considered a debt for purposes of section 166. The fact that a bad debt its not due at the time of deduction shall not of itself prevent is allowance under section 166. For the disallowance of deductions for bad debts owed by a political party, see §1.271–1.

(d) *Amount deductible*—(1) *General rule.* Except in the case of a deduction for a reasonable addition to a reserve for bad debts, the basis for determining the amount of deduction under section 166 in respect of a bad debt shall be the same as the adjusted basis prescribed by §1.1011–1 for determining the loss from the sale or other disposition of property. To determine the allowable deduction in the case of obligations acquired before March 1, 1913, see also paragraph (b) of §1.1053–1.

(2) *Specific cases.* Subject to any provision of section 166 and the regulations thereunder which provides to the contrary, the following amounts are deductible as bad debts:

(i) *Notes or accounts receivable. (a)* If, in computing taxable income, a taxpayer values his notes or accounts receivable at their fair market value when received, the amount deductible as a bad debt under section 166 in respect of such receivables shall be limited to such fair market value even though it is less than their face value.

(b) A purchaser of accounts receivable which become worthless during the taxable year shall be entitled under section 166 to a deduction which is based upon the price he paid for such receivables but not upon their face value.

(ii) *Bankruptcy claim.* Only the difference between the amount received in distribution of the assets of a bankrupt and the amount of the claim may be deducted under section 166 as a bad debt.

(iii) *Claim against decedent's estate.* The excess of the amount of the claim over the amount received by a creditor of a decedent in distribution of the assets of the decedent's estate may be considered a worthless debt under section 166.

(e) *Prior inclusion in income required.* Worthless debts arising from unpaid wages, salaries, fees, rents, and similar items of taxable income shall not be allowed as a deduction under section 166 unless the income such items represent has been included in the return of income for the year for which the deduction as a bad debt is claimed or for a prior taxable year.

(f) *Recovery of bad debts.* Any amount attributable to the recovery during the taxable year of a bad debt, or of a part of a bad debt, which was allowed as a deduction from gross income in a prior taxable year shall be included in gross income for the taxable year of recovery, except to the extent that the recovery is excluded from gross income under the provisions of §1.111–1, relating to the recovery of certain items previously deducted or credited. This paragraph shall not apply, however, to a bad debt which was previously charged against a reserve by a taxpayer on the reserve method of treating bad debts.

(g) *Worthless securities.* (1) Section 166 and the regulations thereunder do not apply to a debt which is evidenced by a bond, debenture, note, or certificate, or other evidence of indebtedness, issued by a corporation or by a government or political subdivision thereof, with interest coupons or in registered form. See section 166(e). For provisions allowing the deduction of a loss resulting from the worthlessness of such a debt, see §1.165–5.

(2) The provisions of subparagraph (1) of this paragraph do not apply to any loss sustained by a bank and resulting from the worthlessness of a security described in section 165(g)(2)(C). See paragraph (a) of §1.582–1.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11402, Nov. 26, 1960, as amended by T.D. 6996, 34 FR 835, Jan. 18, 1969; T.D. 7902, 48 FR 33260, July 21, 1983; T.D. 8071, 51 FR 2479, Jan. 17, 1986]

§1.166–2 Evidence of worthlessness.

(a) *General rule.* In determining whether a debt is worthless in whole or in part the district director will consider all pertinent evidence, including the value of the collateral, if any, securing the debt and the financial condition of the debtor.

(b) *Legal action not required.* Where the surrounding circumstances indicate that a debt is worthless and uncollectible and that legal action to enforce payment would in all probability not result in the satisfaction of

execution on a judgment, a showing of these facts will be sufficient evidence of the worthlessness of the debt for purposes of the deduction under section 166.

(c) *Bankruptcy*—(1) *General rule.* Bankruptcy is generally an indication of the worthlessness of at least a part of an unsecured and unpreferred debt.

(2) *Year of deduction.* In bankruptcy cases a debt may become worthless before settlement in some instances; and in others, only when a settlement in bankruptcy has been reached. In either case, the mere fact that bankruptcy proceedings instituted against the debtor are terminated in a later year, thereby confirming the conclusion that the debt is worthless, shall not authorize the shifting of the deduction under section 166 to such later year.

