

MUNICIPAL FINANCE SUPPORT ACT OF 2017

SEPTEMBER 12, 2017.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. HENSARLING, from the Committee on Financial Services,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1624]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Financial Services, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1624) to require the appropriate Federal banking agencies to treat certain municipal obligations as level 2A liquid assets, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with amendments and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendments are as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Municipal Finance Support Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MUNICIPAL OBLIGATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 18 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1828) is amended—

- (1) by moving subsection (z) so that it appears after subsection (y); and
- (2) by adding at the end the following:

“(aa) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MUNICIPAL OBLIGATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of the final rule titled ‘Liquidity Coverage Ratio: Liquidity Risk Measurement Standards; Final Rule’ (79 Fed. Reg. 61439; published October 10, 2014) (the ‘Final Rule’) and any other regulation which incorporates a definition of the term ‘high-quality liquid asset’, the appropriate Federal banking agencies shall treat a municipal obligation that is both liquid and readily marketable (as defined in the Final Rule) and investment grade as of the calculation date as a high-quality liquid asset that is no lower than a level 2B liquid asset.

“(2) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection:

“(A) INVESTMENT GRADE.—With respect to an obligation, the term ‘investment grade’ has the meaning given that term under part 1 of title 12, Code of Federal Regulations.

“(B) MUNICIPAL OBLIGATION.—The term ‘municipal obligation’ means an obligation of a State or any political subdivision thereof, or any agency or instrumentality of a State or any political subdivision thereof.”

(b) AMENDMENT TO LIQUIDITY COVERAGE RATIO REGULATIONS.—Not later than the end of the 3-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and the Comptroller of the Currency shall amend the final rule titled “Liquidity Coverage Ratio: Liquidity Risk Measurement Standards; Final Rule” (79 Fed. Reg. 61439; published October 10, 2014) to implement the amendments made by this Act.

Amend the title so as to read:

A bill to require the appropriate Federal banking agencies to treat certain municipal obligations as no lower than level 2B liquid assets, and for other purposes.

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

Introduced by Representative Luke Messer on March 20, 2017, H.R. 1624, the “Municipal Finance Support Act of 2017,” amends the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to require federal banking agencies (the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC)) to treat certain municipal securities that are liquid, readily marketable, and investment grade as level 2B liquid assets—at a minimum—for purposes of calculating total high-quality liquid assets (HQLAs) under the Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) regulation promulgated by the federal banking agencies.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

The goal of H.R. 1624 is to reclassify certain municipal securities as highly liquid assets and provide financial institutions with greater flexibility to manage their liquidity requirements.

On September 3, 2014, the OCC, Federal Reserve, and the FDIC issued a final rule that implements the LCR consistent with the Basel Committee’s policy directive. The final rule is designed to strengthen the liquidity risk management of banks, savings associations, and bank holding companies. Banks with at least \$250 billion in total assets or consolidated on-balance sheet foreign exposures of at least \$10 billion are required to be 8 percent compliant by January 1, 2015, and will need to be 90 percent compliant by January 1, 2016, and in complete compliance by January 1, 2017.

For an asset to qualify as an HQLA, it must be liquid and readily marketable, a reliable source of funding in repo or sales markets, and not an obligation of a financial company. Examples of HQLAs include: U.S. Treasuries, Government debt, Investment grade corporate debt and excess reserves held at the Fed.

In the final rule to implement the LCR, the OCC, FDIC and Fed excluded municipal securities as an asset that qualifies as HQLAs. Municipal securities are frequently issued by the transportation, housing, and healthcare authorities of state and local governments to raise funds to pay for projects ranging from bridges and schools to hospitals and recreational facilities. A significant number of investors participate in the \$3.8 trillion municipal securities market: as of March 2017, individuals directly held about \$1.56 trillion of the outstanding municipal securities, and another approximately \$912 billion was held by money market funds, mutual funds, and

closed end funds on behalf of primarily retail investors. The retail participation rate in the municipal securities market is close to 70 percent.

Critics of the LCR rule argue that the exclusion of municipal securities from HQLA treatment will reduce the eligible pool of potential purchasers of municipal issuances. The result will be increased borrowing costs for state and local governments during times of economic stress. In addition, there is no reason why high-quality liquid municipal bonds issued by U.S. states and municipalities should receive a lower standing than foreign sovereign debt with equivalent (or even lesser) credit quality and market liquidity. Most importantly, it disincentives financial institutions from holding investment-grade municipal securities and could cause bank holding companies and national banks to retreat from the \$3.8 trillion municipal securities market, and thereby force state and local governments to scale back spending on roads, schools and other infrastructure projects financed with the bonds.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, federal, state, and local governments will face an estimated \$4.6 trillion outlay over the next 10 years to meet infrastructure needs, with a \$2.1 trillion funding gap. With such significant anticipated costs, it is important for municipalities and states to finance infrastructure projects at the lowest possible cost and have the largest pool of eligible purchasers for municipal issuances. Classifying highly-liquid and readily marketable investment-grade municipal securities as HQLA will help ensure low-cost infrastructure financing remains available for state and local governments.

Members of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors have been sympathetic to arguments about the liquidity profile of municipal securities and their treatment under the LCR. During a September 2014 hearing before the Senate Banking Committee, former Governor Daniel Tarullo observed that some state and local debt is frequently traded and may be “comparable to that of the very liquid corporate bonds” that qualify as HQLAs. Additionally, during Chair Yellen’s February 2015 “Humphrey-Hawkins” testimony before the Financial Services Committee, Fed Chair Janet Yellen stated that she hoped “to be able to identify some of those [municipal] bonds that would qualify for different LCR treatment. We are in discussions with the other banking agencies on that.” At the July 2017 “Humphrey-Hawkins” hearing, Chair Yellen reiterated her support for expanded treatment of municipal securities as HQLAs, noting “the Fed has gone further than other regulators in including more liquid municipal securities as level 2B assets.”

On May 21, 2015, the Federal Reserve issued a proposed rule to permit bank holding companies to include certain general obligation state and municipal bonds to the definition of HQLAs and noted that its study of the issue suggested these instruments should qualify as HQLAs because “they have liquidity characteristics sufficiently similar to investment grade corporate bonds and other HQLA asset classes.” The proposed rule would allow investment grade, general obligation U.S. state and municipal bonds to be counted as HQLAs (specifically level 2B liquid assets) up to certain levels if they meet the same liquidity criteria that currently apply to corporate debt securities. The limits on the amount of a

state or municipality's bonds that could qualify are based on the specific liquidity characteristics of the bonds.

The proposed rule would apply only to entities subject to the LCR and supervised by the Fed, including (1) bank holding companies, certain savings and loan holding companies, and state member banks with \$250 billion or more in total consolidated assets; (2) state member banks with \$10 billion or more in total consolidated assets that are subsidiaries of the above entities; and (3) bank holding companies and certain savings and loan holding companies with \$50 billion or more in total consolidated assets, to which a less stringent LCR applies. Neither the OCC nor the FDIC has taken similar actions to amend the LCR to treat certain municipal securities as HQLAs. As the percentage of municipal securities held at the national bank is greater than those held at the holding company, H.R. 1624 is necessary to require consistent treatment of these municipal assets by all of the prudential regulators.

HEARINGS

The Committee on Financial Services Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises held a hearing examining matters relating to H.R. 1624 on July 14, 2017.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

The Committee on Financial Services met in open session on July 25, 2017, and ordered H.R. 1624 to be reported favorably to the House as amended by a recorded vote of 60 yeas to 0 nays (recorded vote no. FC-69), a quorum being present. Before the motion to report was offered, the Committee adopted an amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. Messer by voice vote.

