

FINANCIAL PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION ACT OF 2015

DECEMBER 12, 2016.—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

together with

MINORITY VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 1266]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Financial Services, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1266) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to make the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection an independent Financial Product Safety Commission, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Financial Product Safety Commission Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. MAKING THE BUREAU AN INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5481 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 1011—

(A) in subsection (a)—

- (i) by striking “in the Federal Reserve System,”;
- (ii) by striking “independent bureau” and inserting “independent commission”;
- (iii) by striking “Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection” and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission (hereinafter in this section referred to as the ‘Commission’)”; and
- (iv) by striking “Bureau” each place such term appears and inserting “Commission”;

(B) by striking subsections (b), (c), and (d);

- (C) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (i);
- (D) in subsection (i), as so redesignated—
- (i) by striking “, including in cities in which the Federal reserve banks, or branches of such banks, are located.”; and
 - (ii) by striking “Bureau” each place such term appears and inserting “Commission”; and
- (E) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsections:
- “(b) **AUTHORITY TO PRESCRIBE REGULATIONS.**—The Commission may prescribe such regulations and issue such orders in accordance with this title as the Commission may determine to be necessary for carrying out this title and all other laws within the Commission’s jurisdiction and shall exercise any authorities granted under this title and all other laws within the Commission’s jurisdiction.
- “(c) **COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION.**—
- “(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commission shall be composed of 5 members who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from among individuals who—
 - “(A) are citizens of the United States; and
 - “(B) have strong competencies and experiences related to consumer financial products and services.
 - “(2) **STAGGERING.**—The members of the Commission shall serve staggered terms, which initially shall be established by the President for terms of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 years, respectively.
 - “(3) **TERMS.**—
 - “(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Each member of the Commission, including the Chair, shall serve for a term of 5 years.
 - “(B) **REMOVAL.**—The President may remove any member of the Commission for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office.
 - “(C) **VACANCIES.**—Any member of the Commission appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term to which that member’s predecessor was appointed (including the Chair) shall be appointed only for the remainder of the term.
 - “(D) **CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.**—Each member of the Commission may continue to serve after the expiration of the term of office to which that member was appointed until a successor has been appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, except that a member may not continue to serve more than 1 year after the date on which that member’s term would otherwise expire.
 - “(E) **OTHER EMPLOYMENT PROHIBITED.**—No member of the Commission shall engage in any other business, vocation, or employment.
- “(d) **AFFILIATION.**—Not more than 3 members of the Commission shall be members of any one political party.
- “(e) **CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION.**—
- “(1) **APPOINTMENT.**—The Chair of the Commission shall be appointed by the President from among the members of the Commission.
 - “(2) **AUTHORITY.**—The Chair shall be the principal executive officer of the Commission, and shall exercise all of the executive and administrative functions of the Commission, including with respect to—
 - “(A) the appointment and supervision of personnel employed under the Commission (other than personnel employed regularly and full time in the immediate offices of members of the Commission other than the Chair);
 - “(B) the distribution of business among personnel appointed and supervised by the Chair and among administrative units of the Commission; and
 - “(C) the use and expenditure of funds.
 - “(3) **LIMITATION.**—In carrying out any of the Chair’s functions under the provisions of this subsection the Chair shall be governed by general policies of the Commission and by such regulatory decisions, findings, and determinations as the Commission may by law be authorized to make.
 - “(4) **REQUESTS OR ESTIMATES RELATED TO APPROPRIATIONS.**—Requests or estimates for regular, supplemental, or deficiency appropriations on behalf of the Commission may not be submitted by the Chair without the prior approval of the Commission.
- “(f) **NO IMPAIRMENT BY REASON OF VACANCIES.**—No vacancy in the members of the Commission shall impair the right of the remaining members of the Commission to exercise all the powers of the Commission. Three members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, except that if there are only 3 members serving on the Commission because of vacancies in the Commission, 2 members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If there are only 2 members serving on the Commission because of vacancies in the Commission, 2 members shall constitute a quorum for the 6-month period be-

ginning on the date of the vacancy which caused the number of Commission members to decline to 2.

“(g) SEAL.—The Commission shall have an official seal.

“(h) COMPENSATION.—

“(1) CHAIR.—The Chair shall receive compensation at the rate prescribed for level I of the Executive Schedule under section 5313 of title 5, United States Code.

“(2) OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.—The 4 other members of the Commission shall each receive compensation at the rate prescribed for level II of the Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5, United States Code.”;

(2) in section 1012(c), by striking paragraphs (2), (3), (4), and (5); and

(3) in section 1014(b), by striking “Not fewer than 6 members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the regional Federal Reserve Bank Presidents, on a rotating basis.”.

(b) COMMISSION FUNDING.—Section 7 of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 289) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) TRANSFER FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal reserve banks shall transfer from the surplus funds of such banks to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for transfer to the Secretary of the Treasury for deposit in the general fund of the Treasury, a total amount of \$75,000,000 in fiscal year 2016.

“(2) ALLOCATED BY FED.—Of the total amount required to be paid by the Federal reserve banks under paragraph (1) for fiscal year 2016, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System shall determine the amount each such bank shall pay in such fiscal year.

“(3) REPLENISHMENT OF SURPLUS FUND PROHIBITED.—During fiscal years 2016 through 2026, no Federal reserve bank may replenish such bank’s surplus fund by the amount of any transfer by such bank under paragraph (1).”.

SEC. 3. DEEMING OF NAME.

Any reference in a law, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection shall be deemed a reference to the Financial Product Safety Commission.

SEC. 4. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION ACT OF 2010.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under paragraph (2), the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5481 et seq.) is amended—

(A) by striking “Director of the Bureau” each place such term appears, other than where such term is used to refer to a Director other than the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”;

(B) by striking “Director” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”, other than where such term is used to refer to a Director other than the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection; and

(C) in section 1002, by striking paragraph (10).

(2) EXCEPTIONS.—The Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5481 et seq.) is amended—

(A) in section 1013(c)(3)—

(i) by striking “Assistant Director of the Bureau for” and inserting “Head of the Office of”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “Assistant Director” and inserting “Head of the Office”;

(B) in section 1013(g)(2)—

(i) by striking “ASSISTANT DIRECTOR” and inserting “HEAD OF THE OFFICE”; and

(ii) by striking “an assistant director” and inserting “a Head of the Office of Financial Protection for Older Americans”;

(C) in section 1016(a), by striking “Director of the Bureau” and inserting “Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission”; and

(D) in section 1066(a), by striking “Director of the Bureau is” and inserting “first member of the Commission is”.

(b) DODD-FRANK WALL STREET REFORM AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT.—The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (12 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 111(b)(1)(D), by striking “Director of the Bureau” and inserting “Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission”; and

(2) in section 1447, by striking “Director of the Bureau” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(c) ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER ACT.—Section 920(a)(4)(C) of the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (15 U.S.C. 1693o–2(a)(4)(C)), as added by section 1075(a)(2) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection” and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(d) EXPEDITED FUNDS AVAILABILITY ACT.—The Expedited Funds Availability Act (12 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), as amended by section 1086 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Bureau” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(e) FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE ACT.—Section 2 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1812), as amended by section 336(a) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, is amended by striking “Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau” each place such term appears and inserting “Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(f) FEDERAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS EXAMINATION COUNCIL ACT OF 1978.—Section 1004(a)(4) of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3303(a)(4)), as amended by section 1091 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau” and inserting “Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(g) FINANCIAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT.—Section 513 of the Financial Literacy and Education Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 9702), as amended by section 1013(d)(5) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director” each place such term appears and inserting “Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(h) HOME MORTGAGE DISCLOSURE ACT OF 1975.—Section 307 of the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975, as amended by section 1094(6) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(i) INTERSTATE LAND SALES FULL DISCLOSURE ACT.—The Interstate Land Sales Full Disclosure Act, as amended by section 1098A of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended—

(1) by amending section 1402(1) to read as follows:

“(1) ‘Chair’ means the Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission;”;

and

(2) in section 1416(a), by striking “Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection” and inserting “Chair”.

(j) REAL ESTATE SETTLEMENT PROCEDURES ACT OF 1974.—Section 5 of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2604), as amended by section 1450 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, is amended—

(1) by striking “The Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection (hereafter in this section referred to as the ‘Director’)” and inserting “The Financial Product Safety Commission”; and

(2) by striking “Director” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(k) S.A.F.E. MORTGAGE LICENSING ACT OF 2008.—The S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.), as amended by section 1100 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended—

(1) by striking “Director” each place such term appears in headings and text, other than where such term is used in the context of the Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision, and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”; and

(2) in section 1503, by striking paragraph (10).

(l) TITLE 44, UNITED STATES CODE.—Section 3513(c) of title 44, United States Code, as amended by section 1100D(b) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Bureau” and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the date on which not less than 3 persons have been confirmed by the Senate to serve as members of the Financial Product Safety Commission.

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

H.R. 1266 amends the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to remove the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) from the Federal Reserve System and re-establish it as a stand-

alone agency—the Financial Product Safety Commission (FPSC)—that is to be governed by a five-member, bipartisan commission. Each member of the FPSC must have strong competencies and experiences regarding consumer financial products and services, and is nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate to serve a staggered, five-year term. The bill provides that a Chair of the Commission serves as the principal executive officer of the FPSC; prohibits the Chair from making requests for estimates related to appropriations without prior Commission approval; and sets compensation for the Chair at level I of the Executive Schedule and compensation for other members at level II of the Executive Schedule. All authorities and powers of the agency remain unchanged.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Replacing the single-member leadership structure with a bipartisan, multimember commission will increase the quality and variety of information considered, while improving accuracy and output quality. Multimember decision-making can also temper extreme outlying views that might otherwise be held by a single person. Further, a commission comprised of commissioners serving staggered terms tends to avoid abrupt policy swings and make agency decisions more predictable for market participants. Unlike a multimember commission, a single director is largely unaccountable to the President, Congress, or even the Federal Reserve Board.

In testimony before the committee on July 9, 2015, Mercatus Center Senior Scholar Todd Zywicki noted:

The fundamental problems of the CFPB go back to this fundamental defect in the way in which it's structured which is no budgetary appropriations, a single director supposedly removable only for a cause. And we've got decades of academic studies on bureaucracies and how bureaucracies behave when they're not subject to Democratic accountability and the CFPB is basically a poster child for how that operates.

So I think over time we have learned that there are two ways that we can structure agencies, as an executive agency like a department accountable to the president through the Democratic process, or a bipartisan agency. And I think for an entity like this, the Federal Trade Commission is exactly the model we need. The Federal Trade Commission has been around for 100 years. It's a bipartisan agency, on budget and it does more or less exactly the same thing as the CFPB.

And I think that FTC has proven the test of time as an agency that is responsive, that takes into account the impact on the economy, questions like competition and consumer choice with respect to any product. And I think that is not only a good idea for this agency, but really the only way that we're going to get this agency back on track and really looking out for the American consumers rather than their own narrow bureaucratic empire-building.

In a letter of support for H.R. 1266 dated September 29, 2015, 23 trade associations representing financial institutions, banks, credit unions, and businesses wrote:

Looking ahead, the current sole director structure at the CFPB jeopardizes the foundation of the Bureau as an objective, neutral consumer protection agency. A commission would serve as a source of balance and stability for consumers and the financial services industry by encouraging internal debate and deliberation, ultimately leading to increased transparency. Moreover, a commission would further promote the CFPB's ability to make bipartisan and reasoned judgments to ensure consumers receive the protection they deserve, which in turn would help strengthen the economy; and would avoid the risk of politically motivated decisions causing uncertainty and harm to consumers.

To preserve the CFPB and prevent it from becoming a political football, Congress should return the CFPB to its originally intended structure, from a sole director to a bipartisan commission.

HEARINGS

The Committee on Financial Services' Subcommittee on Financial Institutions held a hearing examining matters relating to H.R. 1266 on June 11, 2015.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

The Committee on Financial Services met in open session on September 30, 2015 and considered the bill. Mr. Neugebauer offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute. Amendments to the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered respectively by Mr. Delaney and Mr. Mulvaney were withdrawn. The Neugebauer substitute was then adopted by voice vote. The Committee ordered H.R. 1266 to be reported favorably to the House as amended by a recorded vote of 35 yeas to 24 nays (recorded vote no. FC-63) a quorum being present.

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 35 yeas to 24 nays (Record vote no. FC-63), a quorum being present.

Record vote no. FC-63

Representative	Yea	Nay	Present	Representative	Yea	Nay	Present
Mr. Hensarling	X			Ms. Waters (CA)		X	
Mr. King (NY)	X			Mrs. Maloney (NY)		X	
Mr. Royce	X			Ms. Velázquez		X	
Mr. Lucas	X			Mr. Sherman		X	
Mr. Garrett	X			Mr. Meeks		X	
Mr. Neugebauer	X			Mr. Capuano		X	
Mr. McHenry	X			Mr. Hinojosa		X	
Mr. Pearce	X			Mr. Clay		X	
Mr. Posey	X			Mr. Lynch		X	
Mr. Fitzpatrick	X			Mr. David Scott (GA)	X		
Mr. Westmoreland				Mr. Al Green (TX)		X	
Mr. Luetkemeyer	X			Mr. Cleaver		X	
Mr. Huizenga (MI)	X			Ms. Moore		X	
Mr. Duffy	X			Mr. Ellison		X	
Mr. Hurt (VA)	X			Mr. Perlmutter		X	
Mr. Stivers	X			Mr. Himes		X	
Mr. Fincher	X			Mr. Carney		X	
Mr. Stutzman	X			Ms. Sewell (AL)		X	
Mr. Mulvaney	X			Mr. Foster		X	
Mr. Hultgren	X			Mr. Kildee		X	
Mr. Ross	X			Mr. Murphy (FL)		X	
Mr. Pittenger	X			Mr. Delaney		X	
Mrs. Wagner	X			Ms. Sinema	X		
Mr. Barr	X			Mrs. Beatty		X	
Mr. Rothfus	X			Mr. Heck (WA)		X	
Mr. Messer	X			Mr. Vargas		X	
Mr. Schweikert	X						
Mr. Guinta	X						
Mr. Tipton	X						
Mr. Williams	X						
Mr. Poliquin	X						
Mrs. Love	X						
Mr. Hill	X						
Mr. Emmer	X						

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. 1266 will increase agency accountability by replacing the CFPB with the Financial Product Safety Commission, a stand-alone, five-member, bipartisan commission.

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.

COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

The Committee adopts as its own 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, February 11, 2016.

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. 1266, the Financial Product Safety Commission Act of 2015.

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

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

H.R. 1266—Financial Product Safety Commission Act of 2015

Summary: H.R. 1266 would replace the Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) with a commission made up of

a chairman and four additional members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The bill would rename the bureau as the Financial Product Safety Commission, which would have the same responsibilities as the CFPB has under current law. H.R. 1266 also would direct the Federal Reserve to transfer \$75 million from its surplus account to the Treasury.

Based on information from the CFPB and the Federal Reserve System, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 1266 would increase direct spending by \$77 million and revenues by \$47 million over the 2016–2026 period. Taking those effects together, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 1266 would increase the deficit by \$30 million over the 2016–2026 period. Because the bill would affect direct spending and revenues, pay-as-you-go procedures apply.

CBO estimates that enacting the legislation would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits by more than \$5 billion in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

H.R. 1266 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 1266 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 370 (commerce and housing credit).

By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—													
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2016– 2021	2016– 2026
CHANGES IN DIRECT SPENDING													
Estimated Budget Authority	2	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	38	78
Estimated Outlays	*	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	37	77
CHANGES IN REVENUES													
Estimated Revenues	74	–2	–2	–3	–3	–3	–3	–3	–3	–3	–3	62	47
NET INCREASE OR DECREASE (–) IN THE DEFICIT FROM CHANGES IN DIRECT SPENDING AND REVENUES													
Effect on Deficit	–74	9	9	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	11	–25	30

Notes: Components may not sum to totals because of rounding; * = less than \$500,000.

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted in the spring and the new commissioners will be confirmed by the end of the fiscal year, and spending will follow historical patterns for the CFPB. The CFPB is permanently authorized to spend amounts transferred from the Federal Reserve System; because that activity is not subject to appropriation, CFPB expenditures are recorded in the budget as direct spending. Furthermore, the earnings of the Federal Reserve System are remitted to the Treasury and recorded in the budget as revenues; thus, any change to the costs of the Federal Reserve System are recorded in the budget as changes in revenues.

Changes in direct spending

H.R. 1266 would replace the director and deputy director of the CFPB with a five-member commission. Based on information from the CFPB and agencies with similar organizational structures, CBO estimates that the commission would eventually hire an additional 23 employees to provide legal, research, and administrative

CBO ESTIMATE OF PAY-AS-YOU-GO EFFECTS FOR H.R. 1266, AS ORDERED REPORTED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2015—Continued

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—													
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2016–2021	2016–2026	
Changes in Revenues	74	-2	-2	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	62	47	

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: H.R. 1266 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

Increase in long-term direct spending and deficits: CBO estimates that enacting the legislation would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits by more than \$5 billion in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Kim Cawley; Federal Revenues: Nathaniel Frentz; Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Melissa Merrell and Leo Lex; Impact on the Private Sector: Logan Smith.

Estimate approved by: H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis; David Weiner, Assistant Director for Tax Analysis.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

The Committee adopts as its own the estimate of Federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates reform Act.

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

H.R. 1266 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Pursuant to section 3(g) of H. Res. 5, 114th Cong. (2015), the Committee states that no provision of H.R. 1266 establishes or reauthorizes a program of the Federal Government known to be duplicative of another Federal program, a program that was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139, or a program

related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

DISCLOSURE OF DIRECTED RULEMAKING

Pursuant to section 3(i) of H. Res. 5, 114th Cong. (2015), the Committee states that H.R. 1266 contains no directed rulemaking.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Short title

This Section cites H.R. 1266 as the “Financial Product Safety Commission Act of 2015”.

Section 2. Making the bureau an independent Financial Product Safety Commission

This section amends the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 by removing the CFPB from under the Federal Reserve and creating the Financial Product Safety Commission, a bipartisan commission consisting of five-members well versed in consumer finance, serving five-year staggered terms with a Chair appointed by the President. All members of the commission will receive compensation under the Executive Schedule, with the Chair at level I and the other members of the commission at level II.

Section 3. Deeming of name

This section establishes that any pre-existing reference relating to the CFPB is now a reference to the Financial Product Safety Commission.

Section 4. Conforming amendments

This section amends pre-existing laws so that they conform to the new terms and titles set forth in this law.

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 italic, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

DODD-FRANK WALL STREET REFORM AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

* * * * *

TITLE I—FINANCIAL STABILITY

* * * * *

Subtitle A—Financial Stability Oversight Council

SEC. 111. FINANCIAL STABILITY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL ESTABLISHED.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Effective on the date of enactment of this Act, there is established the Financial Stability Oversight Council.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Council shall consist of the following members:

(1) VOTING MEMBERS.—The voting members, who shall each have 1 vote on the Council shall be—

(A) the Secretary of the Treasury, who shall serve as Chairperson of the Council;

(B) the Chairman of the Board of Governors;

(C) the Comptroller of the Currency;

(D) the [Director of the Bureau] *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission*;

(E) the Chairman of the Commission;

(F) the Chairperson of the Corporation;

(G) the Chairperson of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission;

(H) the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency;

(I) the Chairman of the National Credit Union Administration Board; and

(J) an independent member appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, having insurance expertise.

(2) NONVOTING MEMBERS.—The nonvoting members, who shall serve in an advisory capacity as a nonvoting member of the Council, shall be—

(A) the Director of the Office of Financial Research;

(B) the Director of the Federal Insurance Office;

(C) a State insurance commissioner, to be designated by a selection process determined by the State insurance commissioners;

(D) a State banking supervisor, to be designated by a selection process determined by the State banking supervisors; and

(E) a State securities commissioner (or an officer performing like functions), to be designated by a selection process determined by such State securities commissioners.

(3) NONVOTING MEMBER PARTICIPATION.—The nonvoting members of the Council shall not be excluded from any of the proceedings, meetings, discussions, or deliberations of the Council, except that the Chairperson may, upon an affirmative vote of the member agencies, exclude the nonvoting members from any of the proceedings, meetings, discussions, or deliberations of the Council when necessary to safeguard and promote the free exchange of confidential supervisory information.

(c) TERMS; VACANCY.—

(1) TERMS.—The independent member of the Council shall serve for a term of 6 years, and each nonvoting member described in subparagraphs (C), (D), and (E) of subsection (b)(2) shall serve for a term of 2 years.

(2) VACANCY.—Any vacancy on the Council shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(3) ACTING OFFICIALS MAY SERVE.—In the event of a vacancy in the office of the head of a member agency or department, and pending the appointment of a successor, or during the absence or disability of the head of a member agency or department, the acting head of the member agency or department shall serve as a member of the Council in the place of that agency or department head.

