

Contact: Jamie Lettis
202-454-3006
jlettis@checkbook.org



CSS/Consumers' Checkbook Mourns Loss, Celebrates Life of Organization's Founder Robert Krughoff

WASHINGTON—February 27, 2023—The Center for the Study of Services/Consumers' Checkbook is sad to announce the death of the organization's founder and former president Robert Krughoff, 80, on February 26 following a brief illness. Krughoff retired in October 2021 and is remembered fondly by staff, friends, family, and members of the consumer movement.

At 29, Krughoff started Checkbook after leaving a Washington-area auto repair shop for the third time and realizing his car still hadn't been fixed right. At the time, no organization was evaluating the service providers used by ordinary consumers—plumbers, doctors, veterinarians, roofers, exterminators, and many others. Krughoff developed a plan for how to do this and was able to cobble together support, financial and otherwise. CSS published the first issue of *Washington Consumers' Checkbook* in 1976, later expanding to six more regions and growing its healthcare research operations and national advocacy work.

"Robert was a pioneer and a devoted advocate for consumers. His work helped people save money, avoid hassle, and make safer choices about their healthcare. Above all he was a wonderful mentor, friend, husband and father," said Paul Kallaur, president of CSS. "He touched many lives, personally and professionally, and CSS/Checkbook looks forward to continuing his legacy through our dedication to helping consumers. Robert will always have a place in our hearts."

Under Krughoff's leadership, and thanks to his passion, the organization gained a reputation for breaking barriers and expanding access to information so consumers can make smarter choices and have better experiences. CSS/Checkbook garnered many accolades for its work such as winning a National Press Club First Place Award for Excellence in Consumer Journalism, the Consumer Service Award from the Consumer Federation of America, the Consumers and Patients for Quality Award from the National Quality Forum, and the annual Data Liberator Award from Academy Health. Krughoff was honored with the National Consumer League's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2022.

Outside of work, Krughoff was an avid basketball and tennis player, gardener, traveler, and lover of the outdoors. He is remembered especially fondly by neighbors on Washington, D.C.'s Capitol Hill, where he for decades worked with the nonprofit Friends of Garfield Park to rehabilitate and maintain a beloved local community space. Krughoff is survived by his wife, Gayle, children Alex and Anna, and three grandchildren.

About CSS/Consumers' Checkbook

CSS is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) founded in 1974. CSS is the parent organization of Consumers' Checkbook, which publishes *Checkbook* magazine and its online companion, [Checkbook.org](https://www.checkbook.org). Checkbook, which rates auto repair shops, hospitals, plumbers, veterinarians, doctors, and many other service providers, has localized versions in seven metro areas (Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, Seattle-Tacoma, Twin Cities, and Washington, D.C.). A key focus of CSS is on healthcare. It has decades of experience in healthcare surveys, research, analysis, and reporting. It works with research organizations, federal agencies, health plans, healthcare providers, and state insurance exchanges to measure, report, and improve the experiences of healthcare consumers and patients.

###