COMMITTEE VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires the Committee to list the record votes on the motion to report legislation and amendments thereto. The sole recorded vote was on a motion by Chairman Hensarling to report the bill favorably to the House as amended. The motion was agreed to by a recorded vote of 60 yeas to 0 nays (Record vote no. FC-69), a quorum being present.

Present	Representative	Yeas	Nays
	Mr. HENSARLING, <i>Chairman</i>	✓	
	Mr. McHENRY	✓	
	Mr. KING	✓	
	Mr. ROYCE	✓	
	Mr. LUCAS	✓	
	Mr. PEARCE	✓	
	Mr. POSEY	✓	
	Mr. LUETKEMEYER	✓	
	Mr. HUIZENGA	✓	
	Mr. DUFFY	✓	
	Mr. STIVERS	✓	
	Mr. HULTGREN	✓	
	Mr. ROSS	✓	
	Mr. PITTENGER	✓	
	Mrs. WAGNER	✓	
	Mr. BARR	✓	
	Mr. ROTHFUS	✓	
	Mr. MESSER	✓	
	Mr. TIPTON	✓	
	Mr. WILLIAMS	✓	
	Mr. POLIQUIN	✓	
	Mrs. LOVE	✓	
	Mr. HILL	✓	
	Mr. EMMER	✓	
	Mr. ZELDIN	✓	
	Mr. TROTT	✓	
	Mr. LOUDERMILK	✓	
	Mr. MOONEY	✓	
	Mr. MACARTHUR	✓	
	Mr. DAVIDSON	✓	
	Mr. BUDD	✓	
	Mr. KUSTOFF	✓	
	Ms. TENNEY	✓	
	Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH	✓	
	Ms. WATERS, <i>Ranking Member</i>	✓	
	Mrs. MALONEY	✓	
	Ms. VELÁZQUEZ	✓	
	Mr. SHERMAN	✓	
	Mr. MEEKS	✓	
	Mr. CAPUANO	✓	
	Mr. CLAY	✓	
	Mr. LYNCH	✓	
	Mr. SCOTT	✓	
	Mr. GREEN	✓	
	Mr. CLEAVER	✓	
	Ms. MOORE	✓	
	Mr. ELLISON	✓	
	Mr. PERLMUTTER	✓	
	Mr. HIMES	✓	
	Mr. FOSTER	✓	
	Mr. KILDEE	✓	
	Mr. DELANEY	✓	
	Ms. SINEMA	✓	
	Mrs. BEATTY	✓	
	Mr. HECK	✓	
	Mr. VARGAS	✓	
	Mr. GOTTHEIMER	✓	
	Mr. GONZALEZ	✓	
	Mr. CRIST	✓	
	Mr. KIHUEN	✓	

Committee on Financial Services

115th Congress

DATE: 7/25/17

Measure HR 1624

Amendment No. MTA

Offered by: _____

Agreed To	Yes	No	Wdm
	✓		

Voice Vote	Yeas	Nays	Prsnt
	60	0	

Record vote no. FC-69

As Amended

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the findings and recommendations of the Committee based on oversight activities under clause 2(b)(1) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, are incorporated in the descriptive portions of this report.

PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee states that H.R. 1624 will provide regulatory parity for certain municipal securities by requiring federal banking agencies (the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Federal Reserve Board, and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, to treat investment grade municipal securities that are liquid, readily marketable, and investment grade as of the calculation date as high-quality level 2B assets under the Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR).

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY, ENTITLEMENT AUTHORITY, AND TAX EXPENDITURES

In compliance with clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee adopts as its own the estimate of new budget authority, entitlement authority, or tax expenditures or revenues contained in the cost estimate prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATES

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following is the cost estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, September 11, 2017.

Hon. JEB HENSARLING,
*Chairman, Committee on Financial Services,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1624, the Municipal Finance Support Act of 2017.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Sarah Puro.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL,
Director.

Enclosure.

H.R. 1624—Municipal Finance Support Act of 2017

H.R. 1624 would require the federal banking regulators—the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), and the Federal Reserve—to

revise regulations concerning the treatment of municipal bonds in the portfolios of large banks.

Specifically, H.R. 1624 would require the FDIC, the OCC, and the Federal Reserve to allow banks with assets totaling more than \$250 billion to treat certain municipal bonds as highly liquid assets for regulatory purposes. Liquid assets are part of the calculation that regulators use to determine the liquidity coverage ratio—the level of liquid reserves an institution must have to cover the cost of its operating cash flows for 30 days.

Information on bank assets indicates that less than a dozen banks would qualify for the proposed regulatory treatment of municipal bonds under the bill. Based on information from the regulatory agencies, CBO estimates that less than 5 percent of the value of municipal bonds is held by banks subject to the liquidity coverage ratio, and those municipal bonds currently make up less than 2 percent of the assets at the affected banks.

In CBO's judgment because they compose such a small fraction of the assets of large banks, it is very unlikely that the proposed change in the regulatory treatment of the municipal bond assets would increase the probability of a bank failure, which would result in a cost to the Deposit Insurance Fund. Therefore, CBO estimates that enacting this provision would have no significant cost to the federal government.

H.R. 1624 would require the FDIC, the OCC, and the Federal Reserve to amend current regulations. Administrative costs incurred by the FDIC and the OCC to write such regulations are recorded in the budget as an increase in direct spending. Those two agencies are authorized to collect premiums and fees from insured depository institutions to cover administrative expenses. CBO expects that the costs to amend the regulations would be small and would not have a significant net effect on the federal budget. Administrative costs to the Federal Reserve Systems are reflected on the federal budget as a reduction in remittances to the Treasury (which are recorded in the budget as revenues.) CBO expects that any additional administrative costs to the Federal Reserve under the bill also would be insignificant.

Because enacting H.R. 1624 would affect direct spending and revenues; pay-as-you-go procedures apply. CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 1624 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2028.

H.R. 1624 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

If the OCC or the FDIC increases fees or premiums to offset the costs associated with implementing the bill, H.R. 1624 would increase the cost of an existing mandate on private entities required to pay those assessments. CBO estimates that the incremental cost of the mandate would be small and would fall well below the annual threshold for private-sector mandates established in UMRA (\$156 million in 2017, adjusted annually for inflation).

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Sarah Puro (for federal costs) and Logan Smith (for the private-sector mandate). The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

This information is provided in accordance with section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995.

The Committee has determined that the bill does not contain Federal mandates on the private sector. The Committee has determined that the bill does not impose a Federal intergovernmental mandate on State, local, or tribal governments.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

No advisory committees within the meaning of section 5(b) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act were created by this legislation.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of the section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

EARMARK IDENTIFICATION

With respect to clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee has carefully reviewed the provisions of the bill and states that the provisions of the bill do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits within the meaning of the rule.

DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

In compliance with clause 3(c)(5) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee states that no provision of the bill establishes or reauthorizes: (1) a program of the Federal Government known to be duplicative of another Federal program; (2) a program included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139; or (3) a program related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Pub. L. No. 95–220, as amended by Pub. L. No. 98–169).