(d) TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES.—The Council may appoint such special advisory, technical, or professional committees as may be useful in carrying out the functions of the Council, including an advisory committee consisting of State regulators, and the members of such committees may be members of the Council, or other persons, or both.

(e) MEETINGS.—

(1) TIMING.—The Council shall meet at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of the members then serving, but not less frequently than quarterly.

(2) RULES FOR CONDUCTING BUSINESS.—The Council shall adopt such rules as may be necessary for the conduct of the business of the Council. Such rules shall be rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice for purposes of section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

(f) VOTING.—Unless otherwise specified, the Council shall make all decisions that it is authorized or required to make by a majority vote of the voting members then serving.

(g) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FACCA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Council, or to any special advisory, technical, or professional committee appointed by the Council, except that, if an advisory, technical, or professional committee has one or more members who are not employees of or affiliated with the United States Government, the Council shall publish a list of the names of the members of such committee.

(h) ASSISTANCE FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Any department or agency of the United States may provide to the Council and any special advisory, technical, or professional committee appointed by the Council, such services, funds, facilities, staff, and other support services as the Council may determine advisable.

(i) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—

(1) FEDERAL EMPLOYEE MEMBERS.—All members of the Council who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(2) COMPENSATION FOR NON-FEDERAL MEMBER.—Section 5314 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:“Independent Member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council (1).”.

(j) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Any employee of the Federal Government may be detailed to the Council without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege. An employee of the Federal Government detailed to the Council shall report to and be subject to oversight by the Council during the assignment to the Council, and

shall be compensated by the department or agency from which the employee was detailed.

* * * * *

TITLE X—BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION

SEC. 1001. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010”.

SEC. 1002. DEFINITIONS.

Except as otherwise provided in this title, for purposes of this title, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) **AFFILIATE.**—The term “affiliate” means any person that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with another person.

(2) **BUREAU.**—The term “Bureau” means the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.

(3) **BUSINESS OF INSURANCE.**—The term “business of insurance” means the writing of insurance or the reinsuring of risks by an insurer, including all acts necessary to such writing or reinsuring and the activities relating to the writing of insurance or the reinsuring of risks conducted by persons who act as, or are, officers, directors, agents, or employees of insurers or who are other persons authorized to act on behalf of such persons.

(4) **CONSUMER.**—The term “consumer” means an individual or an agent, trustee, or representative acting on behalf of an individual.

(5) **CONSUMER FINANCIAL PRODUCT OR SERVICE.**—The term “consumer financial product or service” means any financial product or service that is described in one or more categories under—

(A) paragraph (15) and is offered or provided for use by consumers primarily for personal, family, or household purposes; or

(B) clause (i), (iii), (ix), or (x) of paragraph (15)(A), and is delivered, offered, or provided in connection with a consumer financial product or service referred to in subparagraph (A).

(6) **COVERED PERSON.**—The term “covered person” means—

(A) any person that engages in offering or providing a consumer financial product or service; and

(B) any affiliate of a person described in subparagraph (A) if such affiliate acts as a service provider to such person.

(7) **CREDIT.**—The term “credit” means the right granted by a person to a consumer to defer payment of a debt, incur debt and defer its payment, or purchase property or services and defer payment for such purchase.

(8) **DEPOSIT-TAKING ACTIVITY.**—The term “deposit-taking activity” means—

- (A) the acceptance of deposits, maintenance of deposit accounts, or the provision of services related to the acceptance of deposits or the maintenance of deposit accounts;
- (B) the acceptance of funds, the provision of other services related to the acceptance of funds, or the maintenance of member share accounts by a credit union; or
- (C) the receipt of funds or the equivalent thereof, as the Bureau may determine by rule or order, received or held by a covered person (or an agent for a covered person) for the purpose of facilitating a payment or transferring funds or value of funds between a consumer and a third party.
- (9) DESIGNATED TRANSFER DATE.—The term “designated transfer date” means the date established under section 1062.
- [(10) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means the Director of the Bureau.]
- (11) ELECTRONIC CONDUIT SERVICES.—The term “electronic conduit services”—
- (A) means the provision, by a person, of electronic data transmission, routing, intermediate or transient storage, or connections to a telecommunications system or network; and
- (B) does not include a person that provides electronic conduit services if, when providing such services, the person—
- (i) selects or modifies the content of the electronic data;
- (ii) transmits, routes, stores, or provides connections for electronic data, including financial data, in a manner that such financial data is differentiated from other types of data of the same form that such person transmits, routes, or stores, or with respect to which, provides connections; or
- (iii) is a payee, payor, correspondent, or similar party to a payment transaction with a consumer.
- (12) ENUMERATED CONSUMER LAWS.—Except as otherwise specifically provided in section 1029, subtitle G or subtitle H, the term “enumerated consumer laws” means—
- (A) the Alternative Mortgage Transaction Parity Act of 1982 (12 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.);
- (B) the Consumer Leasing Act of 1976 (15 U.S.C. 1667 et seq.);
- (C) the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (15 U.S.C. 1693 et seq.), except with respect to section 920 of that Act;
- (D) the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (15 U.S.C. 1691 et seq.);
- (E) the Fair Credit Billing Act (15 U.S.C. 1666 et seq.);
- (F) the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.), except with respect to sections 615(e) and 628 of that Act (15 U.S.C. 1681m(e), 1681w);
- (G) the Home Owners Protection Act of 1998 (12 U.S.C. 4901 et seq.);
- (H) the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (15 U.S.C. 1692 et seq.);
- (I) subsections (b) through (f) of section 43 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1831t(c)-(f));

(J) sections 502 through 509 of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (15 U.S.C. 6802-6809) except for section 505 as it applies to section 501(b);

(K) the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975 (12 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.);

(L) the Home Ownership and Equity Protection Act of 1994 (15 U.S.C. 1601 note);

(M) the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2601 et seq.);

(N) the S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.);

(O) the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.);

(P) the Truth in Savings Act (12 U.S.C. 4301 et seq.);

(Q) section 626 of the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 111-8); and

(R) the Interstate Land Sales Full Disclosure Act (15 U.S.C. 1701).

(13) FAIR LENDING.—The term “fair lending” means fair, equitable, and nondiscriminatory access to credit for consumers.

(14) FEDERAL CONSUMER FINANCIAL LAW.—The term “Federal consumer financial law” means the provisions of this title, the enumerated consumer laws, the laws for which authorities are transferred under subtitles F and H, and any rule or order prescribed by the Bureau under this title, an enumerated consumer law, or pursuant to the authorities transferred under subtitles F and H. The term does not include the Federal Trade Commission Act.

(15) FINANCIAL PRODUCT OR SERVICE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “financial product or service” means—

(i) extending credit and servicing loans, including acquiring, purchasing, selling, brokering, or other extensions of credit (other than solely extending commercial credit to a person who originates consumer credit transactions);

(ii) extending or brokering leases of personal or real property that are the functional equivalent of purchase finance arrangements, if—

(I) the lease is on a non-operating basis;

(II) the initial term of the lease is at least 90 days; and

(III) in the case of a lease involving real property, at the inception of the initial lease, the transaction is intended to result in ownership of the leased property to be transferred to the lessee, subject to standards prescribed by the Bureau;

(iii) providing real estate settlement services, except such services excluded under subparagraph (C), or performing appraisals of real estate or personal property;

(iv) engaging in deposit-taking activities, transmitting or exchanging funds, or otherwise acting as a custodian of funds or any financial instrument for use by or on behalf of a consumer;

(v) selling, providing, or issuing stored value or payment instruments, except that, in the case of a sale of, or transaction to reload, stored value, only if the seller exercises substantial control over the terms or conditions of the stored value provided to the consumer where, for purposes of this clause—

(I) a seller shall not be found to exercise substantial control over the terms or conditions of the stored value if the seller is not a party to the contract with the consumer for the stored value product, and another person is principally responsible for establishing the terms or conditions of the stored value; and

(II) advertising the nonfinancial goods or services of the seller on the stored value card or device is not in itself an exercise of substantial control over the terms or conditions;

(vi) providing check cashing, check collection, or check guaranty services;

(vii) providing payments or other financial data processing products or services to a consumer by any technological means, including processing or storing financial or banking data for any payment instrument, or through any payments systems or network used for processing payments data, including payments made through an online banking system or mobile telecommunications network, except that a person shall not be deemed to be a covered person with respect to financial data processing solely because the person—

(I) is a merchant, retailer, or seller of any nonfinancial good or service who engages in financial data processing by transmitting or storing payments data about a consumer exclusively for purpose of initiating payments instructions by the consumer to pay such person for the purchase of, or to complete a commercial transaction for, such nonfinancial good or service sold directly by such person to the consumer; or

(II) provides access to a host server to a person for purposes of enabling that person to establish and maintain a website;

(viii) providing financial advisory services (other than services relating to securities provided by a person regulated by the Commission or a person regulated by a State securities Commission, but only to the extent that such person acts in a regulated capacity) to consumers on individual financial matters or relating to proprietary financial products or services (other than by publishing any bona fide newspaper, news magazine, or business or financial publication of general and regular circulation, including publishing market data, news, or data analytics or investment information or recommendations that are not tailored to the individual needs of a particular consumer), including—

(I) providing credit counseling to any consumer; and

(II) providing services to assist a consumer with debt management or debt settlement, modifying the terms of any extension of credit, or avoiding foreclosure;

(ix) collecting, analyzing, maintaining, or providing consumer report information or other account information, including information relating to the credit history of consumers, used or expected to be used in connection with any decision regarding the offering or provision of a consumer financial product or service, except to the extent that—

(I) a person—

(aa) collects, analyzes, or maintains information that relates solely to the transactions between a consumer and such person;

(bb) provides the information described in item (aa) to an affiliate of such person; or

(cc) provides information that is used or expected to be used solely in any decision regarding the offering or provision of a product or service that is not a consumer financial product or service, including a decision for employment, government licensing, or a residential lease or tenancy involving a consumer; and

(II) the information described in subclause (I)(aa) is not used by such person or affiliate in connection with any decision regarding the offering or provision of a consumer financial product or service to the consumer, other than credit described in section 1027(a)(2)(A);

(x) collecting debt related to any consumer financial product or service; and

(xi) such other financial product or service as may be defined by the Bureau, by regulation, for purposes of this title, if the Bureau finds that such financial product or service is—

(I) entered into or conducted as a subterfuge or with a purpose to evade any Federal consumer financial law; or

(II) permissible for a bank or for a financial holding company to offer or to provide under any provision of a Federal law or regulation applicable to a bank or a financial holding company, and has, or likely will have, a material impact on consumers.

(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(xi)(II), and subject to clause (ii) of this subparagraph, the following activities provided to a covered person shall not, for purposes of this title, be considered incidental or complementary to a financial activity permissible for a financial holding company to en-

gage in under any provision of a Federal law or regulation applicable to a financial holding company:

(I) Providing information products or services to a covered person for identity authentication.

(II) Providing information products or services for fraud or identify theft detection, prevention, or investigation.

(III) Providing document retrieval or delivery services.

(IV) Providing public records information retrieval.

(V) Providing information products or services for anti-money laundering activities.

(ii) LIMITATION.—Nothing in clause (i) may be construed as modifying or limiting the authority of the Bureau to exercise any—

(I) examination or enforcement powers authority under this title with respect to a covered person or service provider engaging in an activity described in subparagraph (A)(ix); or

(II) powers authorized by this title to prescribe rules, issue orders, or take other actions under any enumerated consumer law or law for which the authorities are transferred under subtitle F or H.

(C) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “financial product or service” does not include—

(i) the business of insurance; or

(ii) electronic conduit services.

(16) FOREIGN EXCHANGE.—The term “foreign exchange” means the exchange, for compensation, of currency of the United States or of a foreign government for currency of another government.

(17) INSURED CREDIT UNION.—The term “insured credit union” has the same meaning as in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1752).

(18) PAYMENT INSTRUMENT.—The term “payment instrument” means a check, draft, warrant, money order, traveler’s check, electronic instrument, or other instrument, payment of funds, or monetary value (other than currency).

(19) PERSON.—The term “person” means an individual, partnership, company, corporation, association (incorporated or unincorporated), trust, estate, cooperative organization, or other entity.

(20) PERSON REGULATED BY THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION.—The term “person regulated by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission” means any person that is registered, or required by statute or regulation to be registered, with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, but only to the extent that the activities of such person are subject to the jurisdiction of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission under the Commodity Exchange Act.

(21) PERSON REGULATED BY THE COMMISSION.—The term “person regulated by the Commission” means a person who is—

(A) a broker or dealer that is required to be registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934;

(B) an investment adviser that is registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940;

(C) an investment company that is required to be registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, and any company that has elected to be regulated as a business development company under that Act;

(D) a national securities exchange that is required to be registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934;

(E) a transfer agent that is required to be registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934;

(F) a clearing corporation that is required to be registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934;

(G) any self-regulatory organization that is required to be registered with the Commission;

(H) any nationally recognized statistical rating organization that is required to be registered with the Commission;

(I) any securities information processor that is required to be registered with the Commission;

(J) any municipal securities dealer that is required to be registered with the Commission;

(K) any other person that is required to be registered with the Commission under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934; and

(L) any employee, agent, or contractor acting on behalf of, registered with, or providing services to, any person described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (K), but only to the extent that any person described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (K), or the employee, agent, or contractor of such person, acts in a regulated capacity.

(22) PERSON REGULATED BY A STATE INSURANCE REGULATOR.—The term “person regulated by a State insurance regulator” means any person that is engaged in the business of insurance and subject to regulation by any State insurance regulator, but only to the extent that such person acts in such capacity.

(23) PERSON THAT PERFORMS INCOME TAX PREPARATION ACTIVITIES FOR CONSUMERS.—The term “person that performs income tax preparation activities for consumers” means—

(A) any tax return preparer (as defined in section 7701(a)(36) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986), regardless of whether compensated, but only to the extent that the person acts in such capacity;

(B) any person regulated by the Secretary under section 330 of title 31, United States Code, but only to the extent that the person acts in such capacity; and

(C) any authorized IRS e-file Providers (as defined for purposes of section 7216 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986), but only to the extent that the person acts in such capacity.

(24) PRUDENTIAL REGULATOR.—The term “prudential regulator” means—

(A) in the case of an insured depository institution or depository institution holding company (as defined in section

3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act), or subsidiary of such institution or company, the appropriate Federal banking agency, as that term is defined in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act; and

(B) in the case of an insured credit union, the National Credit Union Administration.

(25) RELATED PERSON.—The term “related person”—

(A) shall apply only with respect to a covered person that is not a bank holding company (as that term is defined in section 2 of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956), credit union, or depository institution;

(B) shall be deemed to mean a covered person for all purposes of any provision of Federal consumer financial law; and

(C) means—

(i) any director, officer, or employee charged with managerial responsibility for, or controlling shareholder of, or agent for, such covered person;

(ii) any shareholder, consultant, joint venture partner, or other person, as determined by the Bureau (by rule or on a case-by-case basis) who materially participates in the conduct of the affairs of such covered person; and

(iii) any independent contractor (including any attorney, appraiser, or accountant) who knowingly or recklessly participates in any—

(I) violation of any provision of law or regulation; or

(II) breach of a fiduciary duty.

(26) SERVICE PROVIDER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “service provider” means any person that provides a material service to a covered person in connection with the offering or provision by such covered person of a consumer financial product or service, including a person that—

(i) participates in designing, operating, or maintaining the consumer financial product or service; or

(ii) processes transactions relating to the consumer financial product or service (other than unknowingly or incidentally transmitting or processing financial data in a manner that such data is undifferentiated from other types of data of the same form as the person transmits or processes).

(B) EXCEPTIONS.—The term “service provider” does not include a person solely by virtue of such person offering or providing to a covered person—

(i) a support service of a type provided to businesses generally or a similar ministerial service; or

(ii) time or space for an advertisement for a consumer financial product or service through print, newspaper, or electronic media.

(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—A person that is a service provider shall be deemed to be a covered person to the extent that such person engages in the offering or provision of its own consumer financial product or service.

(27) STATE.—The term “State” means any State, territory, or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or the United States Virgin Islands or any federally recognized Indian tribe, as defined by the Secretary of the Interior under section 104(a) of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 479a-1(a)).

(28) STORED VALUE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “stored value” means funds or monetary value represented in any electronic format, whether or not specially encrypted, and stored or capable of storage on electronic media in such a way as to be retrievable and transferred electronically, and includes a prepaid debit card or product, or any other similar product, regardless of whether the amount of the funds or monetary value may be increased or reloaded.

(B) EXCLUSION.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the term “stored value” does not include a special purpose card or certificate, which shall be defined for purposes of this paragraph as funds or monetary value represented in any electronic format, whether or not specially encrypted, that is—

(i) issued by a merchant, retailer, or other seller of nonfinancial goods or services;

(ii) redeemable only for transactions with the merchant, retailer, or seller of nonfinancial goods or services or with an affiliate of such person, which affiliate itself is a merchant, retailer, or seller of nonfinancial goods or services;

(iii) issued in a specified amount that, except in the case of a card or product used solely for telephone services, may not be increased or reloaded;

(iv) purchased on a prepaid basis in exchange for payment; and

(v) honored upon presentation to such merchant, retailer, or seller of nonfinancial goods or services or an affiliate of such person, which affiliate itself is a merchant, retailer, or seller of nonfinancial goods or services, only for any nonfinancial goods or services.

(29) TRANSMITTING OR EXCHANGING FUNDS.—The term “transmitting or exchanging funds” means receiving currency, monetary value, or payment instruments from a consumer for the purpose of exchanging or transmitting the same by any means, including transmission by wire, facsimile, electronic transfer, courier, the Internet, or through bill payment services or through other businesses that facilitate third-party transfers within the United States or to or from the United States.

* * * * *

Subtitle A—Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection

SEC. 1011. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION.

(a) BUREAU ESTABLISHED.—There is established [in the Federal Reserve System,] an [independent bureau] *independent commission* to be known as the “[Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection] *Financial Product Safety Commission* (hereinafter in this section referred to as the “*Commission*”)”, which shall regulate the offering and provision of consumer financial products or services under the Federal consumer financial laws. The [Bureau] *Commission* shall be considered an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code. Except as otherwise provided expressly by law, all Federal laws dealing with public or Federal contracts, property, works, officers, employees, budgets, or funds, including the provisions of chapters 5 and 7 of title 5, shall apply to the exercise of the powers of the [Bureau] *Commission*.

[(b) DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR.—

[(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established the position of the Director, who shall serve as the head of the Bureau.

[(2) APPOINTMENT.—Subject to paragraph (3), the Director shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

[(3) QUALIFICATION.—The President shall nominate the Director from among individuals who are citizens of the United States.

[(4) COMPENSATION.—The Director shall be compensated at the rate prescribed for level II of the Executive Schedule under section 5313 of title 5, United States Code.

[(5) DEPUTY DIRECTOR.—There is established the position of Deputy Director, who shall—

[(A) be appointed by the Director; and

[(B) serve as acting Director in the absence or unavailability of the Director.

[(c) TERM.—

[(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall serve for a term of 5 years.

[(2) EXPIRATION OF TERM.—An individual may serve as Director after the expiration of the term for which appointed, until a successor has been appointed and qualified.

[(3) REMOVAL FOR CAUSE.—The President may remove the Director for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office.

[(d) SERVICE RESTRICTION.—No Director or Deputy Director may hold any office, position, or employment in any Federal reserve bank, Federal home loan bank, covered person, or service provider during the period of service of such person as Director or Deputy Director.]

(b) AUTHORITY TO PRESCRIBE REGULATIONS.—*The Commission may prescribe such regulations and issue such orders in accordance with this title as the Commission may determine to be necessary for carrying out this title and all other laws within the Commission’s*

jurisdiction and shall exercise any authorities granted under this title and all other laws within the Commission's jurisdiction.

(c) COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION.—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—The Commission shall be composed of 5 members who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from among individuals who—

(A) are citizens of the United States; and

(B) have strong competencies and experiences related to consumer financial products and services.

(2) *STAGGERING.*—The members of the Commission shall serve staggered terms, which initially shall be established by the President for terms of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 years, respectively.

(3) *TERMS.*—

(A) *IN GENERAL.*—Each member of the Commission, including the Chair, shall serve for a term of 5 years.

(B) *REMOVAL.*—The President may remove any member of the Commission for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office.

(C) *VACANCIES.*—Any member of the Commission appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term to which that member's predecessor was appointed (including the Chair) shall be appointed only for the remainder of the term.

(D) *CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.*—Each member of the Commission may continue to serve after the expiration of the term of office to which that member was appointed until a successor has been appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, except that a member may not continue to serve more than 1 year after the date on which that member's term would otherwise expire.

