The Small Business – Credit Card Agreement

The Private Sector Delivered a Free-Market Solution for Businesses of All Sizes

Congress Doesn't Need to Act. The Market Already Did.

	Merchant Agreement (2025)	Durbin-Marshall Mandates	
Helps Small Business?	✓	✗	This agreement between Visa, Mastercard, and U.S. merchants—more than 90% of which are small businesses—treats businesses of all sizes equally. The Durbin-Marshall Credit Card Mandates do not. The University of Miami (2025): "Almost all [the benefits from Durbin-Marshall Mandates] will accrue to retailers with $500 million or more in annual sales, with little going to small businesses."
Offers Real Savings?	✓	✗	The merchants' agreement is expected to save businesses more than **$200 billion over eight years**—more than **$25 billion annually.** According to the most generous estimates, Durbin-Marshall saves at most $17 billion annually, with most of the benefits going to corporate mega-stores. Those estimates ignore the costs to consumers and small businesses, including reduced rewards and weaker security.
Guaranteed Reduction in Interchange Rates?	✓	✗	The agreement reduces the U.S. standard credit interchange rate by more than **25%.**
Interchange Rate Certainty?	✓	✗	The agreement will reduce U.S. credit interchange rates by 10 basis points and cap them for five years. In addition, standard U.S. consumer credit rates will be capped at 1.25% for eight years.
More Flexibility for Merchants to Decide Which Cards They Accept?	✓	✗	Merchants will be able to choose which categories of Visa and Mastercard credit cards they accept, providing greater flexibility than under the current "honor all cards" rules. Corporate mega-store lobbyists are objecting to an agreement that gives them the flexibility they have demanded for years—demonstrating that **some merchants are simply being greedy.**
Preserves Existing Data Protections?	✓	✗	Unlike Durbin-Marshall, the agreement preserves existing fraud and data security protections. Durbin-Marshall would require transactions to be routed over untested networks. Texas A&M University (2024): "In a decade, the [Durbin-Marshall] would double the amount of fraud from 2021 levels.
Provides Immediate Relief?	✓	✗	The Merchant Agreement provides guaranteed immediate benefits for businesses of all sizes 90 days after final approval. Durbin-Marshall would require years of regulatory steps and extensive, expensive systems upgrades from merchants, processors, and financial institutions of all sizes.
Widespread Business Support?	✓	✗	A federal judge called the settlement "fair, reasonable, and adequate." More than 12 million merchants will benefit from a private-sector agreement providing over $200 billion in relief. Despite decades of merchant lobbying, the Durbin-Marshall mandates remain controversial and have limited support in Congress.

EPC Electronic Payments Coalition