(d) *Banks and other regulated corporations*—(1) *Worthlessness presumed in year of charge-off.* If a bank or other corporation which is subject to supervision by Federal authorities, or by State authorities maintaining substantially equivalent standards, charges off a debt in whole or in part, either—

(i) In obedience to the specific orders of such authorities, or

(ii) In accordance with established policies of such authorities, and, upon their first audit of the bank or other corporation subsequent to the charge-off, such authorities confirm in writing that the charge-off would have been subject to such specific orders if the audit had been made on the date of the charge-off,

then the debt shall, to the extent charged off during the taxable year, be conclusively presumed to have become worthless, or worthless only in part, as the case may be, during such taxable year. But no such debt shall be so conclusively presumed to be worthless, or worthless only in part, as the case may be, if the amount so charged off is not claimed as a deduction by the taxpayer at the time of filing the return for the taxable year in which the charge-off takes place.

(2) *Evidence of worthlessness in later taxable year.* If such a bank or other corporation does not claim a deduction for such a totally or partially worthless debt in its return for the taxable year in which the charge-off takes place, but claims the deduction for a later taxable year, then the charge-off in the prior taxable year shall be deemed to have been involuntary and the deduction under section 166 shall be allowed for the taxable year for which claimed, provided that the taxpayer produces sufficient evidence to show that—

(i) The debt became wholly worthless in the later taxable year, or became recoverable only in part subsequent to the taxable year of the involuntary charge-off, as the case may be; and,

(ii) To the extent that the deduction claimed in the later taxable year for a debt partially worthless was not involuntarily charged off in prior taxable years, it was charged off in the later taxable year.

(3) *Conformity election*—(i) *Eligibility for election.* In lieu of applying paragraphs (d)(1) and (2) of this section, a bank (as defined in paragraph (d)(4)(i) of this section) that is subject to supervision by Federal authorities, or by state authorities maintaining substantially equivalent standards, may elect under this paragraph (d)(3) to use a method of accounting that establishes a conclusive presumption of worthlessness for debts, provided that the bank meets the express determination requirement of paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(D) of this section for the taxable year of the election.

(ii) *Conclusive presumption*—(A) *In general.* If a bank satisfies the express determination requirement of paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(D) of this section and elects to use the method of accounting under this paragraph (d)(3)—

(*1*) Debts charged off, in whole or in part, for regulatory purposes during a taxable year are conclusively presumed to have become worthless, or worthless only in part, as the case may be, during that year, but only if the charge-off results from a specific order of the bank's supervisory authority or corresponds to the bank's classification of the debt, in whole or in part, as a loss asset, as described in paragraph (d)(3)(ii)(C) of this section; and

(*2*) A bad debt deduction for a debt that is subject to regulatory loss classification standards is allowed for a taxable year only to the extent that the debt is conclusively presumed to

have become worthless under paragraph (d)(3)(ii)(A)(*1*) of this section during that year.

(B) *Charge-off should have been made in earlier year.* The conclusive presumption that a debt is worthless in the year that it is charged off for regulatory purposes applies even if the bank's supervisory authority determines in a subsequent year that the charge-off should have been made in an earlier year. A pattern of charge-offs in the wrong year, however, may result in revocation of the bank's election by the Commissioner pursuant to paragraph (d)(3)(iv)(D) of this section.

(C) *Loss asset defined.* A debt is classified as a loss asset by a bank if the bank assigns the debt to a class that corresponds to a loss asset classification under the standards set forth in the ''Uniform Agreement on the Classification of Assets and Securities Held by Banks'' (See Attachment to Comptroller of the Currency Banking Circular No. 127, Rev. 4–26–91, Comptroller of the Currency, Communications Department, Washington, DC 20219) or similar guidance issued by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, or the Farm Credit Administration; or for institutions under the supervision of the Office of Thrift Supervision, 12 CFR 563.160(b)(3).

(iii) *Election*—(A) *In general.* An election under this paragraph (d)(3) is to be made on bank-by-bank basis and constitutes either the adoption of or a change in method of accounting, depending on the particular bank's facts. A change in method of accounting that results from the making of an election under this paragraph (d)(3) has the effects described in paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(B) of this section.

