



Edward O Owens
President

April 15, 2005

Robert E Feldman
Executive Secretary
Attention Comments
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
550 17th St NW
Washington DC 20429

RE. RIN 3064-AC89

Dear Mr Feldman

I urge you to enhance your proposed changes to the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) regulations so that banks do not reduce their levels of branches, and community development loans and investments to low- and moderate-income communities. Your proposal is an improvement from the one you issued in the fall, but serious issues remain.

I still believe that the current exam structure is the most effective for maximizing the level of community development financing. If you move to a new exam format, you must ensure that significant declines of community development financing do not occur.

I am also concerned that deleting a separate test for services will result in CRA exams no longer holding mid-size banks accountable for the provision of bank branches and low-cost accounts in low- and moderate-income communities. Payday lending and other high cost credit has increased in my community the last several years. The last thing we need are CRA exams that no longer look at the number of bank branches in traditionally underserved communities. Please add the provision of bank branches as a clear factor on your proposed CRA exams for mid-size banks.

I urge you to drop your proposed elimination of public data disclosure requirements regarding community development, and small business and small farm lending. The only way to hold mid-size banks accountable for providing credit to small firms and for affordable housing and community development is if the CRA data remains publicly available. You must not change the requirement that community development in rural areas must benefit low- and moderate-income areas and distressed communities.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Edward O Owens

cc National Community Reinvestment Coalition

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