DISCLOSURE OF DIRECTED RULEMAKING

Pursuant to section 3(i) of H. Res. 5, (115th Congress), the following statement is made concerning directed rulemakings: The Committee estimates that the bill requires one directed rulemaking within the meaning of such section. This directed rulemaking will ensure that the appropriate federal regulators amend the final rule titled ‘Liquidity Coverage Ratio: Liquidity Risk Measurement Standards; Final Rule’ (79 Fed. Reg. 61439) to implement H.R. 1624.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Short title

This Section cites H.R. 1624 as the “Municipal Finance Support Act of 2017”

Section 2. Treatment of certain municipal obligations

This Section amends the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to require federal banking agencies (the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Federal Reserve Board, and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency) to treat certain municipal securities that are liquid, readily marketable, and investment grade as of the calculation date as high-quality level 2B liquid assets. Such change shall be implemented by amending the rule titled ‘Liquidity Coverage Ratio: Liquidity Risk Measurement Standards; Final Rule.’

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (new matter is printed in italic and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE ACT

* * * * *

SEC. 18. (a) REPRESENTATIONS OF DEPOSIT INSURANCE.—

(1) INSURED DEPOSITORY INSTITUTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Each insured depository institution shall display at each place of business maintained by that institution a sign or signs relating to the insurance of the deposits of the institution, in accordance with regulations to be prescribed by the Corporation.

(B) STATEMENT TO BE INCLUDED.—Each sign required under subparagraph (A) shall include a statement that insured deposits are backed by the full faith and credit of the United States Government.

(2) REGULATIONS.—The Corporation shall prescribe regulations to carry out this subsection, including regulations governing the substance of signs required by paragraph (1) and the manner of display or use of such signs.

(3) PENALTIES.—For each day that an insured depository institution continues to violate paragraph (1) or any regulation issued under paragraph (2), it shall be subject to a penalty of not more than \$100, which the Corporation may recover for its use.

(4) FALSE ADVERTISING, MISUSE OF FDIC NAMES, AND MISREPRESENTATION TO INDICATE INSURED STATUS.—

(A) PROHIBITION ON FALSE ADVERTISING AND MISUSE OF FDIC NAMES.—No person may represent or imply that any deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is insured or guaranteed by the Corporation, if such deposit liability,

obligation, certificate, or share is not insured or guaranteed by the Corporation—

(i) by using the terms “Federal Deposit”, “Federal Deposit Insurance”, “Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation”, any combination of such terms, or the abbreviation “FDIC” as part of the business name or firm name of any person, including any corporation, partnership, business trust, association, or other business entity; or

(ii) by using such terms or any other terms, sign, or symbol as part of an advertisement, solicitation, or other document.

(B) PROHIBITION ON MISREPRESENTATIONS OF INSURED STATUS.—No person may knowingly misrepresent—

(i) that any deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is insured, under this Act, if such deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is not so insured; or

(ii) the extent to which or the manner in which any deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is insured under this Act, if such deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is not so insured, to the extent or in the manner represented.

(C) AUTHORITY OF THE APPROPRIATE FEDERAL BANKING AGENCY.—The appropriate Federal banking agency shall have enforcement authority in the case of a violation of this paragraph by any person for which the agency is the appropriate Federal banking agency, or any institution-affiliated party thereof.

(D) CORPORATION AUTHORITY IF THE APPROPRIATE FEDERAL BANKING AGENCY FAILS TO FOLLOW RECOMMENDATION.—

(i) RECOMMENDATION.—The Corporation may recommend in writing to the appropriate Federal banking agency that the agency take any enforcement action authorized under section 8 for purposes of enforcement of this paragraph with respect to any person for which the agency is the appropriate Federal banking agency or any institution-affiliated party thereof.

(ii) AGENCY RESPONSE.—If the appropriate Federal banking agency does not, within 30 days of the date of receipt of a recommendation under clause (i), take the enforcement action with respect to this paragraph recommended by the Corporation or provide a plan acceptable to the Corporation for responding to the situation presented, the Corporation may take the recommended enforcement action against such person or institution-affiliated party.

(E) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—In addition to its authority under subparagraphs (C) and (D), for purposes of this paragraph, the Corporation shall have, in the same manner and to the same extent as with respect to a State non-member insured bank—

(i) jurisdiction over—

(I) any person other than a person for which another agency is the appropriate Federal banking agency or any institution-affiliated party thereof; and

(II) any person that aids or abets a violation of this paragraph by a person described in subclause (I); and

(ii) for purposes of enforcing the requirements of this paragraph, the authority of the Corporation under—

(I) section 10(c) to conduct investigations; and

(II) subsections (b), (c), (d) and (i) of section 8 to conduct enforcement actions.

(F) OTHER ACTIONS PRESERVED.—No provision of this paragraph shall be construed as barring any action otherwise available, under the laws of the United States or any State, to any Federal or State agency or individual.

(b) No insured depository institution shall pay any dividends on its capital stock or interest on its capital notes or debentures (if such interest is required to be paid only out of net profits) or distribute any of its capital assets while it remains in default in the payment of any assessment due to the Corporation; and any director or officer of any insured depository institution who participates in the declaration or payment of any such dividend or interest or in any such distribution shall, upon conviction, be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both: *Provided*, That, if such default is due to a dispute between the insured depository institution and the Corporation over the amount of such assessment, this subsection shall not apply if the insured depository institution deposits security satisfactory to the Corporation for payment upon final determination of the issue.

(c)(1) Except with the prior written approval of the responsible agency, which shall in every case referred to in this paragraph be the Corporation, no insured depository institution shall—

(A) merge or consolidate with any noninsured bank or institution;

(B) assume liability to pay any deposits (including liabilities which would be “deposits” except for the proviso in section 3(1)(5) of this Act) made in, or similar liabilities of, any noninsured bank or institution; or

(C) transfer assets to any noninsured bank or institution in consideration of the assumption of liabilities for any portion of the deposits made in such insured depository institution.

(2) No insured depository institution shall merge or consolidate with any other insured depository institution or, either directly or indirectly, acquire the assets of, or assume liability to pay any deposits made in, any other insured depository institution except with the prior written approval of the responsible agency, which shall be—

(A) the Comptroller of the Currency if the acquiring, assuming, or resulting bank is to be a national bank or a Federal savings association;

(B) the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System if the acquiring, assuming, or resulting bank is to be a State member bank; and

(C) the Corporation if the acquiring, assuming, or resulting bank is to be a State nonmember insured bank or a State savings association.

(3) Notice of any proposed transaction for which approval is required under paragraph (1) or (2) (referred to hereafter in this subsection as a “merger transaction”) shall, unless the responsible agency finds that it must act immediately in order to prevent the probable default of one of the banks or savings associations involved, be published—

(A) prior to the granting of approval of such transaction,

(B) in a form approved by the responsible agency,

(C) at appropriate intervals during a period at least as long as the period allowed for furnishing reports under paragraph (4) of this subsection, and

(D) in a newspaper of general circulation in the community or communities where the main offices of the banks or savings associations involved are located, or, if there is no such newspaper in any such community, then in the newspaper of general circulation published nearest thereto.

(4) REPORTS ON COMPETITIVE FACTORS.—

(A) REQUEST FOR REPORT.—In the interests of uniform standards and subject to subparagraph (B), before acting on any application for approval of a merger transaction, the responsible agency shall—

(i) request a report on the competitive factors involved from the Attorney General of the United States; and

(ii) provide a copy of the request to the Corporation (when the Corporation is not the responsible agency).

(B) FURNISHING OF REPORT.—The report requested under subparagraph (A) shall be furnished by the Attorney General to the responsible agency—

(i) not later than 30 calendar days after the date on which the Attorney General received the request; or

(ii) not later than 10 calendar days after such date, if the requesting agency advises the Attorney General that an emergency exists requiring expeditious action.

(C) EXCEPTIONS.—A responsible agency may not be required to request a report under subparagraph (A) if—

(i) the responsible agency finds that it must act immediately in order to prevent the probable failure of 1 of the insured depository institutions involved in the merger transaction; or

(ii) the merger transaction involves solely an insured depository institution and 1 or more of the affiliates of such depository institution.