(B) *Effect of change in method of accounting.* A change in method of accounting resulting from an election under this paragraph (d)(3) does not require or permit an adjustment under section 481(a). Under this cut-off approach—

(*1*) There is no change in the §1.1011–1 adjusted basis of the bank's existing debts (as determined under the bank's former method of accounting for bad debts) as a result of the change in method of accounting;

(*2*) With respect to debts that are subject to regulatory loss classification standards and are held by the bank at the beginning of the year of change (to the extent that they have not been charged off for regulatory purposes), and with respect to debts subject to regulatory loss classification standards that are originated or acquired subsequent to the beginning of the year of change, bad debt deductions in the year of change and thereafter are determined under the method of accounting for bad debts prescribed by this paragraph (d)(3);

(*3*) With respect to debts that are not subject to regulatory loss classification standards or that have been totally charged off prior to the year of change, bad debt deductions are determined under the general rules of section 166; and

(*4*) If there was any partial charge-off of a debt in a prechange year, any portion of which was not claimed as a deduction, the deduction reflecting that partial charge-off must be taken in the first year in which there is any further charge-off of the debt for regulatory purposes.

(C) *Procedures—*(*1*) *In general.* A new bank adopts the method of accounting under this paragraph (d)(3) for any taxable year ending on or after December 31, 1991 (and for all subsequent taxable years) when it adopts its overall method of accounting for bad debts, by attaching a statement to this effect to its income tax return for that year. Any other bank makes an election for any taxable year ending on or after December 31, 1991 (and for all subsequent taxable years) by filing a completed Form 3115 (Application for Change in Accounting Method) in accordance with the rules of paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(C)(*2*) or (*3*) of this section. The statement or Form 3115 must include the name, address, and taxpayer identification number of the electing bank and contain a declaration that the express determination requirement of paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(D) of this section is satisfied for the taxable year of the election. When a Form 3115 is used, the declaration must be made in the space provided on the form for ''Other

changes in method of accounting.'' The words ''ELECTION UNDER §1.166–2(d)(3)'' must be typed or legibly printed at the top of the statement or page 1 of the Form 3115.

(*2*) *First election.* The first time a bank makes this election, the statement or Form 3115 must be attached to the bank's timely filed return (taking into account extensions of time to file) for the first taxable year covered by the election. The consent of the Commissioner to make a change in method of accounting under this paragraph (d)(3) is granted, pursuant to section 446(e), to any bank that makes the election in accordance with this paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(C), provided the bank has not made a prior election under this paragraph (d)(3).

(*3*) *Subsequent elections.* The advance consent of the Commissioner is required to make any election under this paragraph (d)(3) after a previous election has been revoked pursuant to paragraph (d)(3)(iv) of this section. This consent must be requested under the procedures, terms, and conditions prescribed under the authority of section 446(e) and §1.446–1(e) for requesting a change in method of accounting.

(D) *Express determination requirement.* In connection with its most recent examination involving the bank's loan review process, the bank's supervisory authority must have made an express determination (in accordance with any applicable administrative procedure prescribed hereunder) that the bank maintains and applies loan loss classification standards that are consistent with the regulatory standards of that supervisory authority. For purposes of this paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(D), the supervisory authority of a bank is the *appropriate Federal banking agency* for the bank, as that term is defined in 12 U.S.C. 1813(q), or, in the case of an institution in the Farm Credit System, the Farm Credit Administration.

(E) *Transition period election.* For taxable years ending before completion of the first examination of the bank by its supervisory authority (as defined in paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(D) of this section) that is after October 1, 1992, and that involves the bank's loan review process, the statement or Form 3115 filed by the bank must include a declaration that the bank maintains and applies loan loss classification standards that are consistent with the regulatory standards of that supervisory authority. A bank that makes this declaration is deemed to satisfy the express determination requirement of paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(D) of this section for those years, even though an express determination has not yet been made.

(iv) *Revocation of Election*—(A) *In general.* Revocation of an election under this paragraph (d)(3) constitutes a change in method of accounting that has the effects described in paragraph (d)(3)(iv)(B) of this section. If an election under this paragraph (d)(3) has been revoked, a bank may make a subsequent election only under the provisions of paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(C)(*3*) of this section.

