

Regulatory Comments

From: Jack Antonini <no-reply@cuanswers.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 2:23 PM
To: _Regulatory Comments
Subject: Risk-Based Capital Comment

To: Regulatory Comments
From: Jack Antonini
NACUSO

03/10/2015

Dear Mr. Poliquin:

History has shown that the cooperative model of credit unions is a successful one. The diverse nature of our charters has meant that despite little capital—except member good will and loyalty—the forefathers and current stakeholders of the industry have built the second largest financial system in America today, serving close to 40 million households with savings of nearly \$1 trillion. The proposed rule will serve to hinder that diversity by placing credit unions into more general categories. Protect the true nature of credit unions by ending this rule so we can celebrate the charters that made this industry possible, from the \$60 billion Navy FCU to any of the \$1-5 million “family” credit unions. From the farming communities of South Dakota serving family farms with loans to the taxi drivers from NYC to San Francisco. From the raw recruit in San Diego to the forward deployed military professional in Diego Garcia, Korea, or Afghanistan. From the auto worker in Detroit or Tennessee to the high tech communities of Silicon Valley.

As pointed out in the Hon. J. Mark McWatters’ dissent, the NCUA has pivoted away from its own long-standing interpretation of Section 216(d) of the Federal Credit Union Act. In 2007, the NCUA asked Congress to amend the regulation because you said the NCUA needed additional authority to create a two-tiered Risk Based Capital test. Can you explain why you suddenly believe the NCUA has the authority to do so, when your past practice has been the exact opposite?

As mentioned by the Hon J. Mark McWatters, the NCUA cannot just “piggyback” on to the FDIC unless they have the authority from Congress to do so. The plain language of the statute contradicts the NCUA’s interpretation. After all, if the NCUA was to be given the same PCA authority as the FDIC, Congress could have done exactly that. The clear intent of Congress was to create a separate system for our industry, and the NCUA must operate within those confines.

Although Congress has stated NCUA must develop risk based capital standards and they must be formulated in a similar fashion as the banking industry, we do not believe Congress wished to create a tax on members and abandon the cooperative principles of credit unions. Since the publication in the Federal Register the actual costs associated with this capital tax have been challenged. Recently NAFCU published an estimate that credit unions will need to raise an additional \$760 million dollars in capital to achieve their current capital levels. Because credit unions only have one source of earnings, that additional capital tax must come directly out of our members’ pockets through a reduction in savings rates, increase in loan rates, and potentially changes to transaction fees. We believe NCUA’s estimate falls far short of the actual cost to the industry and again focused on the potential risk to the insurance fund rather than those they regulate and ultimately their members . In an effort to remain the best financial resource for our members, we would encourage the NCUA to withdraw the proposed rule altogether.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Antonini". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "A".

Jack Antonini
NACUSO