(5) The responsible agency shall not approve—

(A) any proposed merger transaction which would result in a monopoly, or which would be in furtherance of any combination or conspiracy to monopolize or to attempt to monopolize the business of banking in any part of the United States, or

(B) any other proposed merger transaction whose effect in any section of the country may be substantially to lessen competition, or to tend to create a monopoly, or which in any other manner would be in restraint of trade, unless it finds that the

anticompetitive effects of the proposed transaction are clearly outweighed in the public interest by the probable effect of the transaction in meeting the convenience and needs of the community to be served.

In every case, the responsible agency shall take into consideration the financial and managerial resources and future prospects of the existing and proposed institutions, the convenience and needs of the community to be served, and the risk to the stability of the United States banking or financial system.

(6) The responsible agency shall immediately notify the Attorney General of any approval by it pursuant to this subsection of a proposed merger transaction. If the agency has found that it must act immediately to prevent the probable failure of one of the insured depository institutions involved, or if the proposed merger transaction is solely between an insured depository institution and 1 or more of its affiliates, and the report on the competitive factors has been dispensed with, the transaction may be consummated immediately upon approval by the agency. If the agency has advised the Attorney General under paragraph (4)(B)(ii) of the existence of an emergency requiring expeditious action and has requested a report on the competitive factors within 10 days, the transaction may not be consummated before the fifth calendar day after the date of approval by the agency. In all other cases, the transaction may not be consummated before the thirtieth calendar day after the date of approval by the agency or, if the agency has not received any adverse comment from the Attorney General of the United States relating to competitive factors, such shorter period of time as may be prescribed by the agency with the concurrence of the Attorney General, but in no event less than 15 calendar days after the date of approval.

(7)(A) Any action brought under the antitrust laws arising out of a merger transaction shall be commenced prior to the earliest time under paragraph (6) at which a merger transaction approved under paragraph (5) might be consummated. The commencement of such an action shall stay the effectiveness of the agency's approval unless the court shall otherwise specifically order. In any such action, the court shall review de novo the issues presented.

(B) In any judicial proceeding attacking a merger transaction approved under paragraph (5) on the ground that the merger transaction alone and of itself constituted a violation of any antitrust laws other than section 2 of the Act of July 2, 1890 (section 2 of the Sherman Antitrust Act, 15 U.S.C. 2), the standards applied by the court shall be identical with those that the banking agencies are directed to apply under paragraph (5).

(C) Upon the consummation of a merger transaction in compliance with this subsection and after the termination of any antitrust litigation commenced within the period prescribed in this paragraph, or upon the termination of such period if no such litigation is commenced therein, the transaction may not thereafter be attacked in any judicial proceeding on the ground that it alone and of itself constituted a violation of any antitrust laws other than section 2 of the Act of July 2, 1890 (section 2 of the Sherman Antitrust Act, 15 U.S.C. 2), but nothing in this subsection shall exempt any bank or savings association resulting from a merger transaction

from complying with the antitrust laws after the consummation of such transaction.

(D) In any action brought under the antitrust laws arising out of a merger transaction approved by a Federal supervisory agency pursuant to this subsection, such agency, and any State banking supervisory agency having jurisdiction within the State involved, may appear as a party of its own motion and as of right, and be represented by its counsel.

(8) For the purposes of this subsection, the term "antitrust laws" means the Act of July 2, 1890 (the Sherman Antitrust Act, 15 U.S.C. 1-7), the Act of October 15, 1914 (the Clayton Act, 15 U.S.C. 12-27), and any other Acts in *pari materia*.

(9) Each of the responsible agencies shall include in its annual report to the Congress a description of each merger transaction approved by it during the period covered by the report, along with—

(A) the name and total resources of each bank or savings association involved;

(B) whether a report was submitted by the Attorney General under paragraph (4), and, if so, a summary by the Attorney General of the substance of such report; and

(C) a statement by the responsible agency of the basis for its approval.

(10) Until June 30, 1976, the responsible agency shall not grant any approval required by law which has the practical effect of permitting a conversion from the mutual to the stock form of organization, including approval of any application pending on the date of enactment of this subsection, except that this sentence shall not be deemed to limit now or hereafter the authority of the responsible agency to grant approvals in cases where the responsible agency finds that it must act in order to maintain the safety, soundness, and stability of an insured depository institution. The responsible agency may by rule, regulation, or otherwise and under such civil penalties (which shall be cumulative to any other remedies) as it may prescribe take whatever action it deems necessary or appropriate to implement or enforce this subsection.

(11) MONEY LAUNDERING.—In every case, the responsible agency, shall take into consideration the effectiveness of any insured depository institution involved in the proposed merger transaction in combatting money laundering activities, including in overseas branches.

(12) The provisions of this subsection do not apply to any merger transaction involving a foreign bank if no party to the transaction is principally engaged in business in the United States.

(13)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the responsible agency may not approve an application for an interstate merger transaction if the resulting insured depository institution (including all insured depository institutions which are affiliates of the resulting insured depository institution), upon consummation of the transaction, would control more than 10 percent of the total amount of deposits of insured depository institutions in the United States.

(B) Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to an interstate merger transaction that involves 1 or more insured depository institutions in default or in danger of default, or with respect to which the Corporation provides assistance under section 13.

(C) In this paragraph—

(i) the term “interstate merger transaction” means a merger transaction involving 2 or more insured depository institutions that have different home States and that are not affiliates; and

(ii) the term “home State” means—

(I) with respect to a national bank, the State in which the main office of the bank is located;

(II) with respect to a State bank or State savings association, the State by which the State bank or State savings association is chartered; and

(III) with respect to a Federal savings association, the State in which the home office (as defined by the regulations of the Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision, or, on and after the transfer date, the Comptroller of the Currency) of the Federal savings association is located.

(d)(1) No State nonmember insured bank shall establish and operate any new domestic branch unless it shall have the prior written consent of the Corporation, and no State nonmember insured bank shall move its main office or any such branch from one location to another without such consent. No foreign bank may move any insured branch from one location to another without such consent. The factors to be considered in granting or withholding the consent of the Corporation under this subsection shall be those enumerated in section 6 of this Act.

(2) No State nonmember insured bank shall establish or operate any foreign branch, except with the prior written consent of the Corporation and upon such conditions and pursuant to such regulations as the Corporation may prescribe from time to time.

(3) EXCLUSIVE AUTHORITY FOR ADDITIONAL BRANCHES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Effective June 1, 1997, a State nonmember bank may not acquire, establish, or operate a branch in any State other than the bank’s home State (as defined in section 44(f)(4)) or a State in which the bank already has a branch unless the acquisition, establishment, or operation of a branch in such State by a State nonmember bank is authorized under this subsection or section 13(f), 13(k), or 44.

(B) RETENTION OF BRANCHES.—In the case of a State nonmember bank which relocates the main office of such bank from 1 State to another State after May 31, 1997, the bank may retain and operate branches within the State which was the bank’s home State (as defined in section 44(f)(4)) before the relocation of such office only to the extent the bank would be authorized, under this section or any other provision of law referred to in subparagraph (A), to acquire, establish, or commence to operate a branch in such State if—

(i) the bank had no branches in such State; or

(ii) the branch resulted from—

(I) an interstate merger transaction approved pursuant to section 44; or

(II) a transaction after May 31, 1997, pursuant to which the bank received assistance from the Corporation under section 13(c).

