



Commodity Futures Trading Commission

Office of External Affairs

Three Lafayette Centre

1155 21st Street, NW

Washington, DC 20581

202.418.5080

Remarks

“The Luckier We Get”

Remarks by Commissioner Bart Chilton of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to the CFTC New York Staff

April 29, 2009

Thanks for taking the time out of your day to visit with me for a few moments. I always get enthusiastic coming to New York and learning first-hand about the important work you are doing. You have been working hard and you deserve a lot of credit for making this agency not only look good, but for being proactive financial regulators. More important than optics is the job you have been doing protecting consumers from fraud, abuse and manipulation. Bravo!

I often talk about how hard folks at the CFTC work. I point out that the CFTC has about a seventh of the workforce of the SEC, yet the market capitalization of our exchanges is much greater than the SEC's. Having a larger staff hasn't made the SEC any better. In fact, given the failures to follow-up on the Bernard Madoff tips, I'd argue the SEC has a rough row to hoe. At the same time, the impressive work that the CFTC has been doing to uncover financial scamsters is nothing short of remarkable. We've filed more cases—in a shorter timeframe—on Ponzi scams than ever before. We are working harder with greater results. That is all due to you, the staff.

A famous golfing instructor, Harvey Penick, said "The more I practice, the luckier I get." That works for us in our careers, too. The harder we work, the more fortunate we become. We find more market anomalies, we discover new ways to look at things, we catch more bad guys. The harder we work, the luckier we get in all of those efforts. But luck has only so much to do with it. Keeping our nose to the grindstone is simply something that makes us the best financial regulators in the nation, and I'm proud of you.

During my first visit to this office in 2007 I said that there were a few priorities of mine with regard to employees. Many of you remember that I said we needed what I called a Life Cycle Account. The basis for that idea is the recognition that there is a value on healthy employees, and therefore the agency should reimburse folks some amount for

expenditures that make them healthier, and therefore better employees. While there have been some fits and starts, I'm pleased to say that Life Cycle is on schedule with the first payout of up to \$400 available to employees in the fourth quarter of this fiscal year. We are putting final touches on the administrative policy and procedures before we notify employees of the particulars. But, as they say, stay tuned. Life Cycle Accounts are coming.

Likewise, it seemed crazy to me that, given the maturity of our employees and the need to attract new talent, we didn't have a program to help defray the cost of student loans. I'm pleased to say that the Student Loan Repayment is also on track for this fiscal year. We are incorporating Division Directors' comments and have this on tap to enable the agency to use it during the current recruitment cycle.

So far, I can tell you that the Obama Administration is much more supportive of requesting from Congress an appropriate level of funding than the previous Administration. I think the new Administration understands that there are tough challenges out there and that with financial regulatory reform, we need more tools to do our job—on the people, technology, and support sides of the matter.

As we look toward the future, we will continue to have challenges. Carbon trading, for example, is something that we will have to address as legislation goes forward. In fact, we are already working on getting ready for these markets—markets that could be the largest commodity markets in the world. Next month we are having a meeting in D.C. to discuss, with a group of professionals who are experienced in environmental markets, what we need to do to be ready. By the way, I couldn't be more thankful for the expert work that Roy Cheruvilil has been doing working with me helping to lead the Energy and Environmental Markets Advisory Committee—EEMAC.

So, we have a lot on our plates and we will need to continue to work hard. But I promise that the harder we work, the more we practice, the luckier we will get. That's good for us. It is good for markets and good for consumers.

Thank you.