relief.

#### **PARTIES**

7. Plaintiff is a resident of the State of Georgia, County of Fulton, residing at 571 Carlton Drive, Palmetto, GA 30268.

8. Defendant Total Card is a "debt collector" as the phrase is defined in <u>15</u> <u>U.S.C. § 1692(a)(6)</u> and used in the FDCPA with an address at 5109 S. Broadband Lane, Sioux Falls, SD 57108.

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9. Upon information and belief, Defendant Total Card is a company that uses the mail, telephone, and facsimile and regularly engages in business the principal purpose of which is to attempt to collect debts alleged to be due another.

10. Defendant Cavalry is a "debt collector" as the phrase is defined in <u>15</u> <u>U.S.C. § 1692(a)(6)</u> and used in the FDCPA with an address at 500 Summit Lake Drive, Valhalla, NY 10595.

11. Upon information and belief, Defendant Cavalry is a company that uses the mail, telephone, and facsimile and regularly engages in business the principal purpose of which is to attempt to collect debts alleged to be due another.

12. John Does 1-25, are fictitious names of individuals and businesses alleged for the purpose of substituting names of Defendants whose identities will be disclosed in discovery and should be made parties to this action.

#### **CLASS ALLEGATIONS**

13. Plaintiff brings this claim on behalf of the following case, pursuant toFed. R. Civ. P. 23(a) and 23(b)(3).

- 14. The Class consists of:
  - a. all individuals with addresses in the State of Georgia;
  - b. to whom Defendant Total Card, Inc. sent a collection letter attempting to collect a consumer debt;
  - c. whose letter states that Defendant Cavalry will not sue the consumer;

- d. without clearly stating that the consumer could no longer be sued by any party;
- e. Additionally the letter, fails to disclose that the previously-lapsed statute of limitations to file a lawsuit to collect the debt will recommence upon payment;
- f. which letter was sent on or after a date one (1) year prior to the filing of this action and on or before a date twenty-one (21) days after the filing of this action.

15. The identities of all class members are readily ascertainable from the records of Defendants and those companies and entities on whose behalf they attempt to collect and/or have purchased debts.

16. Excluded from the Plaintiff Classes are the Defendants and all officer, members, partners, managers, directors and employees of the Defendants and their respective immediate families, and legal counsel for all parties to this action, and all members of their immediate families.

17. There are questions of law and fact common to the Plaintiff Classes, which common issues predominate over any issues involving only individual class members. The principal issue is whether the Defendants' written communications to consumers, in the forms attached as Exhibits A, violate 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692e.

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18. The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the class members, as all are based upon the same facts and legal theories. The Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the Plaintiff Classes defined in this complaint. The Plaintiff has retained counsel with experience in handling consumer lawsuits, complex legal issues, and class actions, and neither the Plaintiff nor their attorneys have any interests, which might cause them not to vigorously pursue this action.

19. This action has been brought, and may properly be maintained, as a class action pursuant to the provisions of Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure because there is a well-defined community interest in the litigation:

- a. <u>Numerosity:</u> The Plaintiff is informed and believe, and on that basis allege, that the Plaintiff Classes defined above are so numerous that joinder of all members would be impractical.
- b. <u>Common Questions Predominate:</u> Common questions of law and fact exist as to all members of the Plaintiff Classes and those questions predominance over any questions or issues involving only individual class members. The principal issue is \whether the Defendants' written communications to consumers, in the forms attached as Exhibit A violate 15 USC §1692e.
- c. <u>Typicality:</u> The Plaintiff's claims are typical of the claims of the class members. The Plaintiff and all members of the Plaintiff Classes have

claims arising out of the Defendants' common uniform course of conduct complained of herein.