(4) STATE “OPT-IN” ELECTION TO PERMIT INTERSTATE BRANCHING THROUGH DE NOVO BRANCHES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Corporation may approve an application by an insured State nonmember bank to establish and operate a de novo branch in a State (other than the bank’s home State) in which the bank does not maintain a branch if—

(i) the law of the State in which the branch is located, or is to be located, would permit establishment of the branch, if the bank were a State bank chartered by such State; and

(ii) the conditions established in, or made applicable to this paragraph by, subparagraph (B) are met.

(B) CONDITIONS ON ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF INTERSTATE BRANCH.—

(i) ESTABLISHMENT.—An application by an insured State nonmember bank to establish and operate a de novo branch in a host State shall be subject to the same requirements and conditions to which an application for a merger transaction is subject under paragraphs (1), (3), and (4) of section 44(b).

(ii) OPERATION.—Subsections (c) and (d)(2) of section 44 shall apply with respect to each branch of an insured State nonmember bank which is established and operated pursuant to an application approved under this paragraph in the same manner and to the same extent such provisions of such section apply to a branch of a State bank which resulted from a merger transaction under such section 44.

(C) DE NOVO BRANCH DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term “de novo branch” means a branch of a State bank which—

(i) is originally established by the State bank as a branch; and

(ii) does not become a branch of such bank as a result of—

(I) the acquisition by the bank of an insured depository institution or a branch of an insured depository institution; or

(II) the conversion, merger, or consolidation of any such institution or branch.

(D) HOME STATE DEFINED.—The term “home State” means the State by which a State bank is chartered.

(E) HOST STATE DEFINED.—The term “host State” means, with respect to a bank, a State, other than the home State of the bank, in which the bank maintains, or seeks to establish and maintain, a branch.

(e) The Corporation may require any insured depository institution to provide protection and indemnity against burglary, defalcation, and other similar insurable losses. Whenever any insured depository institution refuses to comply with any such requirement the Corporation may contract for such protection and indemnity and add the cost thereof to the assessment otherwise payable by such bank.

(f) Whenever any insured depository institution (except a national bank), after written notice of the recommendations of the Corporation based on a report of examination of such insured depository institution by an examiner of the Corporation, shall fail to comply with such recommendations within one hundred and twenty days after such notice, the Corporation shall have the power, and is hereby authorized, to publish only such part of such report of examination as relates to any recommendation not complied with: *Provided*, That notice of intention to make such publication shall be given to the insured depository institution at least ninety days before such publication is made.

(h) PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO TIMELY PAY ASSESSMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (3), any insured depository institution which fails or refuses to pay any assessment shall be subject to a penalty in an amount of not more than 1 percent of the amount of the assessment due for each day that such violation continues.

(2) EXCEPTION IN CASE OF DISPUTE.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply if—

(A) the failure to pay an assessment is due to a dispute between the insured depository institution and the Corporation over the amount of such assessment; and

(B) the insured depository institution deposits security satisfactory to the Corporation for payment upon final determination of the issue.

(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR SMALL ASSESSMENT AMOUNTS.—If the amount of the assessment which an insured depository institution fails or refuses to pay is less than \$10,000 at the time of such failure or refusal, the amount of any penalty to which such institution is subject under paragraph (1) shall not exceed \$100 for each day that such violation continues.

(4) AUTHORITY TO MODIFY OR REMIT PENALTY.—The Corporation, in the sole discretion of the Corporation, may compromise, modify or remit any penalty which the Corporation may assess or has already assessed under paragraph (1) upon a finding that good cause prevented the timely payment of an assessment.

(i)(1) No insured State nonmember bank shall, without the prior consent of the Corporation, reduce the amount or retire any part of its common or preferred capital stock, or retire any part of its capital notes or debentures.

(2) No insured Federal depository institution shall convert into an insured State depository institution if its capital stock or its surplus will be less than the capital stock or surplus, respectively, of the converting bank at the time of the shareholder's meeting approving such conversion, without the prior written consent of—

(A) the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System if the resulting bank is to be a State member bank;

(B) the Corporation if the resulting bank is to be a State nonmember insured bank; and

(C) the Corporation if the resulting institution is to be an insured State savings association.

(3) Without the prior written consent of the Corporation, no insured depository institution shall convert into a noninsured bank or institution.

(4) In granting or withholding consent under this subsection, the responsible agency shall consider—

- (A) the financial history and condition of the bank,
- (B) the adequacy of its capital structure,
- (C) its future earnings prospects,
- (D) the general character and fitness of its management,
- (E) the convenience and needs of the community to be served, and
- (F) whether or not its corporate powers are consistent with the purposes of this Act.

(j) RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSACTIONS WITH AFFILIATES AND INSIDERS.—

(1) TRANSACTIONS WITH AFFILIATES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Sections 23A and 23B of the Federal Reserve Act shall apply with respect to every nonmember insured bank in the same manner and to the same extent as if the nonmember insured bank were a member bank.

(B) AFFILIATE DEFINED.—For the purpose of subparagraph (A), any company that would be an affiliate (as defined in sections 23A and 23B) of a nonmember insured bank if the nonmember insured bank were a member bank shall be deemed to be an affiliate of that nonmember insured bank.

(2) EXTENSIONS OF CREDIT TO OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND PRINCIPAL SHAREHOLDERS.—Subsections (g) and (h) of section 22 of the Federal Reserve Act shall apply with respect to every nonmember insured bank in the same manner and to the same extent as if the nonmember insured bank were a member bank.

(3) AVOIDING EXTRATERRITORIAL APPLICATION TO FOREIGN BANKS.—

(A) TRANSACTIONS WITH AFFILIATES.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to a foreign bank solely because the foreign bank has an insured branch.

(B) EXTENSIONS OF CREDIT TO OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND PRINCIPAL SHAREHOLDERS.—Paragraph (2) shall not apply with respect to a foreign bank solely because the foreign bank has an insured branch, but shall apply with respect to the insured branch.

(C) FOREIGN BANK DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term “foreign bank” has the same meaning as in section 1(b)(7) of the International Banking Act of 1978.

(k) AUTHORITY TO REGULATE OR PROHIBIT CERTAIN FORMS OF BENEFITS TO INSTITUTION-AFFILIATED PARTIES.—

(1) GOLDEN PARACHUTES AND INDEMNIFICATION PAYMENTS.—The Corporation may prohibit or limit, by regulation or order, any golden parachute payment or indemnification payment.

(2) FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.—The Corporation shall prescribe, by regulation, the factors to be considered by the Corporation in taking any action pursuant to paragraph (1) which may include such factors as the following:

(A) Whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that the institution-affiliated party has committed any fraudulent act or omission, breach of trust or fiduciary duty, or insider abuse with regard to the depository institution or

covered company that has had a material affect on the financial condition of the institution.

(B) Whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that the institution-affiliated party is substantially responsible for—

- (i) the insolvency of the depository institution or covered company;
- (ii) the appointment of a conservator or receiver for the depository institution; or
- (iii) the troubled condition of the depository institution (as defined in the regulations prescribed pursuant to section 32(f)).

(C) Whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that the institution-affiliated party has materially violated any applicable Federal or State banking law or regulation that has had a material affect on the financial condition of the institution.

(D) Whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that the institution-affiliated party has violated or conspired to violate—

- (i) section 215, 656, 657, 1005, 1006, 1007, 1014, 1032, or 1344 of title 18, United States Code; or
- (ii) section 1341 or 1343 of such title affecting a federally insured financial institution.

(E) Whether the institution-affiliated party was in a position of managerial or fiduciary responsibility.

(F) The length of time the party was affiliated with the insured depository institution or covered company, and the degree to which—

- (i) the payment reasonably reflects compensation earned over the period of employment; and
- (ii) the compensation involved represents a reasonable payment for services rendered.

