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Georgia Watch honors 2019 Consumer Champions

ATLANTA, GA – On October 10, 2019, Georgia Watch presented its 2019 Consumer Champion Awards to four individuals for their work to protect and empower consumers in Georgia.

Representative Sharon Cooper (R-Marietta, Health & Human Services Committee Chairman), was recognized as the “Consumer Champion for Well-Being” for her hard work to promote healthcare and healthy conditions for Georgians, especially the most vulnerable. During the 2019 legislative session, Rep. Cooper sponsored and passed three bills that address: tenant rights to healthy housing; health insurance coverage which allows patients quicker access to potentially life savings drugs, and legal and appropriate care for pregnant women who are incarcerated.

Harry Samler received the 2019 “Consumer Champion for Financial Protection” award for his persistent coverage of financial concerns affecting consumers. A consumer investigative reporter, Mr. Samler has been solving problems on Atlanta's streets for almost two decades. He's stepped in and gone to bat for consumers countless times, leading to 345 resolutions and over \$1 million recovered for Georgians. In 2005, he joined CBS-46 where he hosts “Better Call Harry.”

The “Consumer Champion for Community Education” award was presented to Iris Harris, Care Manager at Fayette Senior Services, Inc. for her relentless and steadfast dedication to educating seniors about consumer issues, including medical debt and energy bills. Ms. Harris not only provides direct assistance to seniors, but also connects them with resources that enable them to protect themselves and remain independent and active. She has used information from Georgia Watch's [Guide for Medical Bills and Debt](#) to help her clients resolve outstanding medical bills and lower their debt.

Georgia Watch recognized Janelle Williams, Ph.D., with the “Consumer Champion for Change” award for her tenacious commitment to equity and justice. A Senior Associate with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Dr. Williams oversees economic opportunity efforts for the Casey Foundation's Atlanta Civic Site. She both inspired Georgia Watch's organizational vision and motivated its mission to eliminate systemic barriers to opportunity for all Georgians.

“Georgia Watch is proud to recognize these Consumer Champions for standing up for the interests of Georgia consumers,” said Georgia Watch Executive Director Liz Coyle. “We owe



them each a debt of gratitude for the energy they put forth every day to keep Georgians safe, healthy and financially secure."

Founded in 2002, Georgia Watch is a statewide, non-profit consumer advocacy organization working to inform and protect Georgia consumers on matters that significantly impact their quality of life, including the effects of predatory business practices, the high cost of utilities and healthcare, and restricted access to the civil justice system.

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