- d. <u>Adequacy:</u> The Plaintiff will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class members insofar as Plaintiff has no interests that are adverse to the absent class members. The Plaintiff is committed to vigorously litigating this matter. Plaintiff has also retained counsel experienced in handling consumer lawsuits, complex legal issues, and class actions. Neither the Plaintiff nor their counsel have any interests which might cause them not to vigorously pursue the instant class action lawsuit.
- e. <u>Superiority:</u> A class action is superior to the other available means for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy because individual joinder of all members would be impracticable. Class action treatment will permit a large number of similarly situated persons to prosecute their common claims in a single forum efficiently and without unnecessary duplication of effort and expense that individual actions would engender.

20. Certification of a class under Rule 23(b)(3) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure is also appropriate in that the questions of law and fact common to members of the Plaintiff Classes predominate over any questions affecting an

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individual member, and a class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of the controversy.

21. Depending on the outcome of further investigation and discovery, Plaintiff may, at the time of class certification motion, seek to certify a class(es) only as to particular issues pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(c)(4).

### FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

22. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and incorporates the allegations contained in paragraphs numbered above herein with the same force and effect as if the same were set forth at length herein.

23. Some time prior to May 8, 2017, an obligation was allegedly incurred to HSBC Bank Nevada, N.A. / Capital One Bank (USA), N.A. by the Plaintiff.

24. HSBC Bank Nevada, N.A. / Capital One Bank (USA), N.A. obligation arose out of Capital One Bank credit card transactions in which money, property, insurance or services, which are the subject of the transaction, were primarily for personal, family or household purposes.

25. The alleged HSBC Bank Nevada, N.A. / Capital One Bank (USA), N.A. obligation is a "debt" as defined by 15 U.S.C.§ 1692a(5).

26. Due to her financial constraints, Plaintiff could not pay the alleged debt, and it went into default.

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27. Sometime thereafter, Defendant Cavalry purportedly purchased the alleged debt.

28. Defendant Cavalry, a subsequent owner of the HSBC Bank Nevada, N.A. / Capital One Bank (USA), N.A. debt, contracted the Defendant Total Card to collect the alleged debt.

29. Defendant Total Card collects and attempts to collect debts incurred or alleged to have been incurred for personal, family or household purposes on behalf of creditors using the United States Postal Services, telephone and internet.

## Violation I – May 8, 2017 Collection Letter

30. On or about May 8, 2017, Defendant Total Card sent the Plaintiff a collection letter (the "Letter") regarding the alleged debt owed to Defendant Cavalry. See Exhibit A.

31. The very bottom of the Collection Letter states in part: "The law limits how long you can be sued on a debt. Because of the age of your debt, Cavalry SPV I, LLC will not sue you for it..."

32. The alleged debt is time-barred, meaning that Defendant Cavalry cannot sue Plaintiff.

33. The Letter implies that Defendant Cavalry has chosen not to sue ("will not sue you"), instead of the true fact that neither Defendant Cavalry, nor Defendant Total Card, nor any subsequent creditor/collector can file a lawsuit.

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34. The statement contained in Defendant Total Card's letter is materially deceptive to the unsophisticated consumer, who would believe that Defendant Cavalry or a subsequent creditor has the option to change its mind should he/she not pay the alleged debt.

35. Moreover, the Collection Letter is completely silent as to the rights of the debt collector, Defendant Total Card, to file a lawsuit against the consumer.

36. Finally, the Collection Letter is materially deceptive as it fails to disclose that the previously-lapsed statute of limitations to file a lawsuit to collect the debt will recommence upon payment by Plaintiff.

37. Defendants made deceptive and misleading representations when they communicated to Plaintiff that Defendant Cavalry was opting not to sue Plaintiff, when in fact, it was not permitted to sue as a matter of law, in violation of 15 U.S.C. §§1692e, 1692e(2), 1692e(5) and 1692e(10).

38. As a result of Defendant's deceptive, misleading and unfair debt collection practices, Plaintiff has been damaged.

# <u>COUNT I</u> VIOLATIONS OF THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT 15 U.S.C. §1692e *et seq*.

39. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and incorporates the allegations contained in paragraphs above herein with the same force and effect as if the same were set forth at length herein.

40. Defendants' debt collection efforts attempted and/or directed towards the Plaintiff violated various provisions of the FDCPA, including but not limited to 15 U.S.C. § 1692e.

41. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1692e, a debt collector may not use any false, deceptive, or misleading representation or means in connection with the collection of any debt.

42. Defendants made deceptive and misleading representations when they communicated to Plaintiff that Defendant LVNV was choosing not to sue Plaintiff, when in fact, it was not permitted to sue as a matter of law, in violation of 15 U.S.C. §§1692e, 1692e(2), 1692e(5) and 1692e(10).

43. By reason thereof, Defendant is liable to Plaintiff for judgment that Defendant's conduct violated Section 1692e et seq. of the FDCPA, actual damages, statutory damages, costs and attorneys' fees.

#### **DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY**

44. Pursuant to Rule 38 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Plaintiff hereby requests a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

#### **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff Caleena D. Hall, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, demands judgment from Defendant Total Card, Inc. and Defendant Cavalry SPV I, LLC, as follows:

1. Declaring that this action is properly maintainable as a Class Action and certifying Plaintiff as Class representative, and Jonathan B. Mason, Esq. as Class Counsel;

2. Awarding Plaintiff and the Class statutory damages;

3. Awarding Plaintiff and the Class actual damages;

4. Awarding Plaintiff costs of this Action, including reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses;

5. Awarding pre-judgment interest and post-judgment interest; and

6. Awarding Plaintiff and the Class such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

Dated: April 26, 2018

Respectfully Submitted,

# MASON LAW GROUP, P.C.

/s/ Jonathan B. Mason Jonathan B. Mason, Esq. GA Bar No. 475659 1100 Peachtree St. NE, Ste 200 Atlanta, GA 30309 Tel: 404-920-8040 Fax: 404-920-8039 jmason@atlshowbizlaw.com Counsel for Plaintiff

# **Certificate of Compliance With Local Rule 7.1D**

Pursuant to Local Rule 7.1D, the undersigned counsel certifies that this document has been prepared using Times New Roman 14-point font.

DATED, this 26<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2018

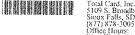
Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Jonathan B. Mason Jonathan B. Mason, Esq. GA Bar No. 475659 **Mason Law Group, P.C.** 1100 Peachtree St., NE Ste 200 Atlanta, GA 30309 Phone: 404-920-8040 Fax 404-920-8039 jmason@atlshowbizlaw.com Case 1:18-cv-01801-ELR-JCF Document 1-1 Filed 04/26/18 Page 1 of 2

# EXHIBIT A

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5109 S. Broadband Lane Sioux Falls, SD 57108-7100





Total Card, Inc. 5109 S. Broadband Lane Stoux Falls, SD 57108 (877) 1878-3005 (605) 977-5800 Office Hours: Mon-Thr 8AM-6PM CST - Fri 8AM-5PM CST

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ACRES AN

May 8, 2017

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HALL:CALFENA D



Dear HALL; CALEENA D:

Our client has agreed to accept 6 monthly payments of \$54 as a full and final resolution on this account!

We represent the above client, Cavalry SPV I, LLC, who is the owner of your account referenced above.

We believe most people want to do the right thing and satisfy their past financial obligations. We also understand that times are tough and it can be difficult to pay the full amount oyed. Because of this, we work with our clients to help you satisfy your account in an alfordable manner.

By taking advantage of this offer, you will save \$258.20 and have your account resolved!

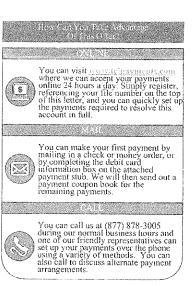
Resolving the account would put an end to the calls and letters attempting to collect on this account. Keep in mind, our client is not obligated to renew or extend this offer.

Want to save even more? Set up a one-time payment for \$292 to resolve your account in full and save \$290.20!

Thirty days after we receive your final payment, we will send you written confirmation that your account has been resolved and you will not be contacted by us again concerning this debt.