(E) *OTHER EMPLOYMENT PROHIBITED.*—No member of the Commission shall engage in any other business, vocation, or employment.

(d) *AFFILIATION.*—Not more than 3 members of the Commission shall be members of any one political party.

(e) *CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION.*—

(1) *APPOINTMENT.*—The Chair of the Commission shall be appointed by the President from among the members of the Commission.

(2) *AUTHORITY.*—The Chair shall be the principal executive officer of the Commission, and shall exercise all of the executive and administrative functions of the Commission, including with respect to—

(A) the appointment and supervision of personnel employed under the Commission (other than personnel employed regularly and full time in the immediate offices of members of the Commission other than the Chair);

(B) the distribution of business among personnel appointed and supervised by the Chair and among administrative units of the Commission; and

(C) the use and expenditure of funds.

(3) *LIMITATION.*—In carrying out any of the Chair's functions under the provisions of this subsection the Chair shall be governed by general policies of the Commission and by such regu-

latory decisions, findings, and determinations as the Commission may by law be authorized to make.

(4) *REQUESTS OR ESTIMATES RELATED TO APPROPRIATIONS.—Requests or estimates for regular, supplemental, or deficiency appropriations on behalf of the Commission may not be submitted by the Chair without the prior approval of the Commission.*

(f) *NO IMPAIRMENT BY REASON OF VACANCIES.—No vacancy in the members of the Commission shall impair the right of the remaining members of the Commission to exercise all the powers of the Commission. Three members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, except that if there are only 3 members serving on the Commission because of vacancies in the Commission, 2 members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If there are only 2 members serving on the Commission because of vacancies in the Commission, 2 members shall constitute a quorum for the 6-month period beginning on the date of the vacancy which caused the number of Commission members to decline to 2.*

(g) *SEAL.—The Commission shall have an official seal.*

(h) *COMPENSATION.—*

(1) *CHAIR.—The Chair shall receive compensation at the rate prescribed for level I of the Executive Schedule under section 5313 of title 5, United States Code.*

(2) *OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.—The 4 other members of the Commission shall each receive compensation at the rate prescribed for level II of the Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5, United States Code.*

[(e)] (i) *OFFICES.—The principal office of the [Bureau] Commission shall be in the District of Columbia. The [Director] Financial Product Safety Commission may establish regional offices of the [Bureau] Commission [, including in cities in which the Federal reserve banks, or branches of such banks, are located,] in order to carry out the responsibilities assigned to the [Bureau] Commission under the Federal consumer financial laws.*

SEC. 1012. EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE POWERS.

(a) *POWERS OF THE BUREAU.—The Bureau is authorized to establish the general policies of the Bureau with respect to all executive and administrative functions, including—*

(1) *the establishment of rules for conducting the general business of the Bureau, in a manner not inconsistent with this title;*

(2) *to bind the Bureau and enter into contracts;*

(3) *directing the establishment and maintenance of divisions or other offices within the Bureau, in order to carry out the responsibilities under the Federal consumer financial laws, and to satisfy the requirements of other applicable law;*

(4) *to coordinate and oversee the operation of all administrative, enforcement, and research activities of the Bureau;*

(5) *to adopt and use a seal;*

(6) *to determine the character of and the necessity for the obligations and expenditures of the Bureau;*

(7) *the appointment and supervision of personnel employed by the Bureau;*

(8) the distribution of business among personnel appointed and supervised by the **Director** *Financial Product Safety Commission* and among administrative units of the Bureau;

(9) the use and expenditure of funds;

(10) implementing the Federal consumer financial laws through rules, orders, guidance, interpretations, statements of policy, examinations, and enforcement actions; and

(11) performing such other functions as may be authorized or required by law.

(b) **DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY.**—The **Director of the Bureau** *Financial Product Safety Commission* may delegate to any duly authorized employee, representative, or agent any power vested in the Bureau by law.

(c) **AUTONOMY OF THE BUREAU.**—

(1) **COORDINATION WITH THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law applicable to the supervision or examination of persons with respect to Federal consumer financial laws, the Board of Governors may delegate to the Bureau the authorities to examine persons subject to the jurisdiction of the Board of Governors for compliance with the Federal consumer financial laws.

(2) AUTONOMY.—Notwithstanding the authorities granted to the Board of Governors under the Federal Reserve Act, the Board of Governors may not—

(A) intervene in any matter or proceeding before the Director, including examinations or enforcement actions, unless otherwise specifically provided by law;

(B) appoint, direct, or remove any officer or employee of the Bureau; or

(C) merge or consolidate the Bureau, or any of the functions or responsibilities of the Bureau, with any division or office of the Board of Governors or the Federal reserve banks.

(3) RULES AND ORDERS.—No rule or order of the Bureau shall be subject to approval or review by the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors may not delay or prevent the issuance of any rule or order of the Bureau.

(4) RECOMMENDATIONS AND TESTIMONY.—No officer or agency of the United States shall have any authority to require the Director or any other officer of the Bureau to submit legislative recommendations, or testimony or comments on legislation, to any officer or agency of the United States for approval, comments, or review prior to the submission of such recommendations, testimony, or comments to the Congress, if such recommendations, testimony, or comments to the Congress include a statement indicating that the views expressed therein are those of the Director or such officer, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Governors or the President.

(5) CLARIFICATION OF AUTONOMY OF THE BUREAU IN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.—The Bureau shall not be liable under any provision of law for any action or inaction of the Board of Governors, and the Board of Governors shall not be liable under any provision of law for any action or inaction of the Bureau.】

SEC. 1013. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) **PERSONNEL.**—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* may fix the number of, and appoint and direct, all employees of the Bureau, in accordance with the applicable provisions of title 5, United States Code.

(B) EMPLOYEES OF THE BUREAU.—The **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* is authorized to employ attorneys, compliance examiners, compliance supervision analysts, economists, statisticians, and other employees as may be deemed necessary to conduct the business of the Bureau. Unless otherwise provided expressly by law, any individual appointed under this section shall be an employee as defined in section 2105 of title 5, United States Code, and subject to the provisions of such title and other laws generally applicable to the employees of an Executive agency.

(C) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—In making any appointment under subparagraph (A), the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* may waive the requirements of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, and the regulations implementing such chapter, to the extent necessary to appoint employees on terms and conditions that are consistent with those set forth in section 11(1) of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 248(1)), while providing for—

(I) fair, credible, and transparent methods of establishing qualification requirements for, recruitment for, and appointments to positions;

(II) fair and open competition and equitable treatment in the consideration and selection of individuals to positions;

(III) fair, credible, and transparent methods of assigning, reassigning, detailing, transferring, and promoting employees.

(ii) VETERANS PREFERENCES.—In implementing this subparagraph, the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall comply with the provisions of section 2302(b)(11), regarding veterans' preference requirements, in a manner consistent with that in which such provisions are applied under chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code. The authority under this subparagraph to waive the requirements of that chapter 33 shall expire 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) COMPENSATION.—Notwithstanding any otherwise applicable provision of title 5, United States Code, concerning compensation, including the provisions of chapter 51 and chapter 53, the following provisions shall apply with respect to employees of the Bureau:

(A) The rates of basic pay for all employees of the Bureau may be set and adjusted by the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission*.

(B) The **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall at all times provide compensation (including benefits)

to each class of employees that, at a minimum, are comparable to the compensation and benefits then being provided by the Board of Governors for the corresponding class of employees.

(C) All such employees shall be compensated (including benefits) on terms and conditions that are consistent with the terms and conditions set forth in section 11(l) of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 248(l)).

(3) BUREAU PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM RETIREMENT PLAN AND FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM THRIFT PLAN.—

(A) EMPLOYEE ELECTION.—Employees appointed to the Bureau may elect to participate in either—

(i) both the Federal Reserve System Retirement Plan and the Federal Reserve System Thrift Plan, under the same terms on which such participation is offered to employees of the Board of Governors who participate in such plans and under the terms and conditions specified under section 1064(i)(1)(C); or

(ii) the Civil Service Retirement System under chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code, or the Federal Employees Retirement System under chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, if previously covered under one of those Federal employee retirement systems.

(B) ELECTION PERIOD.—Bureau employees shall make an election under this paragraph not later than 1 year after the date of appointment by, or transfer under subtitle F to, the Bureau. Participation in, and benefit accruals under, any other retirement plan established or maintained by the Federal Government shall end not later than the date on which participation in, and benefit accruals under, the Federal Reserve System Retirement Plan and Federal Reserve System Thrift Plan begin.

(C) EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION.—The Bureau shall pay an employer contribution to the Federal Reserve System Retirement Plan, in the amount established as an employer contribution under the Federal Employees Retirement System, as established under chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, for each Bureau employee who elects to participate in the Federal Reserve System Retirement Plan. The Bureau shall pay an employer contribution to the Federal Reserve System Thrift Plan for each Bureau employee who elects to participate in such plan, as required under the terms of such plan.

(D) CONTROLLED GROUP STATUS.—The Bureau is the same employer as the Federal Reserve System (as comprised of the Board of Governors and each of the 12 Federal reserve banks prior to the date of enactment of this Act) for purposes of subsections (b), (c), (m), and (o) of section 414 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, (26 U.S.C. 414).

(4) LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS.—Chapter 71 of title 5, United States Code, shall apply to the Bureau and the employees of the Bureau.

(5) AGENCY OMBUDSMAN.—

(A) ESTABLISHMENT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the designated transfer date, the Bureau shall appoint an ombudsman.

(B) DUTIES OF OMBUDSMAN.—The ombudsman appointed in accordance with subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) act as a liaison between the Bureau and any affected person with respect to any problem that such party may have in dealing with the Bureau, resulting from the regulatory activities of the Bureau; and

(ii) assure that safeguards exist to encourage complainants to come forward and preserve confidentiality.

(b) SPECIFIC FUNCTIONAL UNITS.—

(1) RESEARCH.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall establish a unit whose functions shall include researching, analyzing, and reporting on—

(A) developments in markets for consumer financial products or services, including market areas of alternative consumer financial products or services with high growth rates and areas of risk to consumers;

(B) access to fair and affordable credit for traditionally underserved communities;

(C) consumer awareness, understanding, and use of disclosures and communications regarding consumer financial products or services;

(D) consumer awareness and understanding of costs, risks, and benefits of consumer financial products or services;

(E) consumer behavior with respect to consumer financial products or services, including performance on mortgage loans; and

(F) experiences of traditionally underserved consumers, including un-banked and under-banked consumers.

(2) COMMUNITY AFFAIRS.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall establish a unit whose functions shall include providing information, guidance, and technical assistance regarding the offering and provision of consumer financial products or services to traditionally underserved consumers and communities.

(3) COLLECTING AND TRACKING COMPLAINTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall establish a unit whose functions shall include establishing a single, toll-free telephone number, a website, and a database or utilizing an existing database to facilitate the centralized collection of, monitoring of, and response to consumer complaints regarding consumer financial products or services. The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall coordinate with the Federal Trade Commission or other Federal agencies to route complaints to such agencies, where appropriate.

(B) ROUTING CALLS TO STATES.—To the extent practicable, State agencies may receive appropriate complaints from the systems established under subparagraph (A), if—

(i) the State agency system has the functional capacity to receive calls or electronic reports routed by the Bureau systems;

(ii) the State agency has satisfied any conditions of participation in the system that the Bureau may establish, including treatment of personally identifiable information and sharing of information on complaint resolution or related compliance procedures and resources; and

(iii) participation by the State agency includes measures necessary to provide for protection of personally identifiable information that conform to the standards for protection of the confidentiality of personally identifiable information and for data integrity and security that apply to the Federal agencies described in subparagraph (D).

(C) REPORTS TO THE CONGRESS.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall present an annual report to Congress not later than March 31 of each year on the complaints received by the Bureau in the prior year regarding consumer financial products and services. Such report shall include information and analysis about complaint numbers, complaint types, and, where applicable, information about resolution of complaints.

(D) DATA SHARING REQUIRED.—To facilitate preparation of the reports required under subparagraph (C), supervision and enforcement activities, and monitoring of the market for consumer financial products and services, the Bureau shall share consumer complaint information with prudential regulators, the Federal Trade Commission, other Federal agencies, and State agencies, subject to the standards applicable to Federal agencies for protection of the confidentiality of personally identifiable information and for data security and integrity. The prudential regulators, the Federal Trade Commission, and other Federal agencies shall share data relating to consumer complaints regarding consumer financial products and services with the Bureau, subject to the standards applicable to Federal agencies for protection of confidentiality of personally identifiable information and for data security and integrity.

(c) OFFICE OF FAIR LENDING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall establish within the Bureau the Office of Fair Lending and Equal Opportunity.

(2) FUNCTIONS.—The Office of Fair Lending and Equal Opportunity shall have such powers and duties as the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may delegate to the Office, including—

(A) providing oversight and enforcement of Federal laws intended to ensure the fair, equitable, and nondiscriminatory access to credit for both individuals and communities that are enforced by the Bureau, including the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act;

(B) coordinating fair lending efforts of the Bureau with other Federal agencies and State regulators, as appropriate, to promote consistent, efficient, and effective enforcement of Federal fair lending laws;

(C) working with private industry, fair lending, civil rights, consumer and community advocates on the promotion of fair lending compliance and education; and

(D) providing annual reports to Congress on the efforts of the Bureau to fulfill its fair lending mandate.

(3) ADMINISTRATION OF OFFICE.—There is established the position of **[Assistant Director of the Bureau for] *Head of the Office of Fair Lending and Equal Opportunity***, who—

(A) shall be appointed by the **[Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission***; and

(B) shall carry out such duties as the **[Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*** may delegate to such **[Assistant Director] *Head of the Office***.

(d) OFFICE OF FINANCIAL EDUCATION.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The **[Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*** shall establish an Office of Financial Education, which shall be responsible for developing and implementing initiatives intended to educate and empower consumers to make better informed financial decisions.

(2) OTHER DUTIES.—The Office of Financial Education shall develop and implement a strategy to improve the financial literacy of consumers that includes measurable goals and objectives, in consultation with the Financial Literacy and Education Commission, consistent with the National Strategy for Financial Literacy, through activities including providing opportunities for consumers to access—

(A) financial counseling, including community-based financial counseling, where practicable;

(B) information to assist with the evaluation of credit products and the understanding of credit histories and scores;

(C) savings, borrowing, and other services found at mainstream financial institutions;

(D) activities intended to—

(i) prepare the consumer for educational expenses and the submission of financial aid applications, and other major purchases;

(ii) reduce debt; and

(iii) improve the financial situation of the consumer;

(E) assistance in developing long-term savings strategies; and

(F) wealth building and financial services during the preparation process to claim earned income tax credits and Federal benefits.

(3) COORDINATION.—The Office of Financial Education shall coordinate with other units within the Bureau in carrying out its functions, including—

(A) working with the Community Affairs Office to implement the strategy to improve financial literacy of consumers; and

- (B) working with the research unit established by the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* to conduct research related to consumer financial education and counseling.
- (4) REPORT.—Not later than 24 months after the designated transfer date, and annually thereafter, the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall submit a report on its financial literacy activities and strategy to improve financial literacy of consumers to—
- (A) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate; and
 - (B) the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.
- (5) MEMBERSHIP IN FINANCIAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION COMMISSION.—Section 513(c)(1) of the Financial Literacy and Education Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 9702(c)(1)) is amended—
- (A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end;
 - (B) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (D); and
 - (C) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following new subparagraph:
“(C) the **[Director of the Bureau]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection; and”.
- (6) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 513(d) of the Financial Literacy and Education Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 9702(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “The **[Director of the Bureau]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection shall serve as the Vice Chairman.”.
- (7) STUDY AND REPORT ON FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM.—
- (A) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to identify—
 - (i) the feasibility of certification of persons providing the programs or performing the activities described in paragraph (2), including recognizing outstanding programs, and developing guidelines and resources for community-based practitioners, including—
 - (I) a potential certification process and standards for certification;
 - (II) appropriate certifying entities;
 - (III) resources required for funding such a process; and
 - (IV) a cost-benefit analysis of such certification;
 - (ii) technological resources intended to collect, analyze, evaluate, or promote financial literacy and counseling programs;
 - (iii) effective methods, tools, and strategies intended to educate and empower consumers about personal finance management; and
 - (iv) recommendations intended to encourage the development of programs that effectively improve financial education outcomes and empower consumers to

make better informed financial decisions based on findings.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report on the results of the study conducted under this paragraph to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

(e) OFFICE OF SERVICE MEMBER AFFAIRS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall establish an Office of Service Member Affairs, which shall be responsible for developing and implementing initiatives for service members and their families intended to—

(A) educate and empower service members and their families to make better informed decisions regarding consumer financial products and services;

(B) coordinate with the unit of the Bureau established under subsection (b)(3), in order to monitor complaints by service members and their families and responses to those complaints by the Bureau or other appropriate Federal or State agency; and

(C) coordinate efforts among Federal and State agencies, as appropriate, regarding consumer protection measures relating to consumer financial products and services offered to, or used by, service members and their families.

(2) COORDINATION.—

(A) REGIONAL SERVICES.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* is authorized to assign employees of the Bureau as may be deemed necessary to conduct the business of the Office of Service Member Affairs, including by establishing and maintaining the functions of the Office in regional offices of the Bureau located near military bases, military treatment facilities, or other similar military facilities.

(B) AGREEMENTS.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* is authorized to enter into memoranda of understanding and similar agreements with the Department of Defense, including any branch or agency as authorized by the department, in order to carry out the business of the Office of Service Member Affairs.

(3) DEFINITION.—As used in this subsection, the term “service member” means any member of the United States Armed Forces and any member of the National Guard or Reserves.

(f) TIMING.—The Office of Fair Lending and Equal Opportunity, the Office of Financial Education, and the Office of Service Member Affairs shall each be established not later than 1 year after the designated transfer date.

(g) OFFICE OF FINANCIAL PROTECTION FOR OLDER AMERICANS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Before the end of the 180-day period beginning on the designated transfer date, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall establish the Office of Financial Protection for Older Americans, the functions of which shall include activities designed to facilitate the finan-

cial literacy of individuals who have attained the age of 62 years or more (in this subsection, referred to as “seniors”) on protection from unfair, deceptive, and abusive practices and on current and future financial choices, including through the dissemination of materials to seniors on such topics.

(2) **【ASSISTANT DIRECTOR】 HEAD OF THE OFFICE.**—The Office of Financial Protection for Older Americans (in this subsection referred to as the “Office”) shall be headed by **【an assistant director】** *a Head of the Office of Financial Protection for Older Americans.*

(3) **DUTIES.**—The Office shall—

(A) develop goals for programs that provide seniors financial literacy and counseling, including programs that—

(i) help seniors recognize warning signs of unfair, deceptive, or abusive practices, protect themselves from such practices;

(ii) provide one-on-one financial counseling on issues including long-term savings and later-life economic security; and

(iii) provide personal consumer credit advocacy to respond to consumer problems caused by unfair, deceptive, or abusive practices;

(B) monitor certifications or designations of financial advisors who advise seniors and alert the Commission and State regulators of certifications or designations that are identified as unfair, deceptive, or abusive;

(C) not later than 18 months after the date of the establishment of the Office, submit to Congress and the Commission any legislative and regulatory recommendations on the best practices for—

(i) disseminating information regarding the legitimacy of certifications of financial advisers who advise seniors;

(ii) methods in which a senior can identify the financial advisor most appropriate for the senior’s needs; and

(iii) methods in which a senior can verify a financial advisor’s credentials;

(D) conduct research to identify best practices and effective methods, tools, technology and strategies to educate and counsel seniors about personal finance management with a focus on—

(i) protecting themselves from unfair, deceptive, and abusive practices;

(ii) long-term savings; and

(iii) planning for retirement and long-term care;

(E) coordinate consumer protection efforts of seniors with other Federal agencies and State regulators, as appropriate, to promote consistent, effective, and efficient enforcement; and

(F) work with community organizations, non-profit organizations, and other entities that are involved with educating or assisting seniors (including the National Education and Resource Center on Women and Retirement Planning).

SEC. 1014. CONSUMER ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT REQUIRED.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall establish a Consumer Advisory Board to advise and consult with the Bureau in the exercise of its functions under the Federal consumer financial laws, and to provide information on emerging practices in the consumer financial products or services industry, including regional trends, concerns, and other relevant information.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—In appointing the members of the Consumer Advisory Board, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall seek to assemble experts in consumer protection, financial services, community development, fair lending and civil rights, and consumer financial products or services and representatives of depository institutions that primarily serve underserved communities, and representatives of communities that have been significantly impacted by higher-priced mortgage loans, and seek representation of the interests of covered persons and consumers, without regard to party affiliation. [Not fewer than 6 members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the regional Federal Reserve Bank Presidents, on a rotating basis.]

(c) MEETINGS.—The Consumer Advisory Board shall meet from time to time at the call of the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*, but, at a minimum, shall meet at least twice in each year.

