Transcript of Payments Innovation Conference:
Closing Remarks by Governor Waller
October 21, 2025

GOVERNOR WALLER. And let me begin to end things by thanking all the panelists and also those of you in the audience who engaged with some great discussion. I am always struck by the fact. I've said this to a few people over the last day or so, every time I think I have an understanding of what's going on, I go to these things and I realize how little I know. So I have to keep going so I keep learning and learning and learning. So sitting in the audience today reminds me of how important it is to listen and learn from innovators on the ground, both newer entrants and incumbents alike. Today allowed us not only to focus on what is happening in the payment system, but also to envision where it might go next, as we were talking a bit at the end. I jotted down some notes about what I've heard today and I'll wrap things up by highlighting some of the really interesting points made and ask a few questions.

It's clear from our discussions that innovation in payments is coming in many forms. What I heard from our panelists from discussions during the breaks is that the industry is moving as quickly as possible on a number of fronts from finding ways to interoperate across and between traditional and new ecosystems to reimagining the consumer purchase experience through the use of AI and AI agentic agents. All of this points to a future where payments move more rapidly, securely, and seamlessly across networks, both domestic and global. I also heard from many panelists about the growing importance of tokenized money in unlocking the next phase of payments innovation. We heard from a variety of panelists about evolving roles that could be played by stablecoins and commercial bank deposit tokens and the potential efficiency and inclusivity gains these forms of tokenized dollars might deliver. And we ultimately heard a lot of discussion about very classic economics of payments, as that's at the depth of my heart.

Beyond technology, what stood out today was a spirit of collaboration across the ecosystem. And I've noticed this over the last couple of years. Instead of, "Dude, we're going to take your job and drive you out of business," which was kind of the crypto world about six, seven, eight years ago. it's all like, "How do we work together?" I mean, this is a profound cultural change in the way people think about these things. We heard bankers and developers speak in the same language about openness, interoperability and the need for shared standards. And we may have even coined a new term in "scaled-fi."

Things are changing fast in the world of payments and it will be interesting to see a year from now how much has changed or perhaps become more defined about the innovations we discussed today. It remains to be seen just how quickly some of the innovations being discussed now will be widely used or leveraged in the marketplace in the coming years. Now, how quickly might we reach that point, as discussed today, in which most consumers interact with tokenized money in their daily lives unaware of the new technologies at play. I mean, that was kind of a theme. Consumers don't care about the technology underlying things. They just want to know, "Can I use my money to pay for something? Am I going to get money from somebody?" They don't care how it gets done. We care about how it gets done. Right? We do to make sure it's done efficiently, cheaply and safely for those consumers.

What will the blockchain infrastructure rails look like and how many different stable coins might circulate on these rails? I mean, I think this is a big question. There's a lot of talk about lots of stable coins, but, at the end of the day, consumers have to choose which of these things they want to use. It may be very widespread. There may be just a handful that actually are used and the rest are just a tail. That's what we're going to find out by letting it loose and seeing

what the consumers want to do. And which future innovations that are unforeseen today will challenge our assumptions and understanding of what is possible in payments in the future.

So thank you all for making this conference such an informative and enriching experience for me and I believe all my colleagues here at the Board. Thank you to those watching online. And a big thank you to the Fed staff who did such a spectacular job pulling this event together in a very short period of time. And, with that, thank you and goodbye.