



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
MASSACHUSETTS**

**CAMBRIDGE CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMISSION
CAMBRIDGE CONSUMERS' COUNCIL**

JAMES CARAGIANES
Chairman

NANCY LAZARUS
Vice-Chairman

ROBERT K. LAFFIN
Treasurer

GEORGE E. BYARS
Secretary

FAITH BARROW
Consumer Counsellor

ALAN R. BUTLER
Executive Director

1981 ANNUAL REPORT

The Cambridge Consumer Advisory Commission commenced full-time operation of the Cambridge Consumers' Council on February 2, 1981 with the appointment of an Executive Director on a part-time consultant basis.

In early April, The Council moved from its temporary "table top" quarters in City Hall to a permanent office in the McCusker Center at 57 Inman Street where the Council presently shares an office suite with two city agencies.

During the 11 months of full-time operation, the Council received and investigated 393 consumer complaints from Cambridge residents and from non-Cambridge residents who experienced problems with Cambridge merchants. This consumer complaint case load resulted in a documented savings to the consumer of \$15,126.00. This savings represents a return of \$1.38 to the Cambridge consumer for each \$1.00 spent by the Consumers' Council during 1981.

*

The Consumers' Council received 1,324 telephone requests for consumer rights information and referred 234 calls to other agencies in situations where the Council lacked jurisdiction to handle the complaint.

An agency brochure describing the Councils' function and purpose was prepared and printed in December. More than 850 consumer education brochures (provided by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Consumer Affairs) were distributed.

24 volunteer Investigator/Mediators were recruited and trained during 1981. Each volunteer averaged one afternoon of service per week during college semesters. However, one volunteer worked 4 days per week, and another volunteer worked 2 days per

week, during the summer.

Finally, the Massachusetts Attorney General, Consumer Protection Division, awarded the Consumers' Council a grant of \$8,000.00 for the Council's complaint and mediation program during calendar 1982. This figure represents a \$1,500.00 increase over the calendar 1981 grant.

* extrapolated from statistical sampling of incoming calls August through December.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 498-9011

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

March 15, 1982

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed herewith is a copy of the 1981 Annual Report of the
Cambridge Consumer Advisory Commission.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mbf
Enc.

Agenda Item Number Three

8306

Re: copy of the 1981 Annual Report of the
Cambridge Consumer Advisory Commission.

In City Council,

March 15, 1982

3/15/82

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