(d) COMPENSATION AND TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Members of the Consumer Advisory Board who are not full-time employees of the United States shall—

(1) be entitled to receive compensation at a rate fixed by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* while attending meetings of the Consumer Advisory Board, including travel time; and

(2) be allowed travel expenses, including transportation and subsistence, while away from their homes or regular places of business.

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SEC. 1016. APPEARANCES BEFORE AND REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(a) APPEARANCES BEFORE CONGRESS.—The [Director of the Bureau] *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission* shall appear before the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives at semi-annual hearings regarding the reports required under subsection (b).

(b) REPORTS REQUIRED.—The Bureau shall, concurrent with each semi-annual hearing referred to in subsection (a), prepare and submit to the President and to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, a report, beginning with the session following the designated transfer date. The Bureau may also submit such report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(c) CONTENTS.—The reports required by subsection (b) shall include—

(1) a discussion of the significant problems faced by consumers in shopping for or obtaining consumer financial products or services;

(2) a justification of the budget request of the previous year;

(3) a list of the significant rules and orders adopted by the Bureau, as well as other significant initiatives conducted by the Bureau, during the preceding year and the plan of the Bureau for rules, orders, or other initiatives to be undertaken during the upcoming period;

(4) an analysis of complaints about consumer financial products or services that the Bureau has received and collected in its central database on complaints during the preceding year;

(5) a list, with a brief statement of the issues, of the public supervisory and enforcement actions to which the Bureau was a party during the preceding year;

(6) the actions taken regarding rules, orders, and supervisory actions with respect to covered persons which are not credit unions or depository institutions;

(7) an assessment of significant actions by State attorneys general or State regulators relating to Federal consumer financial law;

(8) an analysis of the efforts of the Bureau to fulfill the fair lending mission of the Bureau; and

(9) an analysis of the efforts of the Bureau to increase workforce and contracting diversity consistent with the procedures established by the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion.

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SEC. 1017. FUNDING; PENALTIES AND FINES.

(a) **TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM BOARD OF GOVERNORS.—**

(1) **IN GENERAL.—**Each year (or quarter of such year), beginning on the designated transfer date, and each quarter thereafter, the Board of Governors shall transfer to the Bureau from the combined earnings of the Federal Reserve System, the amount determined by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* to be reasonably necessary to carry out the authorities of the Bureau under Federal consumer financial law, taking into account such other sums made available to the Bureau from the preceding year (or quarter of such year).

(2) **FUNDING CAP.—**

(A) **IN GENERAL.—**Notwithstanding paragraph (1), and in accordance with this paragraph, the amount that shall be transferred to the Bureau in each fiscal year shall not exceed a fixed percentage of the total operating expenses of the Federal Reserve System, as reported in the Annual Report, 2009, of the Board of Governors, equal to—

(i) 10 percent of such expenses in fiscal year 2011;

(ii) 11 percent of such expenses in fiscal year 2012;

and

(iii) 12 percent of such expenses in fiscal year 2013, and in each year thereafter.

(B) **ADJUSTMENT OF AMOUNT.—**The dollar amount referred to in subparagraph (A)(iii) shall be adjusted annually, using the percent increase, if any, in the employment cost index for total compensation for State and local gov-

ernment workers published by the Federal Government, or the successor index thereto, for the 12-month period ending on September 30 of the year preceding the transfer.

(C) REVIEWABILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision in this title, the funds derived from the Federal Reserve System pursuant to this subsection shall not be subject to review by the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

(3) TRANSITION PERIOD.—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and until the designated transfer date, the Board of Governors shall transfer to the Bureau the amount estimated by the Secretary needed to carry out the authorities granted to the Bureau under Federal consumer financial law, from the date of enactment of this Act until the designated transfer date.

(4) BUDGET AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.—

(A) FINANCIAL OPERATING PLANS AND FORECASTS.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall provide to the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of the Office of Management and Budget copies of the financial operating plans and forecasts of the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*, as prepared by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* in the ordinary course of the operations of the Bureau, and copies of the quarterly reports of the financial condition and results of operations of the Bureau, as prepared by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* in the ordinary course of the operations of the Bureau.

(B) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.—The Bureau shall prepare annually a statement of—

- (i) assets and liabilities and surplus or deficit;
- (ii) income and expenses; and
- (iii) sources and application of funds.

(C) FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.—The Bureau shall implement and maintain financial management systems that comply substantially with Federal financial management systems requirements and applicable Federal accounting standards.

(D) ASSERTION OF INTERNAL CONTROLS.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall provide to the Comptroller General of the United States an assertion as to the effectiveness of the internal controls that apply to financial reporting by the Bureau, using the standards established in section 3512(c) of title 31, United States Code.

(E) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—This subsection may not be construed as implying any obligation on the part of the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* to consult with or obtain the consent or approval of the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of the Office of Management and Budget with respect to any report, plan, forecast, or other information referred to in subparagraph (A) or any jurisdiction or oversight over the affairs or operations of the Bureau.

(F) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.—The financial statements of the Bureau shall not be consolidated with the financial

statements of either the Board of Governors or the Federal Reserve System.

(5) AUDIT OF THE BUREAU.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General shall annually audit the financial transactions of the Bureau in accordance with the United States generally accepted government auditing standards, as may be prescribed by the Comptroller General of the United States. The audit shall be conducted at the place or places where accounts of the Bureau are normally kept. The representatives of the Government Accountability Office shall have access to the personnel and to all books, accounts, documents, papers, records (including electronic records), reports, files, and all other papers, automated data, things, or property belonging to or under the control of or used or employed by the Bureau pertaining to its financial transactions and necessary to facilitate the audit, and such representatives shall be afforded full facilities for verifying transactions with the balances or securities held by depositories, fiscal agents, and custodians. All such books, accounts, documents, records, reports, files, papers, and property of the Bureau shall remain in possession and custody of the Bureau. The Comptroller General may obtain and duplicate any such books, accounts, documents, records, working papers, automated data and files, or other information relevant to such audit without cost to the Comptroller General, and the right of access of the Comptroller General to such information shall be enforceable pursuant to section 716(c) of title 31, United States Code.

(B) REPORT.—The Comptroller General shall submit to the Congress a report of each annual audit conducted under this subsection. The report to the Congress shall set forth the scope of the audit and shall include the statement of assets and liabilities and surplus or deficit, the statement of income and expenses, the statement of sources and application of funds, and such comments and information as may be deemed necessary to inform Congress of the financial operations and condition of the Bureau, together with such recommendations with respect thereto as the Comptroller General may deem advisable. A copy of each report shall be furnished to the President and to the Bureau at the time submitted to the Congress.

(C) ASSISTANCE AND COSTS.—For the purpose of conducting an audit under this subsection, the Comptroller General may, in the discretion of the Comptroller General, employ by contract, without regard to section 3709 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (41 U.S.C. 5), professional services of firms and organizations of certified public accountants for temporary periods or for special purposes. Upon the request of the Comptroller General, the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall transfer to the Government Accountability Office from funds available, the amount requested by the Comptroller General to cover the full costs of any audit and report conducted by the Comptroller General. The

Comptroller General shall credit funds transferred to the account established for salaries and expenses of the Government Accountability Office, and such amount shall be available upon receipt and without fiscal year limitation to cover the full costs of the audit and report.

(b) CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION FUND.—

(1) SEPARATE FUND IN FEDERAL RESERVE ESTABLISHED.—There is established in the Federal Reserve a separate fund, to be known as the “Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection Fund” (referred to in this section as the “Bureau Fund”). The Bureau Fund shall be maintained and established at a Federal reserve bank, in accordance with such requirements as the Board of Governors may impose.

(2) FUND RECEIPTS.—All amounts transferred to the Bureau under subsection (a) shall be deposited into the Bureau Fund.

(3) INVESTMENT AUTHORITY.—

(A) AMOUNTS IN BUREAU FUND MAY BE INVESTED.—The Bureau may request the Board of Governors to direct the investment of the portion of the Bureau Fund that is not, in the judgment of the Bureau, required to meet the current needs of the Bureau.

(B) ELIGIBLE INVESTMENTS.—Investments authorized by this paragraph shall be made in obligations of the United States or obligations that are guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States, with maturities suitable to the needs of the Bureau Fund, as determined by the Bureau.

(C) INTEREST AND PROCEEDS CREDITED.—The interest on, and the proceeds from the sale or redemption of, any obligations held in the Bureau Fund shall be credited to the Bureau Fund.

(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Funds obtained by, transferred to, or credited to the Bureau Fund shall be immediately available to the Bureau and under the control of the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*, and shall remain available until expended, to pay the expenses of the Bureau in carrying out its duties and responsibilities. The compensation of the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* and other employees of the Bureau and all other expenses thereof may be paid from, obtained by, transferred to, or credited to the Bureau Fund under this section.

(2) FUNDS THAT ARE NOT GOVERNMENT FUNDS.—Funds obtained by or transferred to the Bureau Fund shall not be construed to be Government funds or appropriated monies.

(3) AMOUNTS NOT SUBJECT TO APPORTIONMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, amounts in the Bureau Fund and in the Civil Penalty Fund established under subsection (d) shall not be subject to apportionment for purposes of chapter 15 of title 31, United States Code, or under any other authority.

(d) PENALTIES AND FINES.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT OF VICTIMS RELIEF FUND.—There is established in the Federal Reserve a separate fund, to be known as the “Consumer Financial Civil Penalty Fund” (referred to in

this section as the “Civil Penalty Fund”). The Civil Penalty Fund shall be maintained and established at a Federal reserve bank, in accordance with such requirements as the Board of Governors may impose. If the Bureau obtains a civil penalty against any person in any judicial or administrative action under Federal consumer financial laws, the Bureau shall deposit into the Civil Penalty Fund, the amount of the penalty collected.

(2) PAYMENT TO VICTIMS.—Amounts in the Civil Penalty Fund shall be available to the Bureau, without fiscal year limitation, for payments to the victims of activities for which civil penalties have been imposed under the Federal consumer financial laws. To the extent that such victims cannot be located or such payments are otherwise not practicable, the Bureau may use such funds for the purpose of consumer education and financial literacy programs.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) DETERMINATION REGARDING NEED FOR APPROPRIATED FUNDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* is authorized to determine that sums available to the Bureau under this section will not be sufficient to carry out the authorities of the Bureau under Federal consumer financial law for the upcoming year.

(B) REPORT REQUIRED.—When making a determination under subparagraph (A), the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall prepare a report regarding the funding of the Bureau, including the assets and liabilities of the Bureau, and the extent to which the funding needs of the Bureau are anticipated to exceed the level of the amount set forth in subsection (a)(2). The **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall submit the report to the President and to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—If the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* makes the determination and submits the report pursuant to paragraph (1), there are hereby authorized to be appropriated to the Bureau, for the purposes of carrying out the authorities granted in Federal consumer financial law, \$200,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014.

(3) APPORTIONMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the amounts in paragraph (2) shall be subject to apportionment under section 1517 of title 31, United States Code, and restrictions that generally apply to the use of appropriated funds in title 31, United States Code, and other laws.

(4) ANNUAL REPORT.—The **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall prepare and submit a report, on an annual basis, to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives regarding the financial operating plans and forecasts of the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission*, the financial condition and results of operations of the Bureau,

and the sources and application of funds of the Bureau, including any funds appropriated in accordance with this subsection.

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Subtitle C—Specific Bureau Authorities

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SEC. 1035. PRIVATE EDUCATION LOAN OMBUDSMAN.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary, in consultation with the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*, shall designate a Private Education Loan Ombudsman (in this section referred to as the “Ombudsman”) within the Bureau, to provide timely assistance to borrowers of private education loans.

(b) PUBLIC INFORMATION.—The Secretary and the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall disseminate information about the availability and functions of the Ombudsman to borrowers and potential borrowers, as well as institutions of higher education, lenders, guaranty agencies, loan servicers, and other participants in private education student loan programs.

(c) FUNCTIONS OF OMBUDSMAN.—The Ombudsman designated under this subsection shall—

(1) in accordance with regulations of the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*, receive, review, and attempt to resolve informally complaints from borrowers of loans described in subsection (a), including, as appropriate, attempts to resolve such complaints in collaboration with the Department of Education and with institutions of higher education, lenders, guaranty agencies, loan servicers, and other participants in private education loan programs;

(2) not later than 90 days after the designated transfer date, establish a memorandum of understanding with the student loan ombudsman established under section 141(f) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1018(f)), to ensure coordination in providing assistance to and serving borrowers seeking to resolve complaints related to their private education or Federal student loans;

(3) compile and analyze data on borrower complaints regarding private education loans; and

(4) make appropriate recommendations to the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*, the Secretary, the Secretary of Education, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives.

(d) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Ombudsman shall prepare an annual report that describes the activities, and evaluates the effectiveness of the Ombudsman during the preceding year.

(2) SUBMISSION.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall be submitted on the same date annually to the Secretary, the Secretary of Education, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Fi-

financial Services and the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the terms “private education loan” and “institution of higher education” have the same meanings as in section 140 of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1650).

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Subtitle F—Transfer of Functions and Personnel; Transitional Provisions

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SEC. 1066. INTERIM AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to perform the functions of the Bureau under this subtitle until the [Director of the Bureau is] *first member of the Commission* is confirmed by the Senate in accordance with section 1011.

(b) INTERIM ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY.—The Department of the Treasury may provide administrative services necessary to support the Bureau before the designated transfer date.

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Subtitle G—Regulatory Improvements

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SEC. 1079. REVIEW, REPORT, AND PROGRAM WITH RESPECT TO EXCHANGE FACILITATORS.

(a) REVIEW.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall review all Federal laws and regulations relating to the protection of consumers who use exchange facilitators for transactions primarily for personal, family, or household purposes.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the designated transfer date, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall submit to Congress a report describing—

(1) recommendations for legislation to ensure the appropriate protection of consumers who use exchange facilitators for transactions primarily for personal, family, or household purposes;

(2) recommendations for updating the regulations of Federal departments and agencies to ensure the appropriate protection of such consumers; and

(3) recommendations for regulations to ensure the appropriate protection of such consumers.

(c) PROGRAM.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the submission of the report under subsection (b), the Bureau shall, consistent with subtitle B, propose regulations or otherwise establish a program to protect consumers who use exchange facilitators.

(d) EXCHANGE FACILITATOR DEFINED.—In this section, the term “exchange facilitator” means a person that—

(1) facilitates, for a fee, an exchange of like kind property by entering into an agreement with a taxpayer by which the ex-

change facilitator acquires from the taxpayer the contractual rights to sell the taxpayer's relinquished property and transfers a replacement property to the taxpayer as a qualified intermediary (within the meaning of Treasury Regulations section 1.1031(k)-1(g)(4)) or enters into an agreement with the taxpayer to take title to a property as an exchange accommodation titleholder (within the meaning of Revenue Procedure 2000-37) or enters into an agreement with a taxpayer to act as a qualified trustee or qualified escrow holder (within the meaning of Treasury Regulations section 1.1031(k)-1(g)(3));

(2) maintains an office for the purpose of soliciting business to perform the services described in paragraph (1); or

(3) advertises any of the services described in paragraph (1) or solicits clients in printed publications, direct mail, television or radio advertisements, telephone calls, facsimile transmissions, or other electronic communications directed to the general public for purposes of providing any such services.

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TITLE XIV—MORTGAGE REFORM AND ANTI-PREDATORY LENDING ACT

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Subtitle D—Office of Housing Counseling

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SEC. 1447. DEFAULT AND FORECLOSURE DATABASE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission*, in consultation with the Federal agencies responsible for regulation of banking and financial institutions involved in residential mortgage lending and servicing, shall establish and maintain a database of information on foreclosures and defaults on mortgage loans for one- to four-unit residential properties and shall make such information publicly available, subject to subsection (e).

(b) CENSUS TRACT DATA.—Information in the database may be collected, aggregated, and made available on a census tract basis.

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—Information collected and made available through the database shall include—

(1) the number and percentage of such mortgage loans that are delinquent by more than 30 days;

(2) the number and percentage of such mortgage loans that are delinquent by more than 90 days;

(3) the number and percentage of such properties that are real estate-owned;

(4) number and percentage of such mortgage loans that are in the foreclosure process;

(5) the number and percentage of such mortgage loans that have an outstanding principal obligation amount that is greater than the value of the property for which the loan was made; and

(6) such other information as the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* consider appropriate.

(d) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to encourage discriminatory or unsound allocation of credit or lending policies or practices.

(e) **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY.**—In establishing and maintaining the database described in subsection (a), the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall—

(1) be subject to the standards applicable to Federal agencies for the protection of the confidentiality of personally identifiable information and for data security and integrity;

(2) implement the necessary measures to conform to the standards for data integrity and security described in paragraph (1); and

(3) collect and make available information under this section, in accordance with paragraphs (5) and (6) of section 1022(c) and the rules prescribed under such paragraphs, in order to protect privacy and confidentiality.

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FEDERAL RESERVE ACT

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DIVISION OF EARNINGS.

SEC. 7. (a) DIVIDENDS AND SURPLUS FUNDS OF RESERVE BANKS.—

(1) STOCKHOLDER DIVIDENDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—After all necessary expenses of a Federal reserve bank have been paid or provided for, the stockholders of the bank shall be entitled to receive an annual dividend of 6 percent on paid-in capital stock.

(B) DIVIDEND CUMULATIVE.—The entitlement to dividends under subparagraph (A) shall be cumulative.

(2) DEPOSIT OF NET EARNINGS IN SURPLUS FUND.—That portion of net earnings of each Federal reserve bank which remains after dividend claims under paragraph (1)(A) have been fully met shall be deposited in the surplus fund of the bank.

(b) TRANSFER FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal reserve banks shall transfer from the surplus funds of such banks to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for transfer to the Secretary of the Treasury for deposit in the general fund of the Treasury, a total amount of \$3,752,000,000 in fiscal year 2000.

(2) ALLOCATED BY FED.—Of the total amount required to be paid by the Federal reserve banks under paragraph (1) for fiscal year 2000, the Board shall determine the amount each such bank shall pay in such fiscal year.

(3) REPLENISHMENT OF SURPLUS FUND PROHIBITED.—During fiscal year 2000, no Federal reserve bank may replenish such bank's surplus fund by the amount of any transfer by such bank under paragraph (1).

(b) **USE OF EARNINGS TRANSFERRED TO THE TREASURY.**—The net earnings derived by the United States from Federal reserve banks shall, in the discretion of the Secretary, be used to supplement the gold reserve held against outstanding United States notes, or shall be applied to the reduction of the outstanding bonded indebtedness of the United States under regulations to be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Should a Federal reserve bank be dissolved or go into liquidation, any surplus remaining, after the payment of all debts, dividend requirements as hereinbefore provided, and the par value of the stock, shall be paid to and become the property of the United States and shall be similarly applied.

(c) **EXEMPTION FROM TAXATION.**—Federal reserve banks, including the capital stock and surplus therein, and the income derived therefrom shall be exempt from Federal, State, and local taxation, except taxes upon real estate.

(d) **TRANSFER FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—*The Federal reserve banks shall transfer from the surplus funds of such banks to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for transfer to the Secretary of the Treasury for deposit in the general fund of the Treasury, a total amount of \$75,000,000 in fiscal year 2016.*

(2) **ALLOCATED BY FED.**—*Of the total amount required to be paid by the Federal reserve banks under paragraph (1) for fiscal year 2016, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System shall determine the amount each such bank shall pay in such fiscal year.*

(3) **REPLENISHMENT OF SURPLUS FUND PROHIBITED.**—*During fiscal years 2016 through 2026, no Federal reserve bank may replenish such bank's surplus fund by the amount of any transfer by such bank under paragraph (1).*

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SECTION 920 OF THE ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER ACT

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SEC. 920. REASONABLE FEES AND RULES FOR PAYMENT CARD TRANSACTIONS.

(a) **REASONABLE INTERCHANGE TRANSACTION FEES FOR ELECTRONIC DEBIT TRANSACTIONS.**—

(1) **REGULATORY AUTHORITY OVER INTERCHANGE TRANSACTION FEES.**—The Board may prescribe regulations, pursuant to section 553 of title 5, United States Code, regarding any interchange transaction fee that an issuer may receive or charge with respect to an electronic debit transaction, to implement this subsection (including related definitions), and to prevent circumvention or evasion of this subsection.

(2) **REASONABLE INTERCHANGE TRANSACTION FEES.**—The amount of any interchange transaction fee that an issuer may receive or charge with respect to an electronic debit transaction shall be reasonable and proportional to the cost incurred by the issuer with respect to the transaction.

(3) **RULEMAKING REQUIRED.**—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall prescribe regulations in final form not later than 9 months after the date of enactment of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, to establish standards for assessing whether the amount of any interchange transaction fee described in paragraph (2) is reasonable and proportional to the cost incurred by the issuer with respect to the transaction.

