

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
EDUCATION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTERIOR AND ENVIRONMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
VICE CHAIRMAN



Cynthia M. Lummis

Congress of the United States
Wyoming

WESTERN CAUCUS
VICE CHAIRMAN

WOMEN'S CAUCUS
CO-CHAIRMAN

2ND AMENDMENT TASK FORCE

10TH AMENDMENT TASK FORCE

REPUBLICAN STUDY COMMITTEE

October 29, 2012

The Honorable Ben S. Bernanke
Chairman
The Federal Reserve System
20th Street and Constitution, NW
Washington, DC 20429

The Honorable Thomas S. Curry
Comptroller
Office of the Comptroller of the Currency
250 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20219

The Honorable Martin J. Gruenberg
Acting Chairman
Federal Deposit Insurance System
550 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20429

Dear Sirs:

I write to express concern over the most recent proposal for one-size-fits-all Basel III capital requirements. I represent a state where many constituents are served by community banks and their unique characteristics need to be incorporated into any final rule making.

Basel III was intended to respond to deficiencies that contributed to the financial crisis and thus should focus on the few large, complex financial institutions that are globalized and create systemic risk. Applying the Basel framework to small community banks just perpetuates the consolidation of risk into larger institutions. It is in the best interest of consumers and the taxpayers to maintain the diversified banking system in the United States. Adding new legal and compliance costs will reduce the viability of the small town banker and encourage more too-big-to-fail institutions.

Higher capital requirements will ultimately limit the amount of credit community banks can provide to their consumers and imposing complex risk weights on loans will restrict the type of credit they can afford to offer. This changes the fundamental economics behind running a small bank and hurts the local businesses that rely on their financing. Restricting access to credit during our economic recovery is not the way to create jobs and grow businesses.

While I understand the need for the global community to consider the impact of capital requirements on the financial system as a whole, regulations in the United States should be tailored to our diverse mix of institutions. I urge you to reconsider the need for small community banks to be included in these stringent requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cynthia M. Lummis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "C".

Cynthia M. Lummis
Member of Congress