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March 26, 2009

Mr. Robert E. Feldman  
Executive Secretary  
Attention: Comments  
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation  
550 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20429

**Re: RIN 3064-AD35; Assessments**

Dear Mr. Feldman:

As the Chief Financial Officer of a tax-exempt hospital and a member of the board of directors of Reading Cooperative Bank, in Massachusetts, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the FDIC's proposal to impose a special assessment on all banks in Massachusetts. I have serious concerns about this proposal, which could impact our relationship with our local bank and could have a significant cost to our community.

I understand that the Deposit Insurance Fund (DIF) must remain strong and secure during these challenging economic times in order to maintain public confidence in the insurance system. However, the proposal imposes a significant financial burden on my bank at a time when we are already dealing with rising unemployment and a deepening recession. Reading Cooperative Bank plays an important role in our local community, and has recently played an essential role in providing financing of our hospital, which serves many of the same communities that Reading Cooperative Bank does.

Our local bank never made risky loans and has served our community in a responsible way for years. I believe banks like Reading Cooperative Bank are being unfairly penalized by the FDIC's proposal. The high cost of the assessment may reduce their ability to lend and impact charitable giving at a time when many nonprofit institutions and social service agencies are facing decreases in donations and higher demand for services. These actions will have negative consequences to our local communities.

I strongly encourage the FDIC to consider alternatives that may reduce the burden of rebuilding the fund while still ensuring that the FDIC has the resources it needs to address ongoing problems in the system. I am confident that we can ensure that the deposit insurance system remains secure without placing such a large burden on local banks. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rule.

Clinical  
Affiliations:

Intensivist  
New England  
Medical Center

Neonatology  
and Pediatrics  
Children's Hospital  
Boston

Perinatology  
Beth Israel Deaconess  
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Sincerely,

Kevin F. Smith  
CFO & Executive Vice President