(B) INFORMATION COLLECTION.—The Board may require any issuer (or agent of an issuer) or payment card network to provide the Board with such information as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this subsection and the Board, in issuing rules under subparagraph (A) and on at least a bi-annual basis thereafter, shall disclose such aggregate or summary information concerning the costs incurred, and interchange transaction fees charged or received, by issuers or payment card networks in connection with the authorization, clearance or settlement of electronic debit transactions as the Board considers appropriate and in the public interest.

(4) CONSIDERATIONS; CONSULTATION.—In prescribing regulations under paragraph (3)(A), the Board shall—

(A) consider the functional similarity between—

(i) electronic debit transactions; and

(ii) checking transactions that are required within the Federal Reserve bank system to clear at par;

(B) distinguish between—

(i) the incremental cost incurred by an issuer for the role of the issuer in the authorization, clearance, or settlement of a particular electronic debit transaction, which cost shall be considered under paragraph (2); and

(ii) other costs incurred by an issuer which are not specific to a particular electronic debit transaction, which costs shall not be considered under paragraph (2); and

(C) consult, as appropriate, with the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision, the National Credit Union Administration Board, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, and the [Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection] *Financial Product Safety Commission*.

(5) ADJUSTMENTS TO INTERCHANGE TRANSACTION FEES FOR FRAUD PREVENTION COSTS.—

(A) ADJUSTMENTS.—The Board may allow for an adjustment to the fee amount received or charged by an issuer under paragraph (2), if—

(i) such adjustment is reasonably necessary to make allowance for costs incurred by the issuer in preventing fraud in relation to electronic debit transactions involving that issuer; and

(ii) the issuer complies with the fraud-related standards established by the Board under subparagraph (B), which standards shall—

(I) be designed to ensure that any fraud-related adjustment of the issuer is limited to the amount described in clause (i) and takes into account any fraud-related reimbursements (including amounts from charge-backs) received from consumers, merchants, or payment card networks in relation to electronic debit transactions involving the issuer; and

(II) require issuers to take effective steps to reduce the occurrence of, and costs from, fraud in relation to electronic debit transactions, including through the development and implementation of cost-effective fraud prevention technology.

(B) RULEMAKING REQUIRED.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall prescribe regulations in final form not later than 9 months after the date of enactment of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, to establish standards for making adjustments under this paragraph.

(ii) FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION.—In issuing the standards and prescribing regulations under this paragraph, the Board shall consider—

(I) the nature, type, and occurrence of fraud in electronic debit transactions;

(II) the extent to which the occurrence of fraud depends on whether authorization in an electronic debit transaction is based on signature, PIN, or other means;

(III) the available and economical means by which fraud on electronic debit transactions may be reduced;

(IV) the fraud prevention and data security costs expended by each party involved in electronic debit transactions (including consumers, persons who accept debit cards as a form of payment, financial institutions, retailers and payment card networks);

(V) the costs of fraudulent transactions absorbed by each party involved in such transactions (including consumers, persons who accept debit cards as a form of payment, financial institutions, retailers and payment card networks);

(VI) the extent to which interchange transaction fees have in the past reduced or increased incentives for parties involved in electronic debit transactions to reduce fraud on such transactions; and

(VII) such other factors as the Board considers appropriate.

(6) EXEMPTION FOR SMALL ISSUERS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—This subsection shall not apply to any issuer that, together with its affiliates, has assets of less than \$10,000,000,000, and the Board shall exempt such issuers from regulations prescribed under paragraph (3)(A).

(B) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term “issuer” shall be limited to the person holding the asset account that is debited through an electronic debit transaction.

(7) EXEMPTION FOR GOVERNMENT-ADMINISTERED PAYMENT PROGRAMS AND RELOADABLE PREPAID CARDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—This subsection shall not apply to an interchange transaction fee charged or received with respect to an electronic debit transaction in which a person uses—

(i) a debit card or general-use prepaid card that has been provided to a person pursuant to a Federal, State or local government-administered payment program, in which the person may only use the debit card or general-use prepaid card to transfer or debit funds, monetary value, or other assets that have been provided pursuant to such program; or

(ii) a plastic card, payment code, or device that is—

(I) linked to funds, monetary value, or assets which are purchased or loaded on a prepaid basis;

(II) not issued or approved for use to access or debit any account held by or for the benefit of the card holder (other than a subaccount or other method of recording or tracking funds purchased or loaded on the card on a prepaid basis);

(III) redeemable at multiple, unaffiliated merchants or service providers, or automated teller machines;

(IV) used to transfer or debit funds, monetary value, or other assets; and

(V) reloadable and not marketed or labeled as a gift card or gift certificate.

(B) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), after the end of the 1-year period beginning on the effective date provided in paragraph (9), this subsection shall apply to an interchange transaction fee charged or received with respect to an electronic debit transaction described in subparagraph (A)(i) in which a person uses a general-use prepaid card, or an electronic debit transaction described in subparagraph (A)(ii), if any of the following fees may be charged to a person with respect to the card:

(i) A fee for an overdraft, including a shortage of funds or a transaction processed for an amount exceeding the account balance.

(ii) A fee imposed by the issuer for the first withdrawal per month from an automated teller machine that is part of the issuer’s designated automated teller machine network.

(C) DEFINITION.—For purposes of subparagraph (B), the term “designated automated teller machine network” means either—

(i) all automated teller machines identified in the name of the issuer; or

(ii) any network of automated teller machines identified by the issuer that provides reasonable and convenient access to the issuer's customers.

(D) REPORTING.—Beginning 12 months after the date of enactment of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, the Board shall annually provide a report to the Congress regarding —

(i) the prevalence of the use of general-use prepaid cards in Federal, State or local government-administered payment programs; and

(ii) the interchange transaction fees and cardholder fees charged with respect to the use of such general-use prepaid cards.

(8) REGULATORY AUTHORITY OVER NETWORK FEES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board may prescribe regulations, pursuant to section 553 of title 5, United States Code, regarding any network fee.

(B) LIMITATION.—The authority under subparagraph (A) to prescribe regulations shall be limited to regulations to ensure that—

(i) a network fee is not used to directly or indirectly compensate an issuer with respect to an electronic debit transaction; and

(ii) a network fee is not used to circumvent or evade the restrictions of this subsection and regulations prescribed under such subsection.

(C) RULEMAKING REQUIRED.—The Board shall prescribe regulations in final form before the end of the 9-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, to carry out the authorities provided under subparagraph (A).

(9) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This subsection shall take effect at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010.

(b) LIMITATION ON PAYMENT CARD NETWORK RESTRICTIONS.—

(1) PROHIBITIONS AGAINST EXCLUSIVITY ARRANGEMENTS.—

(A) NO EXCLUSIVE NETWORK.—The Board shall, before the end of the 1-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, prescribe regulations providing that an issuer or payment card network shall not directly or through any agent, processor, or licensed member of a payment card network, by contract, requirement, condition, penalty, or otherwise, restrict the number of payment card networks on which an electronic debit transaction may be processed to—

(i) 1 such network; or

(ii) 2 or more such networks which are owned, controlled, or otherwise operated by —

(I) affiliated persons; or

(II) networks affiliated with such issuer.

(B) NO ROUTING RESTRICTIONS.—The Board shall, before the end of the 1-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, prescribe regulations providing that an issuer or

payment card network shall not, directly or through any agent, processor, or licensed member of the network, by contract, requirement, condition, penalty, or otherwise, inhibit the ability of any person who accepts debit cards for payments to direct the routing of electronic debit transactions for processing over any payment card network that may process such transactions.

(2) LIMITATION ON RESTRICTIONS ON OFFERING DISCOUNTS FOR USE OF A FORM OF PAYMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A payment card network shall not, directly or through any agent, processor, or licensed member of the network, by contract, requirement, condition, penalty, or otherwise, inhibit the ability of any person to provide a discount or in-kind incentive for payment by the use of cash, checks, debit cards, or credit cards to the extent that—

(i) in the case of a discount or in-kind incentive for payment by the use of debit cards, the discount or in-kind incentive does not differentiate on the basis of the issuer or the payment card network;

(ii) in the case of a discount or in-kind incentive for payment by the use of credit cards, the discount or in-kind incentive does not differentiate on the basis of the issuer or the payment card network; and

(iii) to the extent required by Federal law and applicable State law, such discount or in-kind incentive is offered to all prospective buyers and disclosed clearly and conspicuously.

(B) LAWFUL DISCOUNTS.—For purposes of this paragraph, the network may not penalize any person for the providing of a discount that is in compliance with Federal law and applicable State law.

(3) LIMITATION ON RESTRICTIONS ON SETTING TRANSACTION MINIMUMS OR MAXIMUMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A payment card network shall not, directly or through any agent, processor, or licensed member of the network, by contract, requirement, condition, penalty, or otherwise, inhibit the ability—

(i) of any person to set a minimum dollar value for the acceptance by that person of credit cards, to the extent that —

(I) such minimum dollar value does not differentiate between issuers or between payment card networks; and

(II) such minimum dollar value does not exceed \$10.00; or

(ii) of any Federal agency or institution of higher education to set a maximum dollar value for the acceptance by that Federal agency or institution of higher education of credit cards, to the extent that such maximum dollar value does not differentiate between issuers or between payment card networks.

(B) INCREASE IN MINIMUM DOLLAR AMOUNT.—The Board may, by regulation prescribed pursuant to section 553 of

title 5, United States Code, increase the amount of the dollar value listed in subparagraph (A)(i)(II).

(4) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—No provision of this subsection shall be construed to authorize any person—

(A) to discriminate between debit cards within a payment card network on the basis of the issuer that issued the debit card; or

(B) to discriminate between credit cards within a payment card network on the basis of the issuer that issued the credit card.

(c) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) **AFFILIATE.**—The term “affiliate” means any company that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with another company.

(2) **DEBIT CARD.**—The term “debit card”—

(A) means any card, or other payment code or device, issued or approved for use through a payment card network to debit an asset account (regardless of the purpose for which the account is established), whether authorization is based on signature, PIN, or other means;

(B) includes a general-use prepaid card, as that term is defined in section 915(a)(2)(A); and

(C) does not include paper checks.

(3) **CREDIT CARD.**—The term “credit card” has the same meaning as in section 103 of the Truth in Lending Act.

(4) **DISCOUNT.**—The term “discount”—

(A) means a reduction made from the price that customers are informed is the regular price; and

(B) does not include any means of increasing the price that customers are informed is the regular price.

(5) **ELECTRONIC DEBIT TRANSACTION.**—The term “electronic debit transaction” means a transaction in which a person uses a debit card.

(6) **FEDERAL AGENCY.**—The term “Federal agency” means—

(A) an agency (as defined in section 101 of title 31, United States Code); and

(B) a Government corporation (as defined in section 103 of title 5, United States Code).

(7) **INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**—The term “institution of higher education” has the same meaning as in 101 and 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001, 1002).

(8) **INTERCHANGE TRANSACTION FEE.**—The term “interchange transaction fee” means any fee established, charged or received by a payment card network for the purpose of compensating an issuer for its involvement in an electronic debit transaction.

(9) **ISSUER.**—The term “issuer” means any person who issues a debit card, or credit card, or the agent of such person with respect to such card.

(10) **NETWORK FEE.**—The term “network fee” means any fee charged and received by a payment card network with respect to an electronic debit transaction, other than an interchange transaction fee.

(11) **PAYMENT CARD NETWORK.**—The term “payment card network” means an entity that directly, or through licensed members, processors, or agents, provides the proprietary services, infrastructure, and software that route information and data to conduct debit card or credit card transaction authorization, clearance, and settlement, and that a person uses in order to accept as a form of payment a brand of debit card, credit card or other device that may be used to carry out debit or credit transactions.

(d) **ENFORCEMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Compliance with the requirements imposed under this section shall be enforced under section 918.

(2) **EXCEPTION.**—Sections 916 and 917 shall not apply with respect to this section or the requirements imposed pursuant to this section.

EXPEDITED FUNDS AVAILABILITY ACT

TITLE VI—EXPEDITED FUNDS AVAILABILITY

SEC. 601. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Expedited Funds Availability Act”.

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SEC. 603. EXPEDITED FUNDS AVAILABILITY SCHEDULES.

(a) **NEXT BUSINESS DAY AVAILABILITY FOR CERTAIN DEPOSITS.**—

(1) **CASH DEPOSITS; WIRE TRANSFERS.**—Except as provided in subsection (e) and in section 604, in any case in which—

(A) any cash is deposited in an account at a receiving depository institution staffed by individuals employed by such institution, or

(B) funds are received by a depository institution by wire transfer for deposit in an account at such institution, such cash or funds shall be available for withdrawal not later than the business day after the business day on which such cash is deposited or such funds are received for deposit.

(2) **GOVERNMENT CHECKS; CERTAIN OTHER CHECKS.**—Funds deposited in an account at a depository institution by check shall be available for withdrawal not later than the business day after the business day on which such funds are deposited in the case of—

(A) a check which—

(i) is drawn on the Treasury of the United States; and

(ii) is endorsed only by the person to whom it was issued.

(B) a check which—

(i) is drawn by a State;

(ii) is deposited in a receiving depository institution which is located in such State and is staffed by individuals employed by such institution;

(iii) is deposited with a special deposit slip which indicates it is a check drawn by a State; and

(iv) is endorsed only by the person to whom it was issued;

(C) a check which—

(i) is drawn by a unit of general local government;

(ii) is deposited in a receiving depository institution which is located in the same State as such unit of general local government and is staffed by individuals employed by such institution;

(iii) is deposited with a special deposit slip which indicates it is a check drawn by a unit of general local government; and

(iv) is endorsed only by the person to whom it was issued;

(D) the first \$200 deposited by check or checks on any one business day;

(E) a check deposited in a branch of a depository institution and drawn on the same or another branch of the same depository institution if both such branches are located in the same State or the same check processing region;

(F) a cashier's check, certified check, teller's check, or depository check which—

(i) is deposited in a receiving depository institution which is staffed by individuals employed by such institution;

(ii) is deposited with a special deposit slip which indicates it is a cashier's check, certified check, teller's check, or depository check, as the case may be; and

(iii) is endorsed only by the person to whom it was issued.

(b) PERMANENT SCHEDULE.—

(1) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS DEPOSITED BY LOCAL CHECKS.—Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, subsections (a)(2), (d), and (e) of this section, and section 604, not more than 1 business day shall intervene between the business day on which funds are deposited in an account at a depository institution by a check drawn on a local originating depository institution and the business day on which the funds involved are available for withdrawal.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS DEPOSITED BY NONLOCAL CHECKS.—Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, subsections (a)(2), (d), and (e) of this section, and section 604, not more than 4 business days shall intervene between the business day on which funds are deposited in an account at a depository institution by a check drawn on a nonlocal originating depository institution and the business day on which such funds are available for withdrawal.

(3) TIME PERIOD ADJUSTMENTS FOR CASH WITHDRAWAL OF CERTAIN CHECKS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), funds deposited in an account in a depository institution by check (other than a check described in subsection (a)(2)) shall be available for cash withdrawal not later than the business day after the business day on which

such funds otherwise are available under paragraph (1) or (2).

(B) 5 P.M. CASH AVAILABILITY.—Not more than \$400 (or the maximum amount allowable in the case of a withdrawal from an automated teller machine but not more than \$400) of funds deposited by one or more checks to which this paragraph applies shall be available for cash withdrawal not later than 5 o'clock post meridian of the business day on which such funds are available under paragraph (1) or (2). If funds deposited by checks described in both paragraph (1) and paragraph (2) become available for cash withdrawal under this paragraph on the same business day, the limitation contained in this subparagraph shall apply to the aggregate amount of such funds.

(C) \$200 AVAILABILITY.—Any amount available for withdrawal under this paragraph shall be in addition to the amount available under subsection (a)(2)(D).

(4) APPLICABILITY.—This subsection shall apply with respect to funds deposited by check in an account at a depository institution on or after September 1, 1990, except that the Board may, by regulation, make this subsection or any part of this subsection applicable earlier than September 1, 1990.

(c) TEMPORARY SCHEDULE.—

(1) AVAILABILITY OF LOCAL CHECKS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, subsections (a)(2), (d), and (e) of this section, and section 604, not more than 2 business days shall intervene between the business day on which funds are deposited in an account at a depository institution by a check drawn on a local originating depository institution and the business day on which such funds are available for withdrawal.

(B) TIME PERIOD ADJUSTMENT FOR CASH WITHDRAWAL OF CERTAIN CHECKS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), funds deposited in an account in a depository institution by check drawn on a local depository institution that is not a participant in the same check clearinghouse association as the receiving depository institution (other than a check described in subsection (a)(2)) shall be available for cash withdrawal not later than the business day after the business day on which such funds otherwise are available under subparagraph (A).

(ii) 5 P.M. CASH AVAILABILITY.—Not more than \$400 (or the maximum amount allowable in the case of a withdrawal from an automated teller machine but not more than \$400) of funds deposited by one or more checks to which this subparagraph applies shall be available for cash withdrawal not later than 5 o'clock post meridian of the business day on which such funds are available under subparagraph (A).

(iii) \$200 AVAILABILITY.—Any amount available for withdrawal under this subparagraph shall be in addition to the amount available under subsection (a)(2)(D).

(2) AVAILABILITY OF NONLOCAL CHECKS.—Subject to subsections (a)(2), (d), and (e) of this section and section 604, not more than 6 business days shall intervene between the business day on which funds are deposited in an account at a depository institution by a check drawn on a nonlocal originating depository institution and the business day on which such funds are available for withdrawal.

(3) APPLICABILITY.—This subsection shall apply with respect to funds deposited by check in an account at a depository institution after August 31, 1988, and before September 1, 1990, except as may be otherwise provided under subsection (b)(4).

(d) TIME PERIOD ADJUSTMENTS.—

(1) REDUCTION GENERALLY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, shall, by regulation, reduce the time periods established under subsections (b), (c), and (e) to as short a time as possible and equal to the period of time achievable under the improved check clearing system for a receiving depository institution to reasonably expect to learn of the nonpayment of most items for each category of checks.

(2) EXTENSION FOR CERTAIN DEPOSITS IN NONCONTIGUOUS STATES OR TERRITORIES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any time period established under subsection (b), (c), or (e) shall be extended by 1 business day in the case of any deposit which is both—

(A) deposited in an account at a depository institution which is located in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, or the Virgin Islands; and

(B) deposited by a check drawn on an originating depository institution which is not located in the same State, commonwealth, or territory as the receiving depository institution.

(e) DEPOSITS AT AN ATM.—

(1) NONPROPRIETARY ATM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not more than 4 business days shall intervene between the business day a deposit described in subparagraph (B) is made at a nonproprietary automated teller machine (for deposit in an account at a depository institution) and the business day on which funds from such deposit are available for withdrawal.

(B) DEPOSITS DESCRIBED IN THIS PARAGRAPH.—A deposit is described in this subparagraph if it is—

(i) a cash deposit;

(ii) a deposit made by a check described in subsection (a)(2);

(iii) a deposit made by a check drawn on a local originating depository institution (other than a check described in subsection (a)(2)); or

(iv) a deposit made by a check drawn on a nonlocal originating depository institution (other than a check described in subsection (a)(2)).

(2) PROPRIETARY ATM—TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT SCHEDULES.—The provisions of subsections (a), (b), and (c) shall apply with respect to any funds deposited at a proprietary

auto- mated teller machine for deposit in an account at a depository institution.

(3) STUDY AND REPORT ON ATM'S.—The Board shall, either directly or through the Consumer Advisory Council, establish and maintain a dialogue with depository institutions and their suppliers on the computer software and hardware available for use by automated teller machines, and shall, not later than September 1 of each of the first 3 calendar years beginning after the date of the enactment of this title, report to the Congress regarding such software and hardware and regarding the potential for improving the processing of automated teller machine deposits.

(f) CHECK RETURN; NOTICE OF NONPAYMENT.—No provision of this section shall be construed as requiring that, with respect to all checks deposited in a receiving depository institution—

(1) such checks be physically returned to such depository institution; or

(2) any notice of nonpayment of any such check be given to such depository institution within the times set forth in subsection (a), (b), (c), or (e) or in the regulations issued under any such subsection.

SEC. 604. SAFEGUARD EXCEPTIONS.

(a) NEW ACCOUNTS.—Notwithstanding section 603, in the case of any account established at a depository institution by a new depositor, the following provisions shall apply with respect to any deposit in such account during the 30-day period (or such shorter period as the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, may establish) beginning on the date such account is established—

(1) NEXT BUSINESS DAY AVAILABILITY OF CASH AND CERTAIN ITEMS.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), in the case of—

(A) any cash deposited in such account;

(B) any funds received by such depository institution by wire transfer for deposit in such account;

(C) any funds deposited in such account by cashier's check, certified check, teller's check, depository check, or traveler's check; and

(D) any funds deposited by a government check which is described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of section 603(a)(2),

such cash or funds shall be available for withdrawal on the business day after the business day on which such cash or funds are deposited or, in the case of a wire transfer, on the business day after the business day on which such funds are received for deposit.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF OTHER ITEMS.—In the case of any funds deposited in such account by a check (other than a check described in subparagraph (C) or (D) of paragraph (1)), the availability for withdrawal of such funds shall not be subject to the provisions of section 603(b), 603(c), or paragraphs (1) of section 603(e).