Sincerely, Brett M. Operations Manager

The law limits how long you can be sued on a debt. Because of the age of your debt, Cavalry SPV I, LLC will not sue you for it. If you do not pay the debt, Cavalry Portfolio Services, LLC may report or continue to report it to the credit reporting agencies as unpaid.



#### PLEASE SEE THE BACK OF THIS LETTER FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION ▼ Detach and Return with Payment ▼

 $\Box$  I would like to resolve my account(s) in full by making 6 monthly payments of \$54. Please process my first payment and send me a coupon book for the remaining payments.

 $\oplus$  I would like to save even more and resolve my account(s) in full with a one-time payment of \$292.

n I would like to make a smaller monthly payment that is affordable to me to pay the balance in full. Please process my first payment of \_\_\_\_\_\_ and send me a series of coupon books as necessary for the remaining payments. Please make the payments due on the \_\_\_\_\_ of every month.

Tunne .	Franci, Caroona D
Our File # :	3289
Original Creditor Account # :	5492
Current Balance :	\$582.20

ACCOUNT INFORMATION Nama : Hall- Calaana D

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Total Card, Inc.	ç
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Sioux Falls, SD 57109	5

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# JS44 (Rev. 11/16 NDGA Gase 1:18-cv-01801-ELR-26 TIL Deowner SHEE Filed 04/26/18 Page 1 of 2

The JS44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket record. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ATTACHED)

I. (a) PLAINTIFF(S) Caleena D. Hall, individually and on behalf of all ot similarly situated,	DEFENDANT(S) Total Card, Inc.; Cavalry SPV I, LLC; and John Does 1-25			
(b) COUNTY OF RESIDENCE OF FIRST LISTED PLAINTIFF Fulton (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)	COUNTY OF RESIDENCE OF FIRST LISTED DEFENDANT			
(c) ATTORNEYS (FIRM NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, AND E-MAIL ADDRESS) Jonathan B. Mason, Esq. Mason Law Group, P.C. 1100 Peachtree Street, NE, Suite 200 Atlanta, GA 30309 404.920.8040 jmason@atlshowbizlaw.com		ATTORNEYS (IF KNOWN)		
II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (PLACE AN "X" IN ONE BOX ONLY) 1 U.S. GOVERNMENT PLAINTIFF 2 U.S. GOVERNMENT DEFENDANT 1 U.S. GOVERNMENT 1 U.S	$\begin{array}{c} \text{PLF} & \text{DEF} \\ \hline 1 & \hline 1 & 1 & \text{CI} \\ \hline 2 & \hline 2 & \text{CI} \\ \hline 3 & \hline 3 & \text{CI} \end{array}$	ZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES         N "X" IN ONE BOX FOR PLAINTIFF AND ONE BOX FOR DEFENDANT) (FOR DIVERSITY CASES ONLY)         PLF DEF         TIZEN OF THIS STATE       4       4       INCORPORATED OR PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS IN THIS STATE         TIZEN OF ANOTHER STATE       5       INCORPORATED AND PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS IN THIS STATE         TIZEN OF ANOTHER STATE       6       6       FOREIGN NATION		
IV. ORIGIN (PLACE AN "X "IN ONE BOX ONLY) I ORIGINAL PROCEEDING MULTIDISTRICT BLITIGATION- DIRECT FILE V. CALISE OF A CETION	4 REINSTATED REOPENED	(Specify District) TRANSFER JUDGMENT		
V. CAUSE OF ACTION CETTE THE U.S. CIVIL STATUTE UT JURISDICTIONAL STATUTES UNLE 15 U.S.C. 1692 et seq. Fair Debt Collection Prac collection letter to Plaintiff in violation of the FDC	ctices Act ("	TARE FILING AND WRITE A BRIEF STATEMENT OF CAUSE - DO NOT CITE		
<ul> <li>2. Unusually large number of claims or defenses.</li> <li>3. Factual issues are exceptionally complex</li> <li>4. Greater than normal volume of evidence.</li> <li>5. Extended discovery period is needed.</li> <li>10. Exist</li> </ul>		lems locating or preserving evidence ling parallel investigations or actions by government. tiple use of experts. d for discovery outside United States boundaries. tence of highly technical issues and proof.		
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY				

