



February 12, 2020

Community Reinvestment Act Regulations  
RIN 3064-AF22: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking,  
Docket ID OCC-2018-0008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter today to show my opposition to the proposed changes to the Community Reinvestments Act (CRA) and to offer my support for the extension of the public comment period so that more concerned citizens have the opportunity to provide feedback. The CRA was created in order to address the practice of redlining by the lending and banking institutions; a practice that at its core, is blunt discrimination based on socioeconomic status and the location's associated with it.

I have worked for over 20 years in low income communities across northern California, in both rural communities and urban centers. My consulting company, Matt Huerta Consulting LLC is dedicated to affordable housing and community development in the Monterey Bay and San Francisco Bay Areas.

There are several proposed changes to the CRA that will be extremely problematic if implemented:

- The proposed changes will lessen the public accountability of banks to their communities by enacting unclear performance measures on CRA exams that would not accurately account for banks' responsiveness to local needs.
- They will also lessen CRA's focus on LMI people and communities in contradiction to the intent of the law to address redlining in and disinvestment from LMI and communities of color.
- The NPRM would count rental housing as affordable housing if LMI people could afford to pay the rent, even if the actual tenants are not low or moderate income. Qualified CRA investments should benefit the intended LMI community.
- Banks would get credit for financing athletic stadiums, storage facilities, and luxury housing in Opportunity Zones, which will only fuel gentrification in the very communities vulnerable to it.
- This proposal provides almost no incentive for banks to maintain and open LMI branches, and it seems to do away entirely with any consideration of whether banks are offering affordable bank account and other consumer products, such as payday alternative small dollar loans and age friendly account products, which are needed by LMI and senior communities.
- OCC policies provide more excuses than the other regulators for banks that show evidence of discrimination, discourage double CRA rating downgrades for violations of law, and allow banks that discriminate and redline to still pass their CRA examinations.



- Lastly, in pressing ahead without fair consideration of prior input, and without providing sufficient time for public comment now, the OCC and the FDIC are creating a tiered system of oversight where banks will be able to choose their regulators based on which provides a friendlier CRA framework.

CRA rules should provide greater scrutiny of, and punishment for, evidence of discrimination, and provide CRA rating downgrades for other forms of harm to the community, such as the financing of displacement.

I strongly oppose the changes proposed to the CRA and ask for the extension of the comment period to allow for a proper and thorough examination of the proposed rule changes and the effects they will have in our low income communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Matt Huerta,

Owner  
Matt Huerta Consulting, LLC