(3) LIMITATION RELATING TO CERTAIN CHECKS IN EXCESS OF \$5,000.—In the case of funds deposited in such account during such period by checks described in subparagraph (C) or (D) of paragraph (1) the aggregate amount of which exceeds \$5,000—

(A) paragraph (1) shall apply only with respect to the first \$5,000 of such aggregate amount; and

(B) not more than 8 business days shall intervene between the business day on which any such funds are deposited and the business day on which such excess amount shall be available for withdrawal.

(b) LARGE OR REDEPOSITED CHECKS; REPEATED OVERDRAFTS.—The Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, may, by regulation, establish reasonable exceptions to any time limitation established under subsection (a)(2), (b), (c), or (e) of section 603 for—

(1) the amount of deposits by one or more checks that exceeds the amount of \$5,000 in any one day;

(2) checks that have been returned unpaid and redeposited; and

(3) deposit accounts which have been overdrawn repeatedly.

(c) REASONABLE CAUSE EXCEPTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with regulations which the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, shall prescribe, subsections (a)(2), (b), (c), and (e) of section 603 shall not apply with respect to any check deposited in an account at a depository institution if the receiving depository institution has reasonable cause to believe that the check is uncollectible from the originating depository institution. For purposes of the preceding sentence, reasonable cause to believe requires the existence of facts which would cause a well-grounded belief in the mind of a reasonable person. Such reasons shall be included in the notice required under subsection (f).

(2) BASIS FOR DETERMINATION.—No determination under this subsection may be based on any class of checks or persons.

(3) OVERDRAFT FEES.—If the receiving depository institution determines that a check deposited in an account is a check described in paragraph (1), the receiving depository institution shall not assess any fee for any subsequent overdraft with respect to such account, if—

(A) the depositor was not provided with the written notice required under subsection (f) (with respect to such determination) at the time the deposit was made;

(B) the overdraft would not have occurred but for the fact that the funds so deposited are not available; and

(C) the amount of the check is collected from the originating depository institution.

(4) COMPLIANCE.—Each agency referred to in section 610(a) shall monitor compliance with the requirements of this subsection in each regular examination of a depository institution and shall describe in each report to the Congress the extent to which this subsection is being complied with. For the purpose of this paragraph, each depository institution shall retain a record of each notice provided under subsection (f) as a result of the application of this subsection.

(d) EMERGENCY CONDITIONS.—Subject to such regulations as the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product*

Safety Commission of Consumer Financial Protection, may prescribe, subsections (a)(2), (b), (c), and (e) of section 603 shall not apply to funds deposited by check in any receiving depository institution in the case of—

- (1) any interruption of communication facilities;
- (2) suspension of payments by another depository institution;
- (3) any war; or
- (4) any emergency condition beyond the control of the receiving depository institution,

if the receiving depository institution exercises such diligence as the circumstances require.

(e) PREVENTION OF FRAUD LOSSES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, may, by regulation or order, suspend the applicability of this title, or any portion thereof, to any classification of checks if the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, determines that—

(A) depository institutions are experiencing an unacceptable level of losses due to check-related fraud, and

(B) suspension of this title, or such portion of this title, with regard to the classification of checks involved in such fraud is necessary to diminish the volume of such fraud.

(2) SUNSET PROVISION.—No regulation prescribed or order issued under paragraph (1) shall remain in effect for more than 45 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, or any day either House of Congress is not in session).

(3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(A) NOTICE OF EACH SUSPENSION.—Within 10 days of prescribing any regulation or issuing any order under paragraph (1), the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, shall transmit a report of such action to the Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

(B) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—Each report under subparagraph (A) shall contain—

(i) the specific reason for prescribing the regulation or issuing the order;

(ii) evidence considered by the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, in making the determination under paragraph (1) with respect to such regulation or order; and

(iii) specific examples of the check-related fraud giving rise to such regulation or order.

(f) NOTICE OF EXCEPTION; AVAILABILITY WITHIN REASONABLE TIME.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If any exception contained in this section (other than subsection (a)) applies with respect to funds deposited in an account at a depository institution—

(A) the depository institution shall provide notice in the manner provided in paragraph (2) of—

(i) the time period within which the funds shall be made available for withdrawal; and

(ii) the reason the exception was invoked; and

(B) except where other time periods are specifically provided in this title, the availability of the funds deposited shall be governed by the policy of the receiving depository institution, but shall not exceed a reasonable period of time as determined by the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection.

(2) TIME FOR NOTICE.—The notice required under paragraph (1)(A) with respect to a deposit to which an exception contained in this section applies shall be made by the time provided in the following subparagraphs:

(A) In the case of a deposit made in person by the depositor at the receiving depository institution, the depository institution shall immediately provide such notice in writing to the depositor.

(B) In the case of any other deposit (other than a deposit described in subparagraph (C)), the receiving depository institution shall mail the notice to the depositor not later than the close of the next business day following the business day on which the deposit is received.

(C) In the case of a deposit to which subsection (d) or (e) applies, notice shall be provided by the depository institution in accordance with regulations of the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection.

(D) In the case of a deposit to which subsection (b)(1) or (b)(2) applies, the depository institution may, for nonconsumer accounts and other classes of accounts, as defined by the Board, that generally have a large number of such deposits, provide notice at or before the time it first determines that the subsection applies.

(E) In the case of a deposit to which subsection (b)(3) applies, the depository institution may, subject to regulations of the Board, provide notice at the beginning of each time period it determines that the subsection applies. In addition to the requirements contained in paragraph (1)(A), the notice shall specify the time period for which the exception will apply.

(3) SUBSEQUENT DETERMINATIONS.—If the facts upon which the determination of the applicability of an exception contained in subsection (b) or (c) to any deposit only become known to the receiving depository institution after the time notice is required under paragraph (2) with respect to such deposit, the depository institution shall mail such notice to the depositor as soon as practicable, but not later than the first business day following the day such facts become known to the depository institution.

SEC. 605. DISCLOSURE OF FUNDS AVAILABILITY POLICIES.

(a) NOTICE FOR NEW ACCOUNTS.—Before an account is opened at a depository institution, the depository institution shall provide written notice to the potential customer of the specific policy of

such depository institution with respect to when a customer may withdraw funds deposited into the customer's account.

(b) PREPRINTED DEPOSIT SLIPS.—All preprinted deposit slips that a depository institution furnishes to its customers shall contain a summary notice, as prescribed by the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, in regulations, that deposited items may not be available for immediate withdrawal.

(c) MAILING OF NOTICE.—

(1) FIRST MAILING AFTER ENACTMENT.—In the first regularly scheduled mailing to customers occurring after the effective date of this section, but not more than 60 days after such effective date, each depository institution shall send a written notice containing the specific policy of such depository institution with respect to when a customer may withdraw funds deposited into such customer's account, unless the depository institution has provided a disclosure which meets the requirements of this section before such effective date.

(2) SUBSEQUENT CHANGES.—A depository institution shall send a written notice to customers at least 30 days before implementing any change to the depository institution's policy with respect to when customers may withdraw funds deposited into consumer accounts, except that any change which expedites the availability of such funds shall be disclosed not later than 30 days after implementation.

(3) UPON REQUEST.—Upon the request of any person, a depository institution shall provide or send such person a written notice containing the specific policy of such depository institution with respect to when a customer may withdraw funds deposited into a customer's account.

(d) POSTING OF NOTICE.—

(1) SPECIFIC NOTICE AT MANNED TELLER STATIONS.—Each depository institution shall post, in a conspicuous place in each location where deposits are accepted by individuals employed by such depository institution, a specific notice which describes the time periods applicable to the availability of funds deposited in a consumer account.

(2) GENERAL NOTICE AT AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINES.—In the case of any automated teller machine at which any funds are received for deposit in an account at any depository institution, the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, shall prescribe, by regulations, that the owner or operator of such automated teller machine shall post or provide a general notice that funds deposited in such machine may not be immediately available for withdrawal.

(e) NOTICE OF INTEREST PAYMENT POLICY.—If a depository institution described in section 606(b) begins the accrual of interest or dividends at a later date than the date described in section 606(a) with respect to all funds, including cash, deposited in an interest-bearing account at such depository institution, any notice required to be provided under subsections (a) and (c) shall contain a written description of the time at which such depository institution begins to accrue interest or dividends on such funds.

(f) MODEL DISCLOSURE FORMS.—

(1) PREPARED BY BOARD AND BUREAU.—The Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, shall publish model disclosure forms and clauses for common transactions to facilitate compliance with the disclosure requirements of this section and to aid customers by utilizing readily understandable language.

(2) USE OF FORMS TO ACHIEVE COMPLIANCE.—A depository institution shall be deemed to be in compliance with the requirements of this section if such institution—

(A) uses any appropriate model form or clause as published by the Board, or

(B) uses any such model form or clause and changes such form or clause by—

(i) deleting any information which is not required by this title; or

(ii) rearranging the format.

(3) VOLUNTARY USE.—Nothing in this title requires the use of any such model form or clause prescribed by the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, under this subsection.

(4) NOTICE AND COMMENT.—Model disclosure forms and clauses shall be adopted by the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, only after notice duly given in the Federal Register and an opportunity for public comment in accordance with section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

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SEC. 609. REGULATIONS AND REPORTS BY BOARD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—After notice and opportunity to submit comment in accordance with section 553(c) of title 5, United States Code, the Board, jointly with the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, shall prescribe regulations—

(1) to carry out the provisions of this title;

(2) to prevent the circumvention or evasion of such provisions; and

(3) to facilitate compliance with such provisions.

(b) REGULATIONS RELATING TO IMPROVEMENT OF CHECK PROCESSING SYSTEM.—In order to improve the check processing system, the Board shall consider (among other proposals) requiring, by regulation, that—

(1) depository institutions be charged based upon notification that a check or similar instrument will be presented for payment;

(2) the Federal Reserve banks and depository institutions provide for check truncation;

(3) depository institutions be provided incentives to return items promptly to the depository institution of first deposit;

(4) the Federal Reserve banks and depository institutions take such actions as are necessary to automate the process of returning unpaid checks,

(5) each depository institution and Federal Reserve bank—

- (A) place its endorsement, and other notations specified in regulations of the Board, on checks in the positions specified in such regulations; and
 - (B) take such actions as are necessary to—
 - (i) automate the process of reading endorsements; and
 - (ii) eliminate unnecessary endorsements;
 - (6) within one business day after an originating depository institution is presented a check (for more than such minimum amount as the Board may prescribe)—
 - (A) such originating depository institution determine whether it will pay such check; and
 - (B) if such originating depository institution determines that it will not pay such check, such originating depository institution directly notify the receiving depository institution of such determination;
 - (7) regardless of where a check is cleared initially, all returned checks be eligible to be returned through the Federal Reserve System;
 - (8) Federal Reserve banks and depository institutions participate in the development and implementation of an electronic clearinghouse process to the extent the Board determines, pursuant to the study under subsection (f), that such a process is feasible; and
 - (9) originating depository institutions be permitted to return unpaid checks directly to, and obtain reimbursement for such checks directly from, the receiving depository institution.
- (c) REGULATORY RESPONSIBILITY OF BOARD FOR PAYMENT SYSTEM.—
- (1) RESPONSIBILITY FOR PAYMENT SYSTEM.—In order to carry out the provisions of this title, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System shall have the responsibility to regulate—
 - (A) any aspect of the payment system, including the receipt, payment, collection, or clearing of checks; and
 - (B) any related function of the payment system with respect to checks.
 - (2) REGULATIONS.—The Board shall prescribe such regulations as it may determine to be appropriate to carry out its responsibility under paragraph (1).
- (d) REPORTS.—
- (1) IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORTS.—
 - (A) REQUIRED REPORTS.—The Board shall transmit a report to both Houses of the Congress not later than 18, 30, and 48 months after the date of the enactment of this title.
 - (B) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—Each such report shall describe—
 - (i) the actions taken and progress made by the Board to implement the schedules established in section 603, and
 - (ii) the impact of this title on consumers and depository institutions.
 - (2) EVALUATION OF TEMPORARY SCHEDULE REPORT.—
 - (A) REPORT REQUIRED.—The Board shall transmit a report to both Houses of the Congress not later than 2 years

after the date of the enactment of this title regarding the effects the temporary schedule established under section 603(c) have had on depository institutions and the public.

(B) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—Such report shall also assess the potential impact the implementation of the schedule established in section 603(b) will have on depository institutions and the public, including an estimate of the risks to and losses of depository institutions and the benefits to consumers. Such report shall also contain such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Board may determine to be necessary.

(3) COMPTROLLER GENERAL EVALUATION REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after section 603(b) takes effect, the Comptroller General of the United States shall transmit a report to the Congress evaluating the implementation and administration of this title.

(e) CONSULTATIONS.—In prescribing regulations under subsections (a) and (b), the Board and the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection, in the case of subsection (a), and the Board, in the case of subsection (b), shall consult with the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the National Credit Union Administration Board.

(f) ELECTRONIC CLEARINGHOUSE STUDY.—

(1) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Board shall study the feasibility of modernizing and accelerating the check payment system through the development of an electronic clearinghouse process utilizing existing telecommunications technology to avoid the necessity of actual presentment of the paper instrument to a payor institution before such institution is charged for the item.

(2) CONSULTATION; FACTORS TO BE STUDIED.—In connection with the study required under paragraph (1), the Board shall—

(A) consult with appropriate experts in telecommunications technology; and

(B) consider all practical and legal impediments to the development of an electronic clearinghouse process.

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—The Board shall report its conclusions to the Congress within 9 months of the date of the enactment of this title.

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FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE ACT

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SEC. 2. MANAGEMENT.

(a) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The management of the Corporation shall be vested in a Board of Directors consisting of 5 members—

(A) 1 of whom shall be the Comptroller of the Currency;

(B) 1 of whom shall be the [Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau] *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission*; and

- (C) 3 of whom shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from among individuals who are citizens of the United States, 1 of whom shall have State bank supervisory experience.
- (2) POLITICAL AFFILIATION.—After February 28, 1993, not more than 3 of the members of the Board of Directors may be members of the same political party.
- (b) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—
- (1) CHAIRPERSON.—1 of the appointed members shall be designated by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve as Chairperson of the Board of Directors for a term of 5 years.
- (2) VICE CHAIRPERSON.—1 of the appointed members shall be designated by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve as Vice Chairperson of the Board of Directors.
- (3) ACTING CHAIRPERSON.—In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chairperson of the Board of Directors or during the absence or disability of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall act as Chairperson.
- (c) TERMS.—
- (1) APPOINTED MEMBERS.—Each appointed member shall be appointed for a term of 6 years.
- (2) INTERIM APPOINTMENTS.—Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which such member's predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of such term.
- (3) CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.—The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and each appointed member may continue to serve after the expiration of the term of office to which such member was appointed until a successor has been appointed and qualified.
- (d) VACANCY.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—Any vacancy on the Board of Directors shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.
- (2) ACTING OFFICIALS MAY SERVE.—In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Comptroller of the Currency or the office of **Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau** *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission* and pending the appointment of a successor, or during the absence or disability of the Comptroller of the Currency or the **Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau** *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission*, the acting Comptroller of the Currency or the acting **Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau** *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission*, as the case may be, shall be a member of the Board of Directors in the place of the Comptroller or Director.
- (e) INELIGIBILITY FOR OTHER OFFICES.—
- (1) POSTSERVICE RESTRICTION.—
- (A) IN GENERAL.—No member of the Board of Directors may hold any office, position, or employment in any insured depository institution or any depository institution holding company during—
- (i) the time such member is in office; and

(ii) the 2-year period beginning on the date such member ceases to serve on the Board of Directors.

(B) EXCEPTION FOR MEMBERS WHO SERVE FULL TERM.—The limitation contained in subparagraph (A)(ii) shall not apply to any member who has ceased to serve on the Board of Directors after serving the full term for which such member was appointed.

(2) RESTRICTION DURING SERVICE.—No member of the Board of Directors may—

(A) be an officer or director of any insured depository institution, depository institution holding company, Federal Reserve bank, or Federal home loan bank; or

(B) hold stock in any insured depository institution or depository institution holding company.

(3) CERTIFICATION.—Upon taking office, each member of the Board of Directors shall certify under oath that such member has complied with this subsection and such certification shall be filed with the secretary of the Board of Directors.

(f) STATUS OF EMPLOYEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A director, member, officer, or employee of the Corporation has no liability under the Securities Act of 1933 with respect to any claim arising out of or resulting from any act or omission by such person within the scope of such person's employment in connection with any transaction involving the disposition of assets (or any interests in any assets or any obligations backed by any assets) by the Corporation. This subsection shall not be construed to limit personal liability for criminal acts or omissions, willful or malicious misconduct, acts or omissions for private gain, or any other acts or omissions outside the scope of such person's employment.

(2) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term "employee of the Corporation" includes any employee of the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency or of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau who serves as a deputy or assistant to a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation in connection with activities of the Corporation.

(3) EFFECT ON OTHER LAW.—This subsection does not affect—

(A) any other immunities and protections that may be available to such person under applicable law with respect to such transactions, or

(B) any other right or remedy against the Corporation, against the United States under applicable law, or against any person other than a person described in paragraph (1) participating in such transactions.

This subsection shall not be construed to limit or alter in any way the immunities that are available under applicable law for Federal officials and employees not described in this subsection.

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**FEDERAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS EXAMINATION
COUNCIL ACT OF 1978**

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TITLE X—FEDERAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
EXAMINATION COUNCIL

* * * * *

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COUNCIL

SEC. 1004. (a) There is established the Financial Institutions Examination Council which shall consist of—

- (1) the Comptroller of the Currency,
- (2) the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation,
- (3) a Governor of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System designated by the Chairman of the Board,
- (4) the [Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau] *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission*,
- (5) the Chairman of the National Credit Union Administration Board, and
- (6) the Chairman of the State Liaison Committee.

(b) The members of the Council shall select the first chairman of the Council. Thereafter the chairmanship shall rotate among the members of the Council.

(c) The term of the Chairman of the Council shall be two years.

(d) The members of the Council may, from time to time, designate other officers or employees of their respective agencies to carry out their duties on the Council.

(e) Each member of the Council shall serve without additional compensation but shall be entitled to reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out his official duties as such a member.

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**SECTION 513 OF THE FINANCIAL LITERACY AND
EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT**

**SEC. 513. ESTABLISHMENT OF FINANCIAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION
COMMISSION**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established a commission to be known as the “Financial Literacy and Education Commission”.

(b) **PURPOSE.**—The Commission shall serve to improve the financial literacy and education of persons in the United States through development of a national strategy to promote financial literacy and education.

(c) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(1) **COMPOSITION.**—The Commission shall be composed of—

(A) the Secretary of the Treasury;

(B) the respective head of each of the Federal banking agencies (as defined in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act), the National Credit Union Administration, the Securities and Exchange Commission, each of the Departments of Education, Agriculture, Defense, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, and Veterans Affairs, the Federal Trade Commission, the General Services Administration, the Small Business Administration, the Social Security Administration, the Com-

modity Futures Trading Commission, and the Office of Personnel Management;

(C) the **[Director]** *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission* of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection; and

(D) at the discretion of the President, not more than 5 individuals appointed by the President from among the administrative heads of any other Federal agencies, departments, or other Federal Government entities, whom the President determines to be engaged in a serious effort to improve financial literacy and education.

(2) ALTERNATES.—Each member of the Commission may designate an alternate if the member is unable to attend a meeting of the Commission. Such alternate shall be an individual who exercises significant decisionmaking authority.

(d) CHAIRPERSON.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall serve as the Chairperson. The **[Director]** *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission* of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection shall serve as the Vice Chairman.

(e) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall hold, at the call of the Chairperson, at least 1 meeting every 4 months. All such meetings shall be open to the public. The Commission may hold, at the call of the Chairperson, such other meetings as the Chairperson sees fit to carry out this title.

(f) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(g) INITIAL MEETING.—The Commission shall hold its first meeting not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

HOME MORTGAGE DISCLOSURE ACT OF 1975

TITLE III—HOME MORTGAGE DISCLOSURE

* * * * *

SEC. 307. COMPLIANCE IMPROVEMENT METHODS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—The **[Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection]** *Financial Product Safety Commission*, with the assistance of the Secretary, the Director of the Bureau of the Census, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and such other persons as the Bureau deems appropriate, shall develop or assist in the improvement of, methods of matching addresses and census tracts to facilitate compliance by depository institutions in as economical a manner as possible with the requirements of this title.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated, such sums as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.

