

Abstract: The Customer Satisfaction Survey of *Federal Reserve Bulletin* Subscribers (FR 1371) will solicit comments on the content and usefulness of the Federal Reserve's monthly Bulletin from a sample of subscribers. The staff is focusing on the Bulletin because the Board devotes substantial resources to this publication and will use the information from this survey to determine whether the Board should continue to publish the Bulletin in its current form. The Customer Satisfaction Survey of Publication Subscribers (FR 1372) will solicit comments on the quality of the customer service provided by the Board's Publications Services Department. The information will be used to assess whether the needs of the Board's subscribers are being met in a courteous and expeditious manner and whether changes should be made to the ordering and payment policies and processes in order to increase efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Discontinuation of the Following Report

1. *Report title:* Report of Medium Term Note Issuance.

Agency form number: FR 2600.

OMB control number: 7100-0245.

Effective Date: Friday, March 31, 2000.

Frequency: Monthly, quarterly, or semi-annually.

Reporters: U.S. firms filing SEC shelf registration statements for medium term notes.

Annual reporting hours: 94 burden hours.

Estimated average hours per response: 0.083 hours.

Number of respondents: 424. Small businesses are affected.

General description of report: This information collection is voluntary (15 U.S.C. §§ 225a and 353 et seq). Respondent data are not regarded as confidential.

Abstract: The FR 2600 collects information on the monthly volume of medium-term notes issued by corporations.

Current Actions: The Federal Reserve will discontinue the FR 2600. The report has become unnecessary because data are now obtained from the Depository Trust Corporation, a national clearing house that collects data on medium-term notes issued in the course of its business of clearing and settling securities and acting as trustee for holders of securities.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, March 20, 2000.

Jennifer J. Johnson,
Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 00-7269 Filed 3-23-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6210-01-P

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Formations of, Acquisitions by, and Mergers of Bank Holding Companies

The companies listed in this notice have applied to the Board for approval, pursuant to the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 (12 U.S.C. 1841 *et seq.*) (BHC Act), Regulation Y (12 CFR part 225), and all other applicable statutes and regulations to become a bank holding company and/or to acquire the assets or the ownership of, control of, or the power to vote shares of a bank or bank holding company and all of the banks and nonbanking companies owned by the bank holding company, including the companies listed below.

The applications listed below, as well as other related filings required by the Board, are available for immediate inspection at the Federal Reserve Bank indicated. The application also will be available for inspection at the offices of the Board of Governors. Interested persons may express their views in writing on the standards enumerated in the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1842(c)). If the proposal also involves the acquisition of a nonbanking company, the review also includes whether the acquisition of the nonbanking company complies with the standards in section 4 of the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1843). Unless otherwise noted, nonbanking activities will be conducted throughout the United States. Additional information on all bank holding companies may be obtained from the National Information Center website at www.ffiec.gov/nic/.

Unless otherwise noted, comments regarding each of these applications must be received at the Reserve Bank indicated or the offices of the Board of Governors not later than April 17, 2000.

A. Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta (Lois Berthaume, Vice President) 104 Marietta Street, NW., Atlanta, Georgia 30303-2713:

1. *United Community Banks, Inc.*, Blairsville, Georgia; to merge with North Point Bancshares, Inc., Dawsonville, Georgia, and thereby indirectly acquire Dawson County Bank, Dawsonville, Georgia.

2. *United Community Banks, Inc.*, Blairsville, Georgia; to merge with Independent Bancshares, Inc., Powder Springs, Georgia, and thereby indirectly

acquire Independent Bank & Trust Company, Powder Springs, Georgia.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, March 20, 2000.

Robert deV. Frierson,
Associate Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 00-7271 Filed 3-23-00; 8:45 am]

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FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Notice of Proposals To Engage in Permissible Nonbanking Activities or To Acquire Companies That Are Engaged in Permissible Nonbanking Activities

The companies listed in this notice have given notice under section 4 of the Bank Holding Company Act (12 U.S.C. 1843) (BHC Act) and Regulation Y, (12 CFR Part 225) to engage *de novo*, or to acquire or control voting securities or assets of a company, including the companies listed below, that engages either directly or through a subsidiary or other company, in a nonbanking activity that is listed in § 225.28 of Regulation Y (12 CFR 225.28) or that the Board has determined by Order to be closely related to banking and permissible for bank holding companies. Unless otherwise noted, these activities will be conducted throughout the United States.

Each notice is available for inspection at the Federal Reserve Bank indicated. The notice also will be available for inspection at the offices of the Board of Governors. Interested persons may express their views in writing on the question whether the proposal complies with the standards of section 4 of the BHC Act. Additional information on all bank holding companies may be obtained from the National Information Center website at www.ffiec.gov/nic/.

Unless otherwise noted, comments regarding the applications must be received at the Reserve Bank indicated or the offices of the Board of Governors not later than April 7, 2000.

A. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis (Randall C. Sumner, Vice President) 411 Locust Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63166-2034:

1. *First Banks, Inc.*, Creve Coeur, Missouri; to acquire certain assets and assume certain liabilities of First Capital Group, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico, and thereby engage in leasing personal and real property activities, pursuant to § 225.28(b)(3) of Regulation Y. The leasing activities will be conducted in a newly formed direct wholly owned subsidiary of Notificant, which will assume the selling institution's name of First Capital Group, Inc. and retain its

head office location in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, March 20, 2000.