(B) *Effect of change in method of accounting.* A change in method of accounting resulting from revocation of an election under this paragraph (d)(3) does not require or permit an adjustment under section 481(a). Under this cut-off approach—

(*1*) There is no change in the §1.1011–1 adjusted basis of the bank's existing debts (as determined under this paragraph (d)(3) method or any other former method of accounting used by the bank with respect to its bad debts) as a result of the change in method of accounting; and

(*2*) Bad debt deductions in the year of change and thereafter with respect to all debts held by the bank, whether in existence at the beginning of the year of change or subsequently originated or acquired, are determined under the new method of accounting.

(C) *Automatic revocation*—(*1*) *In general*— A bank's election under this paragraph (d)(3) is revoked automatically if, in connection with any examination involving the bank's loan review process by the bank's supervisory authority as defined in paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(D) of this section, the bank does not obtain the express determination required by that paragraph.

(*2*) *Year of revocation.* If a bank makes the conformity election under the transition rules of paragraph (d)(3)(iii)(E) of this section and does not obtain the express determination in connection with the first examination involving the

bank's loan review process that is after October 1, 1992, the election is revoked as of the beginning of the taxable year of the election or, if later, the earliest taxable year for which tax may be assessed. In other cases in which a bank does not obtain an express determination in connection with an examination of its loan review process, the election is revoked as of the beginning of the taxable year that includes the date as of which the supervisory authority conducts the examination even if the examination is completed in the following taxable year.

(*3*) *Consent granted.* Under the Commissioner's authority in section 446(e) and §1.446–1(e), the bank is directed to and is granted consent to change from this paragraph (3)(1) method as of the year of revocation (year of change) prescribed by paragraph (d)(3)(iv)(C)(*2*) of this section.

(*4*) *Requirements.* A bank changing its method of accounting under the automatic revocation rules of this paragraph (d)(3)(iv)(C) must attach a completed Form 3115 to its income tax return for the year of revocation prescribed by paragraph (d)(3)(iv)(C)(*2*) of this section. The words ''REVOCATION OF §1.166–2(d)(3) ELECTION'' must be typed or legibly printed at the top of page 1 of the Form 3115. If the year of revocation is a year for which the bank has already filed its income tax return, the bank must file an amended return for that year reflecting its change in method of accounting and must attach the completed Form 3115 to that amended return. The bank also must file amended returns reflecting the new method of accounting for all subsequent taxable years for which returns have been filed and tax may be assessed.

(D) *Revocation by Commissioner.* An election under this paragraph (d)(3) may be revoked by the Commissioner as of the beginning of any taxable year for which a bank fails to follow the method of accounting prescribed by this paragraph. In addition, the Commissioner may revoke an election as of the beginning of any taxable year for which the Commissioner determines that a bank has taken charge-offs and deductions that, under all facts and circumstances existing at the time, were substantially in excess of those warranted by the exercise of reasonable business judgment in applying the regulatory standards of the bank's supervisory authority as defined in paragraph (d)(3)(III)(D) of this section.

(E) *Voluntary revocation.* A bank may apply for revocation of its election made under this paragraph (d)(3) by timely filing a completed Form 3115 for the appropriate year and obtaining the consent of the Commissioner in accordance with section 446(e) and §1.446–1(e) (including any applicable administrative procedures prescribed thereunder). The words ''REVOCATION OF §1.166–2(d)(3) ELECTION'' must be typed or legibly printed at the top of page 1 of the Form 3115. If any bank has had its election automatically revoked pursuant to paragraph (d)(3)(iv)(C) of this section and has not changed its method of accounting in accordance with the requirements of that paragraph, the Commissioner will require that any voluntary change in method of accounting under this paragraph (d)(3)(iv)(E) be implemented retroactively pursuant to the same amended return terms and conditions as are prescribed by paragraph (d)(3)(iv)(C) of this section.