(3) CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.—The **[Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* is authorized to utilize, contract with, act through, or compensate any person or agency in order to carry out this subsection.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS TO CONGRESS.—The [Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall recommend to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives, such additional legislation as the [Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection] *Financial Product Safety Commission* deems appropriate to carry out the purpose of this title.

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INTERSTATE LAND SALES FULL DISCLOSURE ACT

* * * * *

TITLE XIV—INTERSTATE LAND SALES

* * * * *

DEFINITIONS

SEC. 1402. For the purposes of this title, the term—

[(1) “Director” means the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection;]

(1) “*Chair*” means the *Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission*;

(2) “person” means an individual, or an unincorporated organization, partnership, association, corporation, trust, or estate;

(3) “subdivision” means any land which is located in any State or in a foreign country and is divided or is proposed to be divided into lots, whether contiguous or not, for the purpose of sale or lease as part of a common promotional plan;

(4) “common promotional plan” means a plan, undertaken by a single developer or a group of developers acting in concert, to offer lots for sale or lease; where such land is offered for sale by such a developer or group of developers acting in concert, and such land is contiguous or is known, designated, or advertised as a common unit or by a common name, such land shall be presumed, without regard to the number of lots covered by each individual offering, as being offered for sale or lease as part of a common promotional plan;

(5) “developer” means any person who, directly or indirectly, sells or leases, or offers to sell or lease, or advertises for sale or lease any lots in a subdivision;

(6) “agent” means any person who represents, or acts for or on behalf of, a developer in selling or leasing, or offering to sell or lease, any lot or lots in a subdivision; but shall not include an attorney at law whose representation or another person consists solely of rendering legal services;

(7) “blanket encumbrance” means a trust deed, mortgage, judgment, or any other lien or encumbrance, including an option or contract to sell or a trust agreement, affecting a subdivision or affecting more than one lot offered within a subdivision, except that such term shall not include any lien or other encumbrance arising as the result of the imposition of any tax assessment by any public authority;

(8) "interstate commerce" means trade or commerce among the several states or between any foreign country and any state;

(9) "State" includes the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories and possessions of the United States;

(10) "purchaser" means an actual or prospective purchaser or lessee of any lot in a subdivision;

(11) "offer" includes any inducement, solicitation, or attempt to encourage a person to acquire a lot in a subdivision; and

(12) "Bureau" means the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.

* * * * *

ADMINISTRATION

SEC. 1416. (a) The authority and responsibility for administering this title shall be in the [Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection] *Chair* who may delegate any of his functions, duties, and powers to employees of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection or to boards of such employees including functions, duties, and powers with respect to investigating, hearing, determining, ordering, or otherwise acting as to any work, business, or matter under this title. The persons to whom such delegations are made with respect to hearing functions, duties, and powers shall be appointed and shall serve in the Bureau in compliance with sections 3105, 3344, 5372, and 7521 of title 5 of the United States Code. The Director shall by rule prescribed such rights of appeal from the decisions of his administrative law judges to other administrative law judges or to other officers in the Bureau, to boards of officers or to himself, as shall be appropriate and in accordance with law.

(b) All hearings shall be public and appropriate records thereof shall be kept, and any order issued after such hearing shall be based on the record made in such hearing which shall be conducted in accordance with provisions of subchapter II of chapter 5, and chapter 7, of title 5, United States Code.

(c) The Director shall conduct all actions with respect to rule-making or adjudication under this title in accordance with the provisions of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code. Notice shall be given of any adverse action or final disposition and such notice and the entry of any order shall be accompanied by a written statement of supporting facts and legal authority.

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REAL ESTATE SETTLEMENT PROCEDURES ACT OF 1974

* * * * *

HOME BUYING INFORMATION BOOKLETS

SEC. 5. (a) PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION.—[The Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection (hereafter in this section referred to as the "Director ")] *The Financial Product Safety Commission* shall prepare, at least once every 5 years, a booklet to

help consumers applying for federally related mortgage loans to understand the nature and costs of real estate settlement services. The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall prepare the booklet in various languages and cultural styles, as the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* determines to be appropriate, so that the booklet is understandable and accessible to homebuyers of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall distribute such booklets to all lenders that make federally related mortgage loans. The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall also distribute to such lenders lists, organized by location, of homeownership counselors certified under section 106(e) of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (12 U.S.C. 1701x(e)) for use in complying with the requirement under subsection (c) of this section.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each booklet shall be in such form and detail as the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall prescribe and, in addition to such other information as the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may provide, shall include in plain and understandable language the following information:

(1) A description and explanation of the nature and purpose of the costs incident to a real estate settlement or a federally related mortgage loan. The description and explanation shall provide general information about the mortgage process as well as specific information concerning, at a minimum—

- (A) balloon payments;
- (B) prepayment penalties;
- (C) the advantages of prepayment; and
- (D) the trade-off between closing costs and the interest rate over the life of the loan.

(2) An explanation and sample of the uniform settlement statement required by section 4.

(3) A list and explanation of lending practices, including those prohibited by the Truth in Lending Act or other applicable Federal law, and of other unfair practices and unreasonable or unnecessary charges to be avoided by the prospective buyer with respect to a real estate settlement.

(4) A list and explanation of questions a consumer obtaining a federally related mortgage loan should ask regarding the loan, including whether the consumer will have the ability to repay the loan, whether the consumer sufficiently shopped for the loan, whether the loan terms include prepayment penalties or balloon payments, and whether the loan will benefit the borrower.

(5) An explanation of the right of rescission as to certain transactions provided by sections 125 and 129 of the Truth in Lending Act.

(6) A brief explanation of the nature of a variable rate mortgage and a reference to the booklet entitled “Consumer Handbook on Adjustable Rate Mortgages”, published by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*, or to any suitable substitute of such booklet that the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may subsequently adopt pursuant to such section.

(7) A brief explanation of the nature of a home equity line of credit and a reference to the pamphlet required to be provided under section 127A of the Truth in Lending Act.

(8) Information about homeownership counseling services made available pursuant to section 106(a)(4) of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (12 U.S.C. 1701x(a)(4)), a recommendation that the consumer use such services, and notification that a list of certified providers of homeownership counseling in the area, and their contact information, is available.

(9) An explanation of the nature and purpose of escrow accounts when used in connection with loans secured by residential real estate and the requirements under section 10 of this Act regarding such accounts.

(10) An explanation of the choices available to buyers of residential real estate in selecting persons to provide necessary services incidental to a real estate settlement.

(11) An explanation of a consumer's responsibilities, liabilities, and obligations in a mortgage transaction.

(12) An explanation of the nature and purpose of real estate appraisals, including the difference between an appraisal and a home inspection.

(13) Notice that the Office of Housing of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection has made publicly available a brochure regarding loan fraud and a World Wide Web address and toll-free telephone number for obtaining the brochure.

(14) An explanation of flood insurance and the availability of flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Program or from a private insurance company, whether or not the real estate is located in an area having special flood hazards, and the following statement: "Although you may not be required to maintain flood insurance on all structures, you may still wish to do so, and your mortgage lender may still require you to do so to protect the collateral securing the mortgage. If you choose to not maintain flood insurance on a structure, and it floods, you are responsible for all flood losses relating to that structure."

The booklet prepared pursuant to this section shall take into consideration differences in real estate settlement procedures that may exist among the several States and territories of the United States and among separate political subdivisions within the same State and territory.

(c) Each lender shall include with the booklet a good faith estimate of the amount or range of charges for specific settlement services the borrower is likely to incur in connection with the settlement as prescribed by the Bureau. Each lender shall also include with the booklet a reasonably complete or updated list of homeownership counselors who are certified pursuant to section 106(e) of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (12 U.S.C. 1701x(e)) and located in the area of the lender.

(d) Each lender referred to in subsection (a) shall provide the booklet described in such subsection to each person from whom it receives or for whom it prepares a written application to borrow money to finance the purchase of residential real estate. The lender shall provide the booklet in the version that is most appropriate for

the person receiving it. Such booklet shall be provided by delivering it or placing it in the mail not later than 3 business days after the lender receives the application, but no booklet need be provided if the lender denies the application for credit before the end of the 3-day period.

(e) Booklets may be printed and distributed by lenders if their form and content are approved by the Bureau as meeting the requirements of subsection (b) of this section.

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S.A.F.E. MORTGAGE LICENSING ACT OF 2008

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008”.

DIVISION A—HOUSING FINANCE REFORM

* * * * *

TITLE V—S.A.F.E. MORTGAGE LICENSING ACT

SEC. 1501. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Secure and Fair Enforcement for Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008” or “S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008”.

SEC. 1502. PURPOSES AND METHODS FOR ESTABLISHING A MORTGAGE LICENSING SYSTEM AND REGISTRY.

In order to increase uniformity, reduce regulatory burden, enhance consumer protection, and reduce fraud, the States, through the Conference of State Bank Supervisors and the American Association of Residential Mortgage Regulators, are hereby encouraged to establish a Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry for the residential mortgage industry that accomplishes all of the following objectives:

- (1) Provides uniform license applications and reporting requirements for State-licensed loan originators.
- (2) Provides a comprehensive licensing and supervisory database.
- (3) Aggregates and improves the flow of information to and between regulators.
- (4) Provides increased accountability and tracking of loan originators.
- (5) Streamlines the licensing process and reduces the regulatory burden.
- (6) Enhances consumer protections and supports anti-fraud measures.
- (7) Provides consumers with easily accessible information, offered at no charge, utilizing electronic media, including the Internet, regarding the employment history of, and publicly ad-

judicated disciplinary and enforcement actions against, loan originators.

(8) Establishes a means by which residential mortgage loan originators would, to the greatest extent possible, be required to act in the best interests of the consumer.

(9) Facilitates responsible behavior in the subprime mortgage market place and provides comprehensive training and examination requirements related to subprime mortgage lending.

(10) Facilitates the collection and disbursement of consumer complaints on behalf of State and Federal mortgage regulators.

SEC. 1503. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this title, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) BUREAU.—The term “Bureau” means the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.

(2) FEDERAL BANKING AGENCY.—The term “Federal banking agency” means the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the National Credit Union Administration, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

(3) DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION.—The term “depository institution” has the same meaning as in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act, and includes any credit union.

(4) LOAN ORIGINATOR.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “loan originator”—

(i) means an individual who—

(I) takes a residential mortgage loan application; and

(II) offers or negotiates terms of a residential mortgage loan for compensation or gain;

(ii) does not include any individual who is not otherwise described in clause (i) and who performs purely administrative or clerical tasks on behalf of a person who is described in any such clause;

(iii) does not include a person or entity that only performs real estate brokerage activities and is licensed or registered in accordance with applicable State law, unless the person or entity is compensated by a lender, a mortgage broker, or other loan originator or by any agent of such lender, mortgage broker, or other loan originator; and

(iv) does not include a person or entity solely involved in extensions of credit relating to timeshare plans, as that term is defined in section 101(53D) of title 11, United States Code.

(B) OTHER DEFINITIONS RELATING TO LOAN ORIGINATOR.—For purposes of this subsection, an individual “assists a consumer in obtaining or applying to obtain a residential mortgage loan” by, among other things, advising on loan terms (including rates, fees, other costs), preparing loan packages, or collecting information on behalf of the consumer with regard to a residential mortgage loan.

(C) ADMINISTRATIVE OR CLERICAL TASKS.—The term “administrative or clerical tasks” means the receipt, collection, and distribution of information common for the processing

or underwriting of a loan in the mortgage industry and communication with a consumer to obtain information necessary for the processing or underwriting of a residential mortgage loan.

(D) REAL ESTATE BROKERAGE ACTIVITY DEFINED.—The term “real estate brokerage activity” means any activity that involves offering or providing real estate brokerage services to the public, including—

(i) acting as a real estate agent or real estate broker for a buyer, seller, lessor, or lessee of real property;

(ii) bringing together parties interested in the sale, purchase, lease, rental, or exchange of real property;

(iii) negotiating, on behalf of any party, any portion of a contract relating to the sale, purchase, lease, rental, or exchange of real property (other than in connection with providing financing with respect to any such transaction);

(iv) engaging in any activity for which a person engaged in the activity is required to be registered or licensed as a real estate agent or real estate broker under any applicable law; and

(v) offering to engage in any activity, or act in any capacity, described in clause (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv).

(5) LOAN PROCESSOR OR UNDERWRITER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “loan processor or underwriter” means an individual who performs clerical or support duties at the direction of and subject to the supervision and instruction of—

(i) a State-licensed loan originator; or

(ii) a registered loan originator.

(B) CLERICAL OR SUPPORT DUTIES.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term “clerical or support duties” may include—

(i) the receipt, collection, distribution, and analysis of information common for the processing or underwriting of a residential mortgage loan; and

(ii) communicating with a consumer to obtain the information necessary for the processing or underwriting of a loan, to the extent that such communication does not include offering or negotiating loan rates or terms, or counseling consumers about residential mortgage loan rates or terms.

(6) NATIONWIDE MORTGAGE LICENSING SYSTEM AND REGISTRY.—The term “Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry” means a mortgage licensing system developed and maintained by the Conference of State Bank Supervisors and the American Association of Residential Mortgage Regulators for the State licensing and registration of State-licensed loan originators and the registration of registered loan originators or any system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1509.

(7) NONTRADITIONAL MORTGAGE PRODUCT.—The term “non-traditional mortgage product” means any mortgage product other than a 30-year fixed rate mortgage.

(8) REGISTERED LOAN ORIGINATOR.—The term “registered loan originator” means any individual who—

(A) meets the definition of loan originator and is an employee of—

(i) a depository institution;

(ii) a subsidiary that is—

(I) owned and controlled by a depository institution; and

(II) regulated by a Federal banking agency; or

(iii) an institution regulated by the Farm Credit Administration; and

(B) is registered with, and maintains a unique identifier through, the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry.

(9) RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE LOAN.—The term “residential mortgage loan” means any loan primarily for personal, family, or household use that is secured by a mortgage, deed of trust, or other equivalent consensual security interest on a dwelling (as defined in section 103(v) of the Truth in Lending Act) or residential real estate upon which is constructed or intended to be constructed a dwelling (as so defined).

[(10) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.]

(11) STATE.—The term “State” means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, any territory of the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

(12) STATE-LICENSED LOAN ORIGINATOR.—The term “State-licensed loan originator” means any individual who—

(A) is a loan originator;

(B) is not an employee of—

(i) a depository institution;

(ii) a subsidiary that is—

(I) owned and controlled by a depository institution; and

(II) regulated by a Federal banking agency; or

(iii) an institution regulated by the Farm Credit Administration; and

(C) is licensed by a State or by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1508 and registered as a loan originator with, and maintains a unique identifier through, the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry.

(13) UNIQUE IDENTIFIER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “unique identifier” means a number or other identifier that—

(i) permanently identifies a loan originator;

(ii) is assigned by protocols established by the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry and the Bureau to facilitate electronic tracking of loan originators and uniform identification of, and public access to, the employment history of and the publicly adjudicated disciplinary and enforcement actions against loan originators; and

(iii) shall not be used for purposes other than those set forth under this title.

(B) RESPONSIBILITY OF STATES.—To the greatest extent possible and to accomplish the purpose of this title, States shall use unique identifiers in lieu of social security numbers.

SEC. 1504. LICENSE OR REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the existence of a licensing or registration regime, as the case may be, an individual may not engage in the business of a loan originator without first—

(1) obtaining, and maintaining annually—

(A) a registration as a registered loan originator; or

(B) a license and registration as a State-licensed loan originator; and

(2) obtaining a unique identifier.

(b) LOAN PROCESSORS AND UNDERWRITERS.—

(1) SUPERVISED LOAN PROCESSORS AND UNDERWRITERS.—A loan processor or underwriter who does not represent to the public, through advertising or other means of communicating or providing information (including the use of business cards, stationery, brochures, signs, rate lists, or other promotional items), that such individual can or will perform any of the activities of a loan originator shall not be required to be a State-licensed loan originator.

(2) INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS.—An independent contractor may not engage in residential mortgage loan origination activities as a loan processor or underwriter unless such independent contractor is a State-licensed loan originator.

SEC. 1505. STATE LICENSE AND REGISTRATION APPLICATION AND ISSUANCE.

(a) BACKGROUND CHECKS.—In connection with an application to any State for licensing and registration as a State-licensed loan originator, the applicant shall, at a minimum, furnish to the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry information concerning the applicant's identity, including—

(1) fingerprints for submission to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and any governmental agency or entity authorized to receive such information for a State and national criminal history background check; and

(2) personal history and experience, including authorization for the System to obtain—

(A) an independent credit report obtained from a consumer reporting agency described in section 603(p) of the Fair Credit Reporting Act; and

(B) information related to any administrative, civil or criminal findings by any governmental jurisdiction.

(b) ISSUANCE OF LICENSE.—The minimum standards for licensing and registration as a State-licensed loan originator shall include the following:

(1) The applicant has never had a loan originator license revoked in any governmental jurisdiction.

(2) The applicant has not been convicted of, or pled guilty or nolo contendere to, a felony in a domestic, foreign, or military court—

- (A) during the 7-year period preceding the date of the application for licensing and registration; or
- (B) at any time preceding such date of application, if such felony involved an act of fraud, dishonesty, or a breach of trust, or money laundering.
- (3) The applicant has demonstrated financial responsibility, character, and general fitness such as to command the confidence of the community and to warrant a determination that the loan originator will operate honestly, fairly, and efficiently within the purposes of this title.
- (4) The applicant has completed the pre-licensing education requirement described in subsection (c).
- (5) The applicant has passed a written test that meets the test requirement described in subsection (d).
- (6) The applicant has met either a net worth or surety bond requirement, or paid into a State fund, as required by the State pursuant to section 1508(d)(6).
- (c) PRE-LICENSING EDUCATION OF LOAN ORIGINATORS.—
 - (1) MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—In order to meet the pre-licensing education requirement referred to in subsection (b)(4), a person shall complete at least 20 hours of education approved in accordance with paragraph (2), which shall include at least—
 - (A) 3 hours of Federal law and regulations;
 - (B) 3 hours of ethics, which shall include instruction on fraud, consumer protection, and fair lending issues; and
 - (C) 2 hours of training related to lending standards for the nontraditional mortgage product marketplace.
 - (2) APPROVED EDUCATIONAL COURSES.—For purposes of paragraph (1), pre-licensing education courses shall be reviewed, and approved by the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry.
 - (3) LIMITATION AND STANDARDS.—
 - (A) LIMITATION.—To maintain the independence of the approval process, the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry shall not directly or indirectly offer pre-licensure educational courses for loan originators.
 - (B) STANDARDS.—In approving courses under this section, the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry shall apply reasonable standards in the review and approval of courses.
- (d) TESTING OF LOAN ORIGINATORS.—
 - (1) IN GENERAL.—In order to meet the written test requirement referred to in subsection (b)(5), an individual shall pass, in accordance with the standards established under this subsection, a qualified written test developed by the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry and administered by an approved test provider.
 - (2) QUALIFIED TEST.—A written test shall not be treated as a qualified written test for purposes of paragraph (1) unless the test adequately measures the applicant's knowledge and comprehension in appropriate subject areas, including—
 - (A) ethics;
 - (B) Federal law and regulation pertaining to mortgage origination;

- (C) State law and regulation pertaining to mortgage origination;
 - (D) Federal and State law and regulation, including instruction on fraud, consumer protection, the nontraditional mortgage marketplace, and fair lending issues.
- (3) MINIMUM COMPETENCE.—
- (A) PASSING SCORE.—An individual shall not be considered to have passed a qualified written test unless the individual achieves a test score of not less than 75 percent correct answers to questions.
 - (B) INITIAL RETESTS.—An individual may retake a test 3 consecutive times with each consecutive taking occurring at least 30 days after the preceding test.
 - (C) SUBSEQUENT RETESTS.—After failing 3 consecutive tests, an individual shall wait at least 6 months before taking the test again.
 - (D) RETEST AFTER LAPSE OF LICENSE.—A State-licensed loan originator who fails to maintain a valid license for a period of 5 years or longer shall retake the test, not taking into account any time during which such individual is a registered loan originator.

(e) MORTGAGE CALL REPORTS.—Each mortgage licensee shall submit to the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry reports of condition, which shall be in such form and shall contain such information as the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry may require.

SEC. 1506. STANDARDS FOR STATE LICENSE RENEWAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The minimum standards for license renewal for State-licensed loan originators shall include the following:

- (1) The loan originator continues to meet the minimum standards for license issuance.
- (2) The loan originator has satisfied the annual continuing education requirements described in subsection (b).

