May 21, 2014

Mr. Gerard Poliquin
Secretary of the Board
National Credit Union Administration
1775 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Poliquin:

I am writing to you today regarding the NCUA's Risk-Based Capital Rule, RIN 3133–AD77. I have been a member of Affinity Federal Credit Union for over twenty years. I joined because I supported the cooperative nature of credit unions, and their commitment to making financial services accessible. Over the years, I have found Affinity to be particularly responsive to its members' needs, and I am concerned about the potential negative impact of the proposed rule on credit unions, such as Affinity, if finalized in its current form.

We all know that risk is a part of everyone's lives, and as much as we might like to avoid it, we cannot. Therefore, risk must be managed. At the same time, we must keep in mind that, while managing risk that is important, member service is always first and foremost. Additionally, as we find ourselves coming out of one of the most significant financial crises the world has ever seen, we must remember that credit unions had more than adequate levels of capital throughout the crisis, based on the current statutory levels established by Congress. Not only did they have capital, but they built capital during the crisis. In other words, there is absolutely no logical reason to require the significantly higher amounts of capital being proposed.

I hope you will permit me to offer some observations and suggestions for your consideration as you move forward in the rulemaking process:

Individual Minimum Capital Ratio (IMCR): The biggest and most dangerous proposal is the IMCR. It is totally subjective authority given to examiners and it overrides all risk weighting or leverage ratio outcomes. This part of the rule must be totally stricken and never allowed in any regulatory environment.

Inconsistency with bank calculation of Risk Weighted Assets (RWA): The proposed rule attempts to incorporate multiple types of financial risk exposures into one set of metrics. One of NCUA's goals is to have PCA metrics that address credit risk, interest rate risk, concentration risk, liquidity risk, operational risk, and market risk." Neither Basel III nor the FDIC Interim Final Rule attempts to capture interest rate risk, liquidity risk, market risk, or operational risk in its risk weightings. The bank rules address credit risk in the PCA metrics. FDIC acknowledges that risk exposures and factors other than credit risk may call for an institution to increase its capital levels but employs supervisory assessments, rather than PCA risk weightings, to tailor an individual institution's required capital to its risk profile. NCUA's approach puts credit unions at a distinct disadvantage to community bank competitors.

Concentration Risk multipliers for real estate and member business loans: NCUA requires increasing risk weights for concentrations in real estate and member business loans. Risk weights increase as the % of assets in these loan categories increase. Credit unions would

require 2x the capital relative to bank competitors for each $ of current 1st mortgage exposure over 35% of assets if the concentration risk multipliers for real estate loans are not modified. Concentration above 20% of assets for other real estate exposures above 20% of assets results in 150% of what is required under bank rules.

Interest Rate Risk multipliers for investments: NCUA incorporates interest rate risk multipliers into the investment portfolio. Risk weights for investments increase as a function of weighted average life of the investment. NCUA would risk weight our investment portfolio at 5X what the bank model suggests as the bank model does not include interest rate risk in the calculation of risk weighted assets. Interest rate risk is adequately addressed in NCUA's interest rate risk regulation and is amply analyzed in the supervisory exam. Furthermore, including interest rate in PCR requirements without including the offsetting liability metric is not sound.

Impact on credit availability & competitive disadvantage: Including interest rate risk multipliers for the investment portfolio and concentration risk multipliers for mortgages and member business loans is contrary to the other federal regulator's PCA rules. The concentration risk multipliers on mortgages and member business loans will not only limit supply of these loans but will also impact pricing of loans to members. If banks have a lower capital requirement, they can price differently. Should NCUA be an arbiter in influencing the market's pricing for critical sectors such as mortgages and small business loans? Should NCUA propose rules that will cause credit unions to lose market share and impede their ability to grow and grow capital?

Impedes ability to build capital: The proposed rule creates a bias in favor of consumer loans. It is clear that NCUA prefers assets that are short term and is partial to retail unsecured exposures. This, along with the severe investment portfolio risk weights, will force credit unions down the yield curve to short duration assets and impede the ability to build capital. This overly prescriptive and onerous regulation essentially dictates the credit union's balance sheet structure and minimizes the board and management's ability to take calculated risk on behalf of members or structure an investment portfolio that balances risk and return. That is not the job of a regulator.

CUSOs: The risk weight applicable to CUSOs is flawed. Not only is the 250% too high but NCUA double counts exposure for majority owned CUSOs. Majority owned CUSOs are accounted under the consolidation method of accounting. RBC is based on a CU's consolidated balance sheet and thus, the assets for majority owned CUSOs are already risk weighted. Adding capital based on a schedule that shows unconsolidated results is double counting. In addition, it is contrary to the credit union's DNA-cooperative efforts to serve members and enhance the industry.

Strategic Plan: Under community bank guidelines Affinity has a substantial cushion above both the leverage and risk based capital ratio requirements that qualify an institution as "well-capitalized". Maintaining a cushion above well capitalized is a priority for Affinity's board of directors. Under NCUA's proposal, the credit union would fall to adequately capitalized for the risk based metric and remain well-capitalized under the leverage/Net-Worth measure. This proposal could result in a modification of our strategic plan and impede our ability to invest in and grow the business in order to serve members today and over the long run.

Numerator: Deducting the NCUSIF from capital assumes that this asset is essentially worthless. Treating this asset as impaired is contrary to GAAP and irrational given that its value is continually preserved through assessments.

The simple solution to all of the problems of this new proposal is to adopt the BASEL III/Community Bank model and completely remove the examiner discretion provision.

I would also ask that you consider allowing credit unions to continue to access secondary or supplemental capital. Doing so would have a far greater impact to achieving capital objectives than driving out deposits, shrinking assets, curtailing lending or reducing investments in the people, systems, marketing and branching required to win business, secure technology and serve members.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this proposed regulation.

Sincerely,

Donna LoStocco
1 Country Oaks Rd
Lebanon, NJ 08833