(4) *Definitions.* For purposes of this paragraph (d)—

(i) *Bank.* The term *bank* has the meaning assigned to it by section 581. The term *bank* also includes any corporation that would be a bank within the meaning of section 581 except for the fact that it is a foreign corporation, but this paragraph (d) applies only with respect to loans the interest on which is effectively connected with the conduct of a banking business within the United States. In addition, the term *bank* includes a Farm Credit System institution that is subject to supervision by the Farm Credit Administration.

(ii) *Charge-off.* For banks regulated by the Office of Thrift Supervision, the term *charge-off* includes the establishment of specific allowances for loan losses in the amount of 100 percent of

the portion of the debt classified as loss.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11402, Nov. 26, 1960; 25 FR 14021, Dec. 31, 1960, as amended by T.D. 7254, 38 FR 2418, Jan. 26, 1973; T.D. 8396, 57 FR 6294, Feb. 24, 1992; T.D. 8441, 57 FR 45569, Oct. 2, 1992; T.D. 8492, 58 FR 53658, Oct. 18, 1993]

§ 1.166–3 Partial or total worthlessness.

(a) *Partial worthlessness*—(1) *Applicable to specific debts only.* A deduction under section 166(a)(2) on account of partially worthless debts shall be allowed with respect to specific debts only.

(2) *Charge-off required.* (i) If, from all the surrounding and attending circumstances, the district director is satisfied that a debt is partially worthless, the amount which has become worthless shall be allowed as a deduction under section 166(a)(2) but only to the extent charged off during the taxable year.

(ii) If a taxpayer claims a deduction for a part of a debt for the taxable year within which that part of the debt is charged off and the deduction is disallowed for that taxable year, then, in a case where the debt becomes partially worthless after the close of that taxable year, a deduction under section 166(a)(2) shall be allowed for a subsequent taxable year but not in excess of the amount charged off in the prior taxable year plus any amount charged off in the subsequent taxable year. In such instance, the charge-off in the prior taxable year shall, if consistently maintained as such, be sufficient to that extent to meet the charge-off requirement of section 166(a)(2) with respect to the subsequent taxable year.

(iii) Before a taxpayer may deduct a debt in part, he must be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the district director the amount thereof which is worthless and the part thereof which has been charged off.

(3) *Significantly modified debt*—(i) *Deemed charge-off.* If a significant modification of a debt instrument (within the meaning of §1.1001–3) during a taxable year results in the recognition of gain by a taxpayer under §1.1001–1(a), and if the requirements of paragraph (a)(3)(ii) of this section are met, there is a deemed charge-off of the debt during that taxable year in the amount specified in paragraph (a)(3)(iii) of this section.

(ii) *Requirements for deemed charge-off.* A debt is deemed to have been charged off only if—

(A) The taxpayer (or, in the case of a debt that constitutes transferred basis property within the meaning of section 7701(a)(43), a transferor taxpayer) has claimed a deduction for partial worthlessness of the debt in any prior taxable year; and

(B) Each prior charge-off and deduction for partial worthlessness satisfied the requirements of paragraphs (a) (1) and (2) of this section.

(iii) *Amount of deemed charge-off.* The amount of the deemed charge-off, if any, is the amount by which the tax basis of the debt exceeds the greater of the fair market value of the debt or the amount of the debt recorded on the taxpayer's books and records reduced as appropriate for a specific allowance for loan losses. The amount of the deemed charge-off, however, may not exceed the amount of recognized gain described in paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section.

(iv) *Effective date.* This paragraph (a)(3) applies to significant modifications of debt instruments occurring on or after September 23, 1996.

(b) *Total worthlessness.* If a debt becomes wholly worthless during the taxable year, the amount thereof which has not been allowed as a deduction from gross income for any prior taxable year shall be allowed as a deduction for the current taxable year.

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11402, Nov. 29, 1960, as amended by T.D. 8763, 63 FR 4396, Jan. 29, 1998]

§ 1.166–4 Reserve for bad debts.

(a) *Allowance of deduction.* A taxpayer who has established the reserve method of treating bad debts and has maintained proper reserve accounts for bad debts or who, in accordance with paragraph (b) of §1.166–1, adopts the reserve method of treating bad debts may deduct from gross income a reasonable addition to a reserve for bad debts in lieu of deducting specific bad debt items. This paragraph applies both to bad debts owed to the taxpayer and to bad debts arising out of section