(3) CERTAIN PAYMENTS PROHIBITED.—No insured depository institution or covered company may prepay the salary or any liability or legal expense of any institution-affiliated party if such payment is made—

(A) in contemplation of the insolvency of such institution or covered company or after the commission of an act of insolvency; and

(B) with a view to, or has the result of—

- (i) preventing the proper application of the assets of the institution to creditors; or
- (ii) preferring one creditor over another.

(4) GOLDEN PARACHUTE PAYMENT DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “golden parachute payment” means any payment (or any agreement to make any payment) in the nature of compensation by any insured depository institution or covered company for the benefit of any institution-affiliated party pursuant to an obligation of such institution or covered company that—

- (i) is contingent on the termination of such party’s affiliation with the institution or covered company; and

(ii) is received on or after the date on which—

(I) the insured depository institution or covered company, or any insured depository institution subsidiary of such covered company, is insolvent;

(II) any conservator or receiver is appointed for such institution;

(III) the institution's appropriate Federal banking agency determines that the insured depository institution is in a troubled condition (as defined in the regulations prescribed pursuant to section 32(f));

(IV) the insured depository institution has been assigned a composite rating by the appropriate Federal banking agency or the Corporation of 4 or 5 under the Uniform Financial Institutions Rating System; or

(V) the insured depository institution is subject to a proceeding initiated by the Corporation to terminate or suspend deposit insurance for such institution.

(B) CERTAIN PAYMENTS IN CONTEMPLATION OF AN EVENT.—Any payment which would be a golden parachute payment but for the fact that such payment was made before the date referred to in subparagraph (A)(ii) shall be treated as a golden parachute payment if the payment was made in contemplation of the occurrence of an event described in any subclause of such subparagraph.

(C) CERTAIN PAYMENTS NOT INCLUDED.—The term “golden parachute payment” shall not include—

(i) any payment made pursuant to a retirement plan which is qualified (or is intended to be qualified) under section 401 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or other nondiscriminatory benefit plan;

(ii) any payment made pursuant to a bona fide deferred compensation plan or arrangement which the Board determines, by regulation or order, to be permissible; or

(iii) any payment made by reason of the death or disability of an institution-affiliated party.

(5) OTHER DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

(A) INDEMNIFICATION PAYMENT.—Subject to paragraph (6), the term “indemnification payment” means any payment (or any agreement to make any payment) by any insured depository institution or covered company for the benefit of any person who is or was an institution-affiliated party, to pay or reimburse such person for any liability or legal expense with regard to any administrative proceeding or civil action instituted by the appropriate Federal banking agency which results in a final order under which such person—

(i) is assessed a civil money penalty;

(ii) is removed or prohibited from participating in conduct of the affairs of the insured depository institution; or

(iii) is required to take any affirmative action described in section 8(b)(6) with respect to such institution.

(B) LIABILITY OR LEGAL EXPENSE.—The term “liability or legal expense” means—

(i) any legal or other professional expense incurred in connection with any claim, proceeding, or action;

(ii) the amount of, and any cost incurred in connection with, any settlement of any claim, proceeding, or action; and

(iii) the amount of, and any cost incurred in connection with, any judgment or penalty imposed with respect to any claim, proceeding, or action.

(C) PAYMENT.—The term “payment” includes—

(i) any direct or indirect transfer of any funds or any asset; and

(ii) any segregation of any funds or assets for the purpose of making, or pursuant to an agreement to make, any payment after the date on which such funds or assets are segregated, without regard to whether the obligation to make such payment is contingent on—

(I) the determination, after such date, of the liability for the payment of such amount; or

(II) the liquidation, after such date, of the amount of such payment.

(D) COVERED COMPANY.—The term “covered company” means any depository institution holding company (including any company required to file a report under section 4(f)(6) of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956), or any other company that controls an insured depository institution.

(6) CERTAIN COMMERCIAL INSURANCE COVERAGE NOT TREATED AS COVERED BENEFIT PAYMENT.—No provision of this subsection shall be construed as prohibiting any insured depository institution or covered company, from purchasing any commercial insurance policy or fidelity bond, except that, subject to any requirement described in paragraph (5)(A)(iii), such insurance policy or bond shall not cover any legal or liability expense of the institution or covered company which is described in paragraph (5)(A).

(1) When authorized by State law, a State nonmember insured bank may, but only with the prior written consent of the Corporation and upon such conditions and under such regulations as the Corporation may prescribe from time to time, acquire and hold, directly or indirectly, stock or other evidences of ownership in one or more banks or other entities organized under the law of a foreign country or a dependency or insular possession of the United States and not engaged, directly or indirectly, in any activity in the United States except as, in the judgment of the Board of Directors, shall be incidental to the international or foreign business of such foreign bank or entity; and, notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (j) of this section, such State nonmember insured bank may, as to such foreign bank or entity, engage in transactions that would otherwise be covered thereby, but only in the manner and

within the limit prescribed by the Corporation by general or specific regulation or ruling.

(m) ACTIVITIES OF SAVINGS ASSOCIATIONS AND THEIR SUBSIDIARIES.—

(1) PROCEDURES.—When an insured savings association establishes or acquires a subsidiary or when an insured savings association elects to conduct any new activity through a subsidiary that the insured savings association controls, the insured savings association—

(A) shall notify the Corporation or the Comptroller of the Currency, as appropriate, not less than 30 days prior to the establishment, or acquisition, of any such subsidiary, and not less than 30 days prior to the commencement of any such activity, and in either case shall provide at that time such information as each such agency may, by regulation, require; and

(B) shall conduct the activities of the subsidiary in accordance with regulations of the Comptroller of the Currency and orders of the Corporation and the Comptroller of the Currency.

(2) ENFORCEMENT POWERS.—With respect to any subsidiary of an insured savings association:

(A) the Corporation and the Comptroller of the Currency, as appropriate, shall each have, with respect to such subsidiary, the respective powers that each has with respect to the insured savings association pursuant to this section or section 8; and

(B) the Corporation or the Comptroller of the Currency, as appropriate, may determine, after notice and opportunity for hearing, that the continuation by the insured savings association of its ownership or control of, or its relationship to, the subsidiary—

(i) constitutes a serious risk to the safety, soundness, or stability of the insured savings association, or

(ii) is inconsistent with sound banking principles or with the purposes of this Act.

Upon making any such determination, the Corporation or the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, as appropriate, shall have authority to order the insured savings association to divest itself of control of the subsidiary. The Corporation or the Comptroller of the Currency, as appropriate, may take any other corrective measures with respect to the subsidiary, including the authority to require the subsidiary to terminate the activities or operations posing such risks, as the Corporation or the Comptroller of the Currency, respectively, may deem appropriate.

(3) ACTIVITIES INCOMPATIBLE WITH DEPOSIT INSURANCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation may determine by regulation or order that any specific activity poses a serious threat to the Deposit Insurance Fund. Prior to adopting any such regulation, the Corporation shall, in the case of a Federal savings association, consult with the Comptroller of the Currency and shall provide appropriate State supervisors the opportunity to comment thereon, and the Corporation shall specifically take such comments into con-

sideration. Any such regulation shall be issued in accordance with section 553 of title 5, United States Code. If the Board of Directors makes such a determination with respect to an activity, the Corporation shall have authority to order that no savings association may engage in the activity directly.

(B) AUTHORITY OF COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY.—This section does not limit the authority of the Comptroller of the Currency to issue regulations to promote safety and soundness, or to enforce compliance as to Federal savings associations with other applicable laws.

