



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
OF THE
FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20551

ADDRESS OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE
TO THE BOARD

May 15, 1997

The Board has adopted a revised statement of policy regarding equal opportunity within the System. This statement of policy is consistent with a Policy Statement on Equal Employment Opportunity within the System ("Policy Statement") approved by the Conference of Presidents at its November 20, 1996, meeting. The Board concurs with the policy position adopted by the Conference and strongly supports the continuation of effective equal employment opportunity programs at all Federal Reserve Banks.

The Board believes that adoption and implementation of strong equal employment opportunity programs at all Federal Reserve Banks is in the public interest. The Board takes the position that each Reserve Bank should at a minimum conform to substantive federal laws, rules and orders governing equal employment opportunity. Inasmuch as Federal Reserve Banks are subject to the general prohibition against discrimination contained in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which covers generally any employer in an industry affecting commerce that has fifteen or more employees, this means that policies prohibiting discrimination in the workplace and providing for lawful affirmative action programs and initiatives should be memorialized in appropriate policy statements for the benefit of Reserve Bank management and staff and should be implemented in accordance with their terms.

The Policy Statement continues the longstanding requirements that each Reserve Bank designate a senior officer to report to the president or first vice president with respect to the equal employment opportunity program. As this officer is

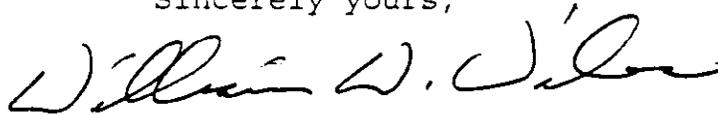
essentially engaged in auditing each institution's program in this field, consideration should be given to having this appointed officer be outside the regular personnel function and accessible to employees outside of the usual personnel channels. Each Reserve Bank should also give consideration to the value of distinguishing the officer who is to report on the equal employment opportunity program from its regular personnel administration.

The Board believes that affirmative action components of equal employment opportunity plans need not conform precisely to formats or requirements identified by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for plans adopted by Federal Government agencies. In addition, it is recognized that each Reserve Bank's plan may need to have certain unique institutional or community characteristics and, accordingly, the Board does not suggest a uniform plan for all Federal Reserve Banks. Further, although the Federal Reserve Banks are not Federal Government agencies, the Board concurs with the Conference of Presidents in the belief that Federal Reserve Banks should not include in their equal employment opportunity plans any provisions that would be unlawful if included in the equal employment opportunity plan of a Federal Government agency.

The Board's EEO Programs Adviser shall review Reserve Bank equal employment opportunity programs and, where appropriate, shall make recommendations for improvement in the programs and in their implementation. The EEO Programs Adviser may request additional information from a Reserve Bank as needed to carry out his or her responsibilities. In making recommendations, the EEO Programs Adviser shall follow the new Guidelines for Review of System EEO Programs, that will be prepared and, when approved, inserted in the FRAM as ¶ 2-021.

This letter, which will appear in the FRAM as ¶ 2-020, replaces S-2074, December 24, 1968; S-2109, November 6, 1969; S-2139, June 4, 1970; and S-2426, June 13, 1980.

Sincerely yours,



William W. Wiles
Secretary

TO THE PRESIDENTS AND FIRST VICE PRESIDENTS OF ALL FEDERAL
RESERVE BANKS AND OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF BRANCHES