Robert deV. Frierson,

Associate Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 00-7270 Filed 3-23-00; 8:45 am]

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FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Sunshine Act Meeting

Agency Holding the Meeting: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

Time and Date: 10:00 am, Wednesday, March 29, 2000.

Place: Marriner S. Eccles Federal Reserve Board Building, 20th and C Streets, NW., Washington, DC 20551.

Status: Closed.

Matters to be Considered:

1. Personnel actions (appointments, promotions, assignments, reassignments, and salary actions) involving individual Federal Reserve System employees.

2. Any matters carried forward from a previously announced meeting.

Contact Person for More Information: Lynn S. Fox, Assistant to the Board; 202-452-3204.

Supplementary Information: You may call 202-452-3206 beginning at approximately 5 pm two business days before the meeting for a recorded announcement of bank and bank holding company applications scheduled for the meeting; or you may contact the Board's Web site at <http://www.federalreserve.gov> for an electronic announcement that not only lists applications, but also indicates procedural and other information about the meeting.

Dated: March 22, 2000.

Robert deV. Frierson,

Associate Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 00-7428 Filed 3-22-00; 10:59 am]

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FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

Public Workshop; Slotting Allowances and Other Grocery Marketing Practices: When Should They Raise Antitrust Concerns?

AGENCY: Federal Trade Commission.

ACTION: Notice announcing workshop.

SUMMARY: The Federal Trade Commission has set May 31 and June 1 as the dates for its public workshop examining the appropriate antitrust assessment of slotting allowances,

category management, and other grocery marketing practices.

DATES: The workshop will be held on May 31 and June 1 in the Commission Meeting Room (Room 432), 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20580.

FOR PANEL PARTICIPATION OR FURTHER

INFORMATION CONTACT: To obtain information about possible panel participation or for questions about the workshop, please contact: David Balto, Bureau of Competition, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20580, telephone 202-326-2881, e-mail dbalto@ftc.gov; or William Cohen, Office of Policy Planning, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20580, telephone 202-326-2110, e-mail wcohen@ftc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Public Workshop; Slotting Allowances and Other Grocery Marketing Practices: When Should They Raise Antitrust Concerns?

Overview

In recent years, debate has continued about when slotting allowances and other grocery marketing practices appropriately raise antitrust concerns and thus pose potential matters for antitrust enforcement. The Commission last held hearings in this area in November, 1995, and this past fall, both the Senate Small Business Committee and the House Judiciary Committee held hearings that addressed several issues, including antitrust issues, in connection with slotting allowances.

The term "slotting allowance" typically refers to a lump-sum, up-front payment that a food manufacturer must pay to a supermarket for access to its shelves. Very often, debates over slotting allowances have assumed that all slotting allowances, and all of the market conditions in which they are used, are the same. In fact, the term "slotting allowance" has been used to cover an extremely broad range of conduct, some of it clearly unlawful as commercial bribery, some clearly lawful, and a great deal of it in the gray area in between, the antitrust legality of which can be determined only in light of all the surrounding facts and circumstances. At the same time, the legal and economic literature on the appropriate antitrust analysis of these practices has not been as well developed as would be desirable.

The FTC plans to convene a workshop that will focus on the antitrust implications of slotting allowances and other grocery marketing practices, such as category management, in which

retailers engage particular manufacturers to provide advisory or decisionmaking functions in determining how best to market certain products of a type produced by those manufacturers. The workshop is intended to facilitate a discussion among manufacturers and retailers (both small and large businesses), consumer groups, marketing experts, economists, and lawyers that will increase factual knowledge and illuminate the relevant antitrust issues with respect to these and other grocery marketing practices. The format will consist of panel presentations and discussions, which will include participation by attendees.

The goal of the workshop is to gain a better understanding of the types of slotting allowances and other grocery marketing practices that are used, the reasons for which they are used, and the criteria for assessing whether slotting allowances or other grocery marketing practices raise antitrust concerns. Interested parties are invited to participate or attend.

Specific Question To Be Addressed

The workshop will address the following questions, among others:

- What are the different types of slotting allowances, and what prompts the use of one type rather than another?
- Are slotting allowances used for both new and established products? In what proportion?
- How do slotting allowances vary from other types of product promotion, and what circumstances lead to the use of slotting allowances rather than other types of product promotion?
- How do slotting allowances vary from market to market?
- What is the impact of slotting allowances on new product development and innovation?
- Do slotting allowances significantly increase the capital costs of entry or doing business in particular markets? If so, how do capital markets respond?
- How do supermarkets ultimately use the fees they receive as slotting allowances?
- Under what circumstances do slotting allowances have an impact on prices to consumers and consumer demand? What is the impact?
- Are slotting allowances sometimes paid in order to obtain substantial exclusivity and, arguably, market power?
- If slotting allowances were prohibited, would that lead to material differences in the bargaining relationship between manufacturers and retailers—or would discounts to retailers simply take a different form?