(C) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY OF FDIC TO PREVENT SERIOUS RISKS TO INSURANCE FUND.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Corporation may prescribe and enforce such regulations and issue such orders as the Corporation determines to be necessary to prevent actions or practices of savings associations that pose a serious threat to the Deposit Insurance Fund.

(4) “SUBSIDIARY” DEFINED.—As used in this subsection, the term “subsidiary” does not include an insured depository institution.

(5) APPLICABILITY TO CERTAIN SAVINGS BANKS.—Subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) of this subsection do not apply to—

(A) any Federal savings bank that was chartered prior to October 15, 1982, as a savings bank under State law, or

(B) a savings association that acquired its principal assets from an institution that was chartered prior to October 15, 1982, as a savings bank under State law.

(n) CALCULATION OF CAPITAL.—No appropriate Federal banking agency shall allow any insured depository institution to include an unidentifiable intangible asset in its calculation of compliance with the appropriate capital standard, if such unidentifiable intangible asset was acquired after April 12, 1989, except to the extent permitted under section 5(t) of the Home Owners’ Loan Act.

(o) REAL ESTATE LENDING.—

(1) UNIFORM REGULATIONS.—Not more than 9 months after the date of enactment of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act of 1991, each appropriate Federal banking agency shall adopt uniform regulations prescribing standards for extensions of credit that are—

(A) secured by liens on interests in real estate; or

(B) made for the purpose of financing the construction of a building or other improvements to real estate.

(2) STANDARDS.—

(A) CRITERIA.—In prescribing standards under paragraph (1), the agencies shall consider—

(i) the risk posed to the Deposit Insurance Fund by such extensions of credit;

(ii) the need for safe and sound operation of insured depository institutions; and

(iii) the availability of credit.

(B) VARIATIONS PERMITTED.—In prescribing standards under paragraph (1), the appropriate Federal banking agencies may differentiate among types of loans—

- (i) as may be required by Federal statute;
- (ii) as may be warranted, based on the risk to the Deposit Insurance Fund; or
- (iii) as may be warranted, based on the safety and soundness of the institutions.

(3) LOAN EVALUATION STANDARD.—No appropriate Federal banking agency shall adversely evaluate an investment or a loan made by an insured depository institution, or consider such a loan to be nonperforming, solely because the loan is made to or the investment is in commercial, residential, or industrial property, unless such investment or loan may affect the institution's safety and soundness.

(4) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The regulations adopted under paragraph (1) shall become effective not later than 15 months after the date of enactment of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act of 1991. Such regulations shall continue in effect except as uniformly amended by the appropriate Federal banking agencies, acting in concert.

(p) PERIODIC REVIEW OF CAPITAL STANDARDS.—Each appropriate Federal banking agency shall, in consultation with the other Federal banking agencies, biennially review its capital standards for insured depository institutions to determine whether those standards require sufficient capital to facilitate prompt corrective action to prevent or minimize loss to the Deposit Insurance Fund, consistent with section 38.

(q) SOVEREIGN RISK.—Section 25C of the Federal Reserve Act shall apply to every nonmember insured bank in the same manner and to the same extent as if the nonmember insured bank were a member bank.

(r) SUBSIDIARY DEPOSITORY INSTITUTIONS AS AGENTS FOR CERTAIN AFFILIATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any bank subsidiary of a bank holding company may receive deposits, renew time deposits, close loans, service loans, and receive payments on loans and other obligations as an agent for a depository institution affiliate.

(2) BANK ACTING AS AGENT IS NOT A BRANCH.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a bank acting as an agent in accordance with paragraph (1) for a depository institution affiliate shall not be considered to be a branch of the affiliate.

(3) PROHIBITIONS ON ACTIVITIES.—A depository institution may not—

(A) conduct any activity as an agent under paragraph (1) or (6) which such institution is prohibited from conducting as a principal under any applicable Federal or State law; or

(B) as a principal, have an agent conduct any activity under paragraph (1) or (6) which the institution is prohibited from conducting under any applicable Federal or State law.

(4) EXISTING AUTHORITY NOT AFFECTED.—No provision of this subsection shall be construed as affecting—

(A) the authority of any depository institution to act as an agent on behalf of any other depository institution under any other provision of law; or

(B) whether a depository institution which conducts any activity as an agent on behalf of any other depository institution under any other provision of law shall be considered to be a branch of such other institution.

(5) AGENCY RELATIONSHIP REQUIRED TO BE CONSISTENT WITH SAFE AND SOUND BANKING PRACTICES.—An agency relationship between depository institutions under paragraph (1) or (6) shall be on terms that are consistent with safe and sound banking practices and all applicable regulations of any appropriate Federal banking agency.

(6) AFFILIATED INSURED SAVINGS ASSOCIATIONS.—An insured savings association which was an affiliate of a bank on July 1, 1994, may conduct activities as an agent on behalf of such bank in the same manner as an insured bank affiliate of such bank may act as agent for such bank under this subsection to the extent such activities are conducted only in—

(A) any State in which—

(i) the bank is not prohibited from operating a branch under any provision of Federal or State law; and

(ii) the savings association maintained an office or branch and conducted business as of July 1, 1994; or

(B) any State in which—

(i) the bank is not expressly prohibited from operating a branch under a State law described in section 44(a)(2); and

(ii) the savings association maintained a main office and conducted business as of July 1, 1994.

(s) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN AFFILIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No depository institution may be an affiliate of, be sponsored by, or accept financial support, directly or indirectly, from any Government-sponsored enterprise.

(2) EXCEPTION FOR MEMBERS OF A FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to the membership of a depository institution in a Federal home loan bank.

(3) ROUTINE BUSINESS FINANCING.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to advances or other forms of financial assistance provided by a Government-sponsored enterprise pursuant to the statutes governing such enterprise.

(4) STUDENT LOANS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—This subsection shall not apply to any arrangement between the Holding Company (or any subsidiary of the Holding Company other than the Student Loan Marketing Association) and a depository institution, if the Secretary approves the affiliation and determines that—

(i) the reorganization of such Association in accordance with section 440 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, will not be adversely affected by the arrangement;

(ii) the dissolution of the Association pursuant to such reorganization will occur before the end of the 2-year period beginning on the date on which such arrangement is consummated or on such earlier date as the Secretary deems appropriate: *Provided*, That the Secretary may extend this period for not more than 1 year at a time if the Secretary determines that such extension is in the public interest and is appropriate to achieve an orderly reorganization of the Association or to prevent market disruptions in connection with such reorganization, but no such extensions shall in the aggregate exceed 2 years;

(iii) the Association will not purchase or extend credit to, or guarantee or provide credit enhancement to, any obligation of the depository institution;

(iv) the operations of the Association will be separate from the operations of the depository institution; and

(v) until the "dissolution date" (as that term is defined in section 440 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended) has occurred, such depository institution will not use the trade name or service mark "Sallie Mae" in connection with any product or service it offers if the appropriate Federal banking agency for such depository institution determines that—

(I) the depository institution is the only institution offering such product or service using the "Sallie Mae" name; and

(II) such use would result in the depository institution having an unfair competitive advantage over other depository institutions.

(B) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—In approving any arrangement referred to in subparagraph (A) the Secretary may impose any terms and conditions on such an arrangement that the Secretary considers appropriate, including—

(i) imposing additional restrictions on the issuance of debt obligations by the Association; or

(ii) restricting the use of proceeds from the issuance of such debt.

