

From: William Whitaker
Subject: CRA Regulations Hearings

Comments:

Submitted values are:

Submit your comment letter to bank regulators:

Body (please personalize the bracketed areas to ensure your letter is not overlooked):

My name is William Whitaker,
I am a member of Oregon Rural Action, a grassroots membership based organization based in Northeast Oregon.

Good affordable credit is essential to the health of our nation's rural communities. Financial institutions must be held accountable to participate in the real economy by offering quality loans and community investments. Thank you for initiating the process of updating the Community Reinvestment Act.

The past decade has shown how devastating high-cost, predatory credit can be to our nation. Toxic credit that was targeted to low-income and communities of color caused pushed our entire economy to the brink of collapse and has left in its wake devastation in the form of rampant unemployment, faltering state and local budgets miles of foreclosures and abandoned buildings.

Small entrepreneurs such as our member Randy Joseph have been unable to secure financing for small scale wind projects while foreign industrial sized wind farms have no problem being financed. There is no USDA certified slaughter facility serving Northeast Oregon. This means that small ranchers and farmers raising grass-fed beef are unable to compete with corporate stockyard meat producers. We need credit to support local farmers and ranchers.

It is imperative that the banks, many of them the very ones who caused this crisis, repair the damage and continue to do good business in our communities. An updated and modernized Community Reinvestment Act can help.

We need:

- * Real Accountability and Fairness for Banks. Banks like Bank of America and Wells Fargo that took down our economy should not receive outstanding ratings. Banks should no longer be allowed to pick which of their areas they are graded on or which parts of their companies get looked at.

- * Banks must get failing grades if they discriminate by offering toxic loans, less credit, worse credit or inadequate services to African-American and Latino communities.

- * Strengthen the requirements for banks to work with us. If they are not doing their jobs, we will be the first to know. We need to be able to challenge the banks directly to meet our credit needs.

Sincerely,

First Name: William
Last Name: Whitaker