(b) CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR STATE-LICENSED LOAN ORIGINATORS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to meet the annual continuing education requirements referred to in subsection (a)(2), a State-licensed loan originator shall complete at least 8 hours of education approved in accordance with paragraph (2), which shall include at least—

- (A) 3 hours of Federal law and regulations;
- (B) 2 hours of ethics, which shall include instruction on fraud, consumer protection, and fair lending issues; and
- (C) 2 hours of training related to lending standards for the nontraditional mortgage product marketplace.

(2) APPROVED EDUCATIONAL COURSES.—For purposes of paragraph (1), continuing education courses shall be reviewed, and approved by the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry.

(3) CALCULATION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS.—A State-licensed loan originator—

- (A) may only receive credit for a continuing education course in the year in which the course is taken; and

(B) may not take the same approved course in the same or successive years to meet the annual requirements for continuing education.

(4) **INSTRUCTOR CREDIT.**—A State-licensed loan originator who is approved as an instructor of an approved continuing education course may receive credit for the originator’s own annual continuing education requirement at the rate of 2 hours credit for every 1 hour taught.

(5) **LIMITATION AND STANDARDS.**—

(A) **LIMITATION.**—To maintain the independence of the approval process, the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry shall not directly or indirectly offer any continuing education courses for loan originators.

(B) **STANDARDS.**—In approving courses under this section, the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry shall apply reasonable standards in the review and approval of courses.

SEC. 1507. SYSTEM OF REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) **DEVELOPMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Bureau shall develop and maintain a system for registering employees of a depository institution, employees of a subsidiary that is owned and controlled by a depository institution and regulated by a Federal banking agency, or employees of an institution regulated by the Farm Credit Administration, as registered loan originators with the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry. The system shall be implemented before the end of the 1-year period beginning on the date of enactment of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010.

(2) **REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS.**—In connection with the registration of any loan originator under this subsection, the Bureau shall, at a minimum, furnish or cause to be furnished to the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry information concerning the identity of the employee, including—

(A) fingerprints for submission to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and any governmental agency or entity authorized to receive such information for a State and national criminal history background check; and

(B) personal history and experience, including authorization for the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry to obtain information related to any administrative, civil or criminal findings by any governmental jurisdiction.

(b) **COORDINATION.**—

(1) **UNIQUE IDENTIFIER.**—The Bureau, and the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection shall coordinate with the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry to establish protocols for assigning a unique identifier to each registered loan originator that will facilitate electronic tracking and uniform identification of, and public access to, the employment history of and publicly adjudicated disciplinary and enforcement actions against loan originators.

(2) **NATIONWIDE MORTGAGE LICENSING SYSTEM AND REGISTRY DEVELOPMENT.**—To facilitate the transfer of information re-

quired by subsection (a)(2), the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry shall coordinate with the Bureau, and the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection concerning the development and operation, by such System and Registry, of the registration functionality and data requirements for loan originators.

(c) CONSIDERATION OF FACTORS AND PROCEDURES.—In establishing the registration procedures under subsection (a) and the protocols for assigning a unique identifier to a registered loan originator, the Bureau shall make such de minimis exceptions as may be appropriate to paragraphs (1)(A) and (2) of section 1504(a), shall make reasonable efforts to utilize existing information to minimize the burden of registering loan originators, and shall consider methods for automating the process to the greatest extent practicable consistent with the purposes of this title.

SEC. 1508. BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BACKUP AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH LOAN ORIGINATOR LICENSING SYSTEM.

(a) BACKUP LICENSING SYSTEM.—If, by the end of the 1-year period, or the 2-year period in the case of a State whose legislature meets only biennially, beginning on the date of the enactment of this title or at any time thereafter, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* determines that a State does not have in place by law or regulation a system for licensing and registering loan originators that meets the requirements of sections 1505 and 1506 and subsection (d) of this section, or does not participate in the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of a system for the licensing and registration by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of loan originators operating in such State as State-licensed loan originators.

(b) LICENSING AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS.—The system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under subsection (a) for any State shall meet the requirements of sections 1505 and 1506 for State-licensed loan originators.

(c) UNIQUE IDENTIFIER.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall coordinate with the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry to establish protocols for assigning a unique identifier to each loan originator licensed by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* as a State-licensed loan originator that will facilitate electronic tracking and uniform identification of, and public access to, the employment history of and the publicly adjudicated disciplinary and enforcement actions against loan originators.

(d) STATE LICENSING LAW REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of this section, the law in effect in a State meets the requirements of this subsection if the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* determines the law satisfies the following minimum requirements:

(1) A State loan originator supervisory authority is maintained to provide effective supervision and enforcement of such law, including the suspension, termination, or nonrenewal of a license for a violation of State or Federal law.

(2) The State loan originator supervisory authority ensures that all State-licensed loan originators operating in the State

are registered with Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry.

(3) The State loan originator supervisory authority is required to regularly report violations of such law, as well as enforcement actions and other relevant information, to the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry.

(4) The State loan originator supervisory authority has a process in place for challenging information contained in the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry.

(5) The State loan originator supervisory authority has established a mechanism to assess civil money penalties for individuals acting as mortgage originators in their State without a valid license or registration.

(6) The State loan originator supervisory authority has established minimum net worth or surety bonding requirements that reflect the dollar amount of loans originated by a residential mortgage loan originator, or has established a recovery fund paid into by the loan originators.

(e) **TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF PERIOD.**—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may extend, by not more than 24 months, the 1-year or 2-year period, as the case may be, referred to in subsection (a) for the licensing of loan originators in any State under a State licensing law that meets the requirements of sections 1505 and 1506 and subsection (d) if the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* determines that such State is making a good faith effort to establish a State licensing law that meets such requirements, license mortgage originators under such law, and register such originators with the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry.

(f) **REGULATION AUTHORITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Bureau is authorized to promulgate regulations setting minimum net worth or surety bond requirements for residential mortgage loan originators and minimum requirements for recovery funds paid into by loan originators.

(2) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In issuing regulations under paragraph (1), the Bureau shall take into account the need to provide originators adequate incentives to originate affordable and sustainable mortgage loans, as well as the need to ensure a competitive origination market that maximizes consumer access to affordable and sustainable mortgage loans.

SEC. 1509. BACKUP AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH A NATIONWIDE MORTGAGE LICENSING AND REGISTRY SYSTEM.

If at any time the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* determines that the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry is failing to meet the requirements and purposes of this title for a comprehensive licensing, supervisory, and tracking system for loan originators, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall establish and maintain such a system to carry out the purposes of this title and the effective registration and regulation of loan originators.

SEC. 1510. FEES.

The Bureau, the Farm Credit Administration, and the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry may charge reasonable fees to cover the costs of maintaining and providing access to

information from the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry, to the extent that such fees are not charged to consumers for access to such system and registry.

SEC. 1511. BACKGROUND CHECKS OF LOAN ORIGINATORS.

(a) ACCESS TO RECORDS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in providing identification and processing functions, the Attorney General shall provide access to all criminal history information to the appropriate State officials responsible for regulating State-licensed loan originators to the extent criminal history background checks are required under the laws of the State for the licensing of such loan originators.

(b) AGENT.—For the purposes of this section and in order to reduce the points of contact which the Federal Bureau of Investigation may have to maintain for purposes of subsection (a), the Conference of State Bank Supervisors or a wholly owned subsidiary may be used as a channeling agent of the States for requesting and distributing information between the Department of Justice and the appropriate State agencies.

SEC. 1512. CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION.

(a) SYSTEM CONFIDENTIALITY.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, any requirement under Federal or State law regarding the privacy or confidentiality of any information or material provided to the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry or a system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1509, and any privilege arising under Federal or State law (including the rules of any Federal or State court) with respect to such information or material, shall continue to apply to such information or material after the information or material has been disclosed to the system. Such information and material may be shared with all State and Federal regulatory officials with mortgage industry oversight authority without the loss of privilege or the loss of confidentiality protections provided by Federal and State laws.

(b) NONAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS.—Information or material that is subject to a privilege or confidentiality under subsection (a) shall not be subject to—

(1) disclosure under any Federal or State law governing the disclosure to the public of information held by an officer or an agency of the Federal Government or the respective State; or

(2) subpoena or discovery, or admission into evidence, in any private civil action or administrative process, unless with respect to any privilege held by the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry or the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* with respect to such information or material, the person to whom such information or material pertains waives, in whole or in part, in the discretion of such person, that privilege.

(c) COORDINATION WITH OTHER LAW.—Any State law, including any State open record law, relating to the disclosure of confidential supervisory information or any information or material described in subsection (a) that is inconsistent with subsection (a) shall be superseded by the requirements of such provision to the extent State law provides less confidentiality or a weaker privilege.

(d) PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION.—This section shall not apply with respect to the information or material relating to the employment history of, and publicly adjudicated disciplinary and enforcement actions against, loan originators that is included in Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry for access by the public.

SEC. 1513. LIABILITY PROVISIONS.

The Bureau, any State official or agency, or any organization serving as the administrator of the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System and Registry or a system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1509, or any officer or employee of any such entity, shall not be subject to any civil action or proceeding for monetary damages by reason of the good faith action or omission of any officer or employee of any such entity, while acting within the scope of office or employment, relating to the collection, furnishing, or dissemination of information concerning persons who are loan originators or are applying for licensing or registration as loan originators.

SEC. 1514. ENFORCEMENT BY THE BUREAU.

(a) SUMMONS AUTHORITY.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may—

(1) examine any books, papers, records, or other data of any loan originator operating in any State which is subject to a licensing system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1508; and

(2) summon any loan originator referred to in paragraph (1) or any person having possession, custody, or care of the reports and records relating to such loan originator, to appear before the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* or any delegate of the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* at a time and place named in the summons and to produce such books, papers, records, or other data, and to give testimony, under oath, as may be relevant or material to an investigation of such loan originator for compliance with the requirements of this title.

(b) EXAMINATION AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* establishes a licensing system under section 1508 for any State, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall appoint examiners for the purposes of administering such section.

(2) POWER TO EXAMINE.—Any examiner appointed under paragraph (1) shall have power, on behalf of the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*, to make any examination of any loan originator operating in any State which is subject to a licensing system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1508 whenever the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* determines an examination of any loan originator is necessary to determine the compliance by the originator with this title.

(3) REPORT OF EXAMINATION.—Each examiner appointed under paragraph (1) shall make a full and detailed report of examination of any loan originator examined to the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission*.

(4) ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS AND AFFIRMATIONS; EVIDENCE.—In connection with examinations of loan originators operating in any State which is subject to a licensing system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1508, or with other types of investigations to determine compliance with applicable law and regulations, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* and examiners appointed by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may administer oaths and affirmations and examine and take and preserve testimony under oath as to any matter in respect to the affairs of any such loan originator.

(5) ASSESSMENTS.—The cost of conducting any examination of any loan originator operating in any State which is subject to a licensing system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1508 shall be assessed by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* against the loan originator to meet the Secretary's expenses in carrying out such examination.

(c) CEASE AND DESIST PROCEEDING.—

(1) AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY.—If the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* finds, after notice and opportunity for hearing, that any person is violating, has violated, or is about to violate any provision of this title, or any regulation thereunder, with respect to a State which is subject to a licensing system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1508, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may publish such findings and enter an order requiring such person, and any other person that is, was, or would be a cause of the violation, due to an act or omission the person knew or should have known would contribute to such violation, to cease and desist from committing or causing such violation and any future violation of the same provision, rule, or regulation. Such order may, in addition to requiring a person to cease and desist from committing or causing a violation, require such person to comply, or to take steps to effect compliance, with such provision or regulation, upon such terms and conditions and within such time as the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may specify in such order. Any such order may, as the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* deems appropriate, require future compliance or steps to effect future compliance, either permanently or for such period of time as the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may specify, with such provision or regulation with respect to any loan originator.

(2) HEARING.—The notice instituting proceedings pursuant to paragraph (1) shall fix a hearing date not earlier than 30 days nor later than 60 days after service of the notice unless an earlier or a later date is set by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* with the consent of any respondent so served.

(3) TEMPORARY ORDER.—Whenever the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* determines that the alleged violation or threatened violation specified in the notice instituting proceedings pursuant to paragraph (1), or the continuation thereof, is likely to result in significant dissipation or conver-

sion of assets, significant harm to consumers, or substantial harm to the public interest prior to the completion of the proceedings, the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* may enter a temporary order requiring the respondent to cease and desist from the violation or threatened violation and to take such action to prevent the violation or threatened violation and to prevent dissipation or conversion of assets, significant harm to consumers, or substantial harm to the public interest as the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* deems appropriate pending completion of such proceedings. Such an order shall be entered only after notice and opportunity for a hearing, unless the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* determines that notice and hearing prior to entry would be impracticable or contrary to the public interest. A temporary order shall become effective upon service upon the respondent and, unless set aside, limited, or suspended by the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* or a court of competent jurisdiction, shall remain effective and enforceable pending the completion of the proceedings.

(4) REVIEW OF TEMPORARY ORDERS.—

(A) REVIEW BY SECRETARY.—At any time after the respondent has been served with a temporary cease and desist order pursuant to paragraph (3), the respondent may apply to the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* to have the order set aside, limited, or suspended. If the respondent has been served with a temporary cease and desist order entered without a prior hearing before the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission*, the respondent may, within 10 days after the date on which the order was served, request a hearing on such application and the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall hold a hearing and render a decision on such application at the earliest possible time.

(B) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—Within—

(i) 10 days after the date the respondent was served with a temporary cease and desist order entered with a prior hearing before the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission*; or

(ii) 10 days after the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* renders a decision on an application and hearing under paragraph (1), with respect to any temporary cease and desist order entered without a prior hearing before the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission*,

the respondent may apply to the United States district court for the district in which the respondent resides or has its principal place of business, or for the District of Columbia, for an order setting aside, limiting, or suspending the effectiveness or enforcement of the order, and the court shall have jurisdiction to enter such an order. A respondent served with a temporary cease and desist order entered without a prior hearing before the **[Director]** *Financial Product Safety Commission* may not apply to the court except after hearing and decision by the **[Director]** *Finan-*

cial Product Safety Commission on the respondent's application under subparagraph (A).

(C) NO AUTOMATIC STAY OF TEMPORARY ORDER.—The commencement of proceedings under subparagraph (B) shall not, unless specifically ordered by the court, operate as a stay of the Secretary's order.

(5) AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY TO PROHIBIT PERSONS FROM SERVING AS LOAN ORIGINATORS.—In any cease and desist proceeding under paragraph (1), the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may issue an order to prohibit, conditionally or unconditionally, and permanently or for such period of time as the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall determine, any person who has violated this title or regulations thereunder, from acting as a loan originator if the conduct of that person demonstrates unfitness to serve as a loan originator.

(d) AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY TO ASSESS MONEY PENALTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* may impose a civil penalty on a loan originator operating in any State which is subject to a licensing system established by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under section 1508, if the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* finds, on the record after notice and opportunity for hearing, that such loan originator has violated or failed to comply with any requirement of this title or any regulation prescribed by the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* under this title or order issued under subsection (c).

(2) MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF PENALTY.—The maximum amount of penalty for each act or omission described in paragraph (1) shall be \$25,000.

SEC. 1515. STATE EXAMINATION AUTHORITY.

In addition to any authority allowed under State law a State licensing agency shall have the authority to conduct investigations and examinations as follows:

(1) For the purposes of investigating violations or complaints arising under this title, or for the purposes of examination, the State licensing agency may review, investigate, or examine any loan originator licensed or required to be licensed under this title, as often as necessary in order to carry out the purposes of this title.

(2) Each such loan originator shall make available upon request to the State licensing agency the books and records relating to the operations of such originator. The State licensing agency may have access to such books and records and interview the officers, principals, loan originators, employees, independent contractors, agents, and customers of the licensee concerning their business.

(3) The authority of this section shall remain in effect, whether such a loan originator acts or claims to act under any licensing or registration law of such State, or claims to act without such authority.

(4) No person subject to investigation or examination under this section may knowingly withhold, abstract, remove, muti-

late, destroy, or secrete any books, records, computer records, or other information.

SEC. 1516. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CONGRESS.

(a) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this title, and annually thereafter, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall submit a report to Congress on the effectiveness of the provisions of this title, including legislative recommendations, if any, for strengthening consumer protections, enhancing examination standards, streamlining communication between all stakeholders involved in residential mortgage loan origination and processing, and establishing performance based bonding requirements for mortgage originators or institutions that employ such brokers.

(b) LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this title, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall make recommendations to Congress on legislative reforms to the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974, that the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* deems appropriate to promote more transparent disclosures, allowing consumers to better shop and compare mortgage loan terms and settlement costs.

SEC. 1517. STUDY AND REPORTS ON DEFAULTS AND FORECLOSURES.

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall conduct an extensive study of the root causes of default and foreclosure of home loans, using as much empirical data as is available.

(b) PRELIMINARY REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this title, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall submit to Congress a preliminary report regarding the study required by this section.

(c) FINAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this title, the [Director] *Financial Product Safety Commission* shall submit to Congress a final report regarding the results of the study required by this section, which shall include any recommended legislation relating to the study, and recommendations for best practices and for a process to provide targeted assistance to populations with the highest risk of potential default or foreclosure.

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TITLE 44, UNITED STATES CODE

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CHAPTER 35—COORDINATION OF FEDERAL INFORMATION POLICY

SUBCHAPTER I—FEDERAL INFORMATION POLICY

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§ 3513. Director review of agency activities; reporting; agency response

(a) In consultation with the Administrator of General Services, the Archivist of the United States, the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, the Director shall periodically review selected agency information resources management activities to ascertain the efficiency and effectiveness of such activities to improve agency performance and the accomplishment of agency missions.

(b) Each agency having an activity reviewed under subsection (a) shall, within 60 days after receipt of a report on the review, provide a written plan to the Director describing steps (including milestones) to—

(1) be taken to address information resources management problems identified in the report; and

(2) improve agency performance and the accomplishment of agency missions.

(c) COMPARABLE TREATMENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Director shall treat or review a rule or order prescribed or proposed by the [Director of the Bureau] *Financial Product Safety Commission* of Consumer Financial Protection on the same terms and conditions as apply to any rule or order prescribed or proposed by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

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MINORITY VIEWS

H.R. 1266 would change the leadership structure of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (“CFPB”) from an effective single director to a partisan, gridlocked five member commission. The legislation is a direct attempt to stymie the functioning of this important, independent agency, prevent consumers from receiving the full scope of consumer protections envisioned by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, and is an effort to empower the financial industry to exert more influence over CFPB decision making.

This committee has often heard complaints that agencies run by multi-member commissions are slow to issue rules mandated by Congress or take enforcement actions. Replacing the Director of the Bureau with a multi-member commission would increase bureaucracy and could slow the Bureau’s ability to respond quickly and effectively to stakeholder views or emerging challenges in the industry. Given the recent violations of consumer rights by the financial industry, including the potential opening of more than 2.5 million fraudulent accounts in consumers’ names by Wells Fargo, the need to ensure that consumer protections are enforced by an independent agency, free from partisan politics and unnecessary bureaucratic delays, should be apparent to anyone committed to enforcing the laws designed to protect the consumers of financial products and services.

In addition, the CFPB’s Director already engages in a robust discussion of multiple views and incorporates these views into Bureau decision making under several provisions of the Dodd-Frank Act. Some of these requirements include mandating that the Bureau seek the input of affected parties, including small businesses under section 1100G, prudential bank regulators under section 1022(b)(2)(B), and a consumer advisory board composed of outside experts under section 1014.

Finally, despite assertions from proponents of H.R. 1266 that a commission structure would enhance the accountability of the Bureau, the reality is that commission governance would make the Bureau less accountable to Congress and all affected parties. A review by the non-partisan Government Accountability Office (GAO), in examining the structure of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), found that the “superior administrative effectiveness of a single-director structure would outweigh any potential benefits of collegial decision-making within CPSC’s multimember commission.” GAO also found that high turnover, and divisions among commissioners led to delays in decision-making. Further, individuals involved in the legislative process leading to the Bureau’s creation—including former Chairmen Barney Frank and Chris Dodd, as well as Senator Elizabeth Warren and the Obama Administration, all have noted that changing the Bureau’s structure

would interfere with its ability to make consumer financial markets operate more efficiently and effectively.

The CFPB has a mission that is enshrined in statute and bound by the relevant consumer laws. Directors of independent agencies, as well as courts, should be trusted and expected to uphold those laws. History has shown that Directors of independent agencies often act in non-partisan ways when they are entrusted with an important public service role. In its current form, the CFPB's structure works as it should by striking a balance between the ability of an elected administration to influence the direction of the agency by choosing a Director and ensuring that, once chosen, that Director has the necessary independence to carry out the mission of the agency without undue political influence.

For the foregoing reasons, the Minority opposes H.R. 1266.

MAXINE WATERS.
WM. LACY CLAY.
RUBÉN HINOJOSA.
KEITH ELLISON.
AL GREEN.