(C) ADDITIONAL LIMITATIONS.—In the event that the Holding Company (or any subsidiary of the Holding Company) enters into such an arrangement, the value of the Association's "investment portfolio" shall not at any time exceed the lesser of—

(i) the value of such portfolio on the date of the enactment of this subsection; or

(ii) the value of such portfolio on the date such an arrangement is consummated. The term "investment portfolio" shall mean all investments shown on the consolidated balance sheet of the Association other than—

(I) any instrument or assets described in section 439(d) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as such section existed on the day before the date of the repeal of such section;

(II) any direct noncallable obligations of the United States or any agency thereof for which the full faith and credit of the United States is pledged; or

(III) cash or cash equivalents.

(D) ENFORCEMENT.—The terms and conditions imposed under subparagraph (B) may be enforced by the Secretary in accordance with section 440 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

(E) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this paragraph, the following definition shall apply—

(i) ASSOCIATION; HOLDING COMPANY.—Notwithstanding any provision in section 3, the terms “Association” and “Holding Company” have the same meanings as in section 440(i) of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

(ii) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Treasury.

(5) GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED ENTERPRISE DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term “Government-sponsored enterprise” has the meaning given to such term in section 1404(e)(1)(A) of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989.

(t) RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS.—Each appropriate Federal banking agency, after consultation with and consideration of the views of the Commission, shall establish recordkeeping requirements for banks relying on exceptions contained in paragraphs (4) and (5) of section 3(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Such recordkeeping requirements shall be sufficient to demonstrate compliance with the terms of such exceptions and be designed to facilitate compliance with such exceptions.

(2) AVAILABILITY TO COMMISSION; CONFIDENTIALITY.—Each appropriate Federal banking agency shall make any information required under paragraph (1) available to the Commission upon request. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Commission shall not be compelled to disclose any such information. Nothing in this paragraph shall authorize the Commission to withhold information from Congress, or prevent the Commission from complying with a request for information from any other Federal department or agency or any self-regulatory organization requesting the information for purposes within the scope of its jurisdiction, or complying with an order of a court of the United States in an action brought by the United States or the Commission. For purposes of section 552 of title 5, United States Code, this paragraph shall be considered a statute described in subsection (b)(3)(B) of such section 552.

(3) DEFINITION.—As used in this subsection the term “Commission” means the Securities and Exchange Commission.

(u) LIMITATION ON CLAIMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No person may bring a claim against any Federal banking agency (including in its capacity as conservator or receiver) for the return of assets of an affiliate or controlling shareholder of the insured depository institution trans-

ferred to, or for the benefit of, an insured depository institution by such affiliate or controlling shareholder of the insured depository institution, or a claim against such Federal banking agency for monetary damages or other legal or equitable relief in connection with such transfer, if at the time of the transfer—

(A) the insured depository institution is subject to any direction issued in writing by a Federal banking agency to increase its capital; and

(B) for that portion of the transfer that is made by an entity covered by section 5(g) of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 or section 45 of this Act, the Federal banking agency has followed the procedure set forth in such section.

(2) DEFINITION OF CLAIM.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term “claim”—

(A) means a cause of action based on Federal or State law that—

(i) provides for the avoidance of preferential or fraudulent transfers or conveyances; or

(ii) provides similar remedies for preferential or fraudulent transfers or conveyances; and

(B) does not include any claim based on actual intent to hinder, delay, or defraud pursuant to such a fraudulent transfer or conveyance law.

(v) LOANS BY INSURED INSTITUTIONS ON THEIR OWN STOCK.—

(1) GENERAL PROHIBITION.—No insured depository institution may make any loan or discount on the security of the shares of its own capital stock.

(2) EXCLUSION.—For purposes of this subsection, an insured depository institution shall not be deemed to be making a loan or discount on the security of the shares of its own capital stock if it acquires the stock to prevent loss upon a debt previously contracted for in good faith.

(w) WRITTEN EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES MAY CONTAIN SUSPICIONS OF INVOLVEMENT IN ILLEGAL ACTIVITY.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any insured depository institution, and any director, officer, employee, or agent of such institution, may disclose in any written employment reference relating to a current or former institution-affiliated party of such institution which is provided to another insured depository institution in response to a request from such other institution, information concerning the possible involvement of such institution-affiliated party in potentially unlawful activity.

(2) INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED.—Nothing in paragraph (1) shall be construed, by itself, to create any affirmative duty to include any information described in paragraph (1) in any employment reference referred to in paragraph (1).

(3) MALICIOUS INTENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, voluntary disclosure made by an insured depository institution, and any director, officer, employee, or agent of such institution, under this subsection concerning potentially unlawful activity that is made with malicious intent,

shall not be shielded from liability from the person identified in the disclosure.

(4) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term “insured depository institution” includes any uninsured branch or agency of a foreign bank.

(x) PRIVILEGES NOT AFFECTED BY DISCLOSURE TO BANKING AGENCY OR SUPERVISOR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The submission by any person of any information to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, any Federal banking agency, State bank supervisor, or foreign banking authority for any purpose in the course of any supervisory or regulatory process of such Bureau, agency, supervisor, or authority shall not be construed as waiving, destroying, or otherwise affecting any privilege such person may claim with respect to such information under Federal or State law as to any person or entity other than such Bureau, agency, supervisor, or authority.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—No provision of paragraph (1) may be construed as implying or establishing that—

(A) any person waives any privilege applicable to information that is submitted or transferred under any circumstance to which paragraph (1) does not apply; or

(B) any person would waive any privilege applicable to any information by submitting the information to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, any Federal banking agency, State bank supervisor, or foreign banking authority, but for this subsection.

(y) STATE LENDING LIMIT TREATMENT OF DERIVATIVES TRANSACTIONS.—An insured State bank may engage in a derivative transaction, as defined in section 5200(b)(3) of the Revised Statutes of the United States (12 U.S.C. 84(b)(3)), only if the law with respect to lending limits of the State in which the insured State bank is chartered takes into consideration credit exposure to derivative transactions.

(z) GENERAL PROHIBITION ON SALE OF ASSETS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An insured depository institution may not purchase an asset from, or sell an asset to, an executive officer, director, or principal shareholder of the insured depository institution, or any related interest of such person (as such terms are defined in section 22(h) of Federal Reserve Act), unless—

(A) the transaction is on market terms; and

(B) if the transaction represents more than 10 percent of the capital stock and surplus of the insured depository institution, the transaction has been approved in advance by a majority of the members of the board of directors of the insured depository institution who do not have an interest in the transaction.

(2) RULEMAKING.—The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System may issue such rules as may be necessary to define terms and to carry out the purposes this subsection. Before proposing or adopting a rule under this paragraph, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System shall consult with the Comptroller of the Currency and the Corporation as to the terms of the rule.

(aa) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MUNICIPAL OBLIGATIONS.—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—For purposes of the final rule titled “Liquidity Coverage Ratio: Liquidity Risk Measurement Standards; Final Rule” (79 Fed. Reg. 61439; published October 10, 2014) (the “Final Rule”) and any other regulation which incorporates a definition of the term “high-quality liquid asset”, the appropriate Federal banking agencies shall treat a municipal obligation that is both liquid and readily marketable (as defined in the Final Rule) and investment grade as of the calculation date as a high-quality liquid asset that is no lower than a level 2B liquid asset.

(2) *DEFINITIONS.*—For purposes of this subsection:

(A) *INVESTMENT GRADE.*—With respect to an obligation, the term “investment grade” has the meaning given that term under part 1 of title 12, Code of Federal Regulations.

(B) *MUNICIPAL OBLIGATION.*—The term “municipal obligation” means an obligation of a State or any political subdivision thereof, or any agency or instrumentality of a State or any political subdivision thereof.

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