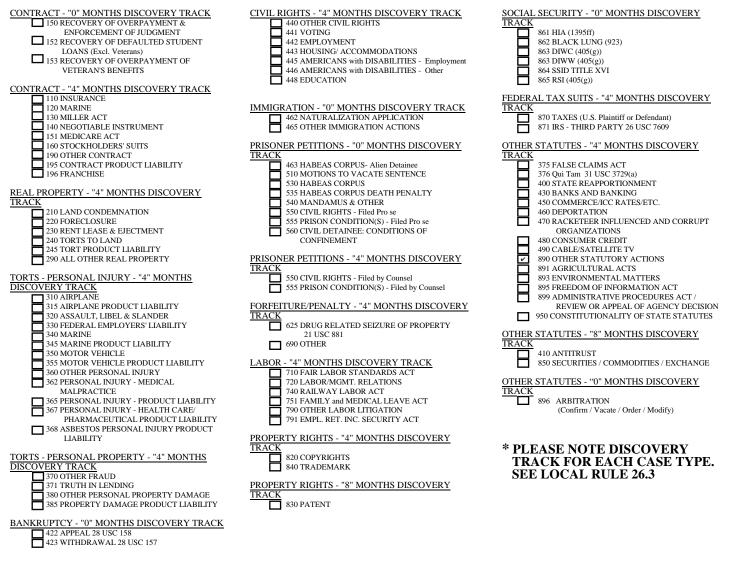
	APPLYING IFP	MAG. JUDGE (IFP)
	NATURE OF SUIT	CAUSE OF ACTION
(Referral)		

JUDGE

MAG. JUDGE

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#### VI. NATURE OF SUIT (PLACE AN "X" IN ONE BOX ONLY)



#### VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:

└ CHECK IF CLASS ACTION UNDER F.R.Civ.P. 23 DEMAND \$\_\_\_\_\_\_ JURY DEMAND └ YES □ NO (CHECK YES <u>ONLY</u> IF DEMANDED IN COMPLAINT)

# VIII. RELATED/REFILED CASE(S) IF ANY

JUDGE\_

#### DOCKET NO.\_

CIVIL CASES ARE DEEMED RELATED IF THE PENDING CASE INVOLVES: (CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX)

- □ 1. PROPERTY INCLUDED IN AN EARLIER NUMBERED PENDING SUIT.
- □ 2. SAME ISSUE OF FACT OR ARISES OUT OF THE SAME EVENT OR TRANSACTION INCLUDED IN AN EARLIER NUMBERED PENDING SUIT.
- □ 3. VALIDITY OR INFRINGEMENT OF THE SAME PATENT, COPYRIGHT OR TRADEMARK INCLUDED IN AN EARLIER NUMBERED PENDING SUIT.
- 4. APPEALS ARISING OUT OF THE SAME BANKRUPTCY CASE AND ANY CASE RELATED THERETO WHICH HAVE BEEN DECIDED BY THE SAME BANKRUPTCY JUDGE,
- **5.** REPETITIVE CASES FILED BY <u>PRO SE</u> LITIGANTS.
- 6. COMPANION OR RELATED CASE TO CASE(S) BEING SIMULTANEOUSLY FILED (INCLUDE ABBREVIATED STYLE OF OTHER CASE(S)):

☐ 7. EITHER SAME OR ALL OF THE PARTIES AND ISSUES IN THIS CASE WERE PREVIOUSLY INVOLVED IN CASE NO. DISMISSED. This case ☐ IS ☐ IS NOT (check one box) SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME CASE.

, WHICH WAS

/s/ Jonathan B. Mason

# **ClassAction.org**

This complaint is part of ClassAction.org's searchable class action lawsuit database and can be found in this post: Lawsuit: Despite Collection Notice Claims, Total Card, Cavalry SPV Could Not Sue Debtor