

Press Releases

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OTS 07-073 - OTS Director Reich Addresses National Bankers Association

Office of Thrift Supervision

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OTS Director Reich Addresses National Bankers Association

Washington, D.C. -- Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) Director John Reich addressed the National Bankers Association today during its Annual Convention in Durham, N.C.

In his prepared remarks, Reich congratulated the association on its 80-year history of supporting minority-owned depository institutions. The association, known as the NBA, was formed in 1927 in Philadelphia.

"Each day, in many tangible and intangible ways, the NBA strives to forge alliances among its members and to advance their strategic business goals and objectives," the Director said.

Reich cited the pressures that regulatory burden and unfair competition are putting on community banks, including the banks represented by the NBA.

"I feel a particular affinity with minority bankers like you because I am a former community banker," he said. "Our shared experience makes us keenly aware of the important role community banking plays in strengthening neighborhoods by providing critical financial services and promoting economic development."

He also cautioned against cutting off credit to worthy subprime borrowers in attempting to avoid foreclosures, prevent predatory lending and reassure capital markets.

"We should also remember a fact of particular interest to this organization--that credit has been increasingly available to minorities in the last 15 years," the Director said. "This availability of credit, coupled with sound underwriting for mortgage loans and fair lending practices, firmly supports the NBA's goal of building strong minority communities."

In the question-and-answer session following the delivery of his remarks, Reich discussed the relative advantages of the federal thrift charter. He highlighted the ability of thrifts to operate under a single regulator of the institution and its holding company, as well as the ability of federal thrifts to branch and operate nationwide under a uniform standard for their lending and deposit taking operations.

A copy of Director Reich's prepared remarks is available on the OTS website at www.ots.treas.gov.

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The Office of Thrift Supervision, an office of the Department of the Treasury, regulates and supervises the nation's thrift industry. OTS's mission is to ensure the safety and soundness of, and compliance with consumer protection laws by, thrift institutions, and to support their role as home mortgage lenders and providers of other community credit and financial services. OTS also oversees the activities and operations of thrift holding companies that own or control thrift institutions. Copies of OTS news releases and other documents are available at the OTS web page at www.ots.treas.gov.