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Sent: Tuesday, May 08, 2007 3:21 PM
To: Comments, Regs
Subject: Regulatory Comments

May 8, 2007

Docket No. 2007-09

Regulation Comments
Chief Counsel's Office
Office of Thrift Supervision
1700 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20552
By email: Regs.comments@ots.treas.gov

Attention: Docket No. 2007-09, proposed subprime guidance.

I am writing to express opinion on proposed subprime guidance. Long Island Housing Services agrees with the National Community Reinvestment Coalition and believe that the proposed extension of guidance to subprime lenders will lessen mortgage defaults and foreclosures, lessening risks to consumers. While we feel that it would be advisable to also extend guidance to prime market lenders, we support your intention to further regulate these risky loans. We urge your agency to implement these proposed changes as soon as possible.

While your guidance encourages underwriting, it needs to go further and ensure that borrowers will be able to afford subprime adjustable rate (ARM) loans by requiring an assessment of the borrower's ability to repay the loan at the maximum interest rate. Currently, many subprime lenders are assessing repayment ability at the low, initial rate, which will cause several borrowers to default when the interest rate increases. Your proposed guidance also discourages onerous prepayment penalties and urges lender to exercise appropriate caution when using reduced documentation of borrower income.

Many borrowers who took out 2/28 and 3/27 subprime loans are subject to unpredictable future costs. "Predatory" loans, such as these, offering a two-year fixed rate which then can lead to jumps of 50% or more in monthly payments, result in payment shock, forcing borrowers in my locality to refinance or risk certain default. Often, these same borrowers could have qualified for thirty-year fixed rate loans at affordable interest rates. In order to truly expand market participation and financial access to low-moderate income families, secure and responsible means of extending credit must be encouraged.

Without strong, protective, enforced regulations, the impact of these abusive and dangerous lending practices is that 223,000 households with subprime loans lost their homes to foreclosure and 725,000 had missed mortgage payments in the third quarter of 2006, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association. The percentage of subprime mortgages delinquent by 90 days or more, in foreclosure, or resulting in seized properties, hit 10% in November of 2006. Progress made in lending to working class and minority communities during the 1990's stands to be lost. The extension of guidelines to subprime lenders is an important measure, which is critically necessary at this time.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. If you have any questions, please contact me at 570-346-0759 ext 114 or by email to hskene@uncnepa.org.

Peace,

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--Strange is our situation here on Earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose. From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: that man is here for the sake of other men.
-Albert Einstein