

Office of Thrift Supervision, Treasury

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AUTHORITY: 12 U.S.C. 1462, 1462a, 1463, 1464, 1467a, 1701j-3, 1828, 3803, 3806; 42 U.S.C. 4106.

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§ 560.1 General.

(a) *Authority and scope.* This part is being issued by OTS under its general rulemaking and supervisory authority under the Home Owners' Loan Act (HOLA), 12 U.S.C. 1462 *et seq.* Subpart A of this part sets forth the lending and investment powers of Federal savings associations. Subpart B of this part contains safety-and-soundness based lending and investment provisions applicable to all savings associations. Subpart C of this part addresses alternative mortgages and applies to all savings associations.

(b) *General lending standards.* Each savings association is expected to conduct its lending and investment activities prudently. Each association should use lending and investment standards that are consistent with safety and soundness, ensure adequate portfolio diversification and are appropriate for

the size and condition of the institution, the nature and scope of its operations, and conditions in its lending market. Each association should adequately monitor the condition of its portfolio and the adequacy of any collateral securing its loans.

§ 560.2 Applicability of law.

(a) *Occupation of field.* Pursuant to sections 4(a) and 5(a) of the HOLA, 12 U.S.C. 1463(a), 1464(a), OTS is authorized to promulgate regulations that preempt state laws affecting the operations of federal savings associations when deemed appropriate to facilitate the safe and sound operation of federal savings associations, to enable federal savings associations to conduct their operations in accordance with the best practices of thrift institutions in the United States, or to further other purposes of the HOLA. To enhance safety and soundness and to enable federal savings associations to conduct their operations in accordance with best practices (by efficiently delivering low-cost credit to the public free from undue regulatory duplication and burden), OTS hereby occupies the entire field of lending regulation for federal savings associations. OTS intends to give federal savings associations maximum flexibility to exercise their lending powers in accordance with a uniform federal scheme of regulation. Accordingly, federal savings associations may extend credit as authorized under federal law, including this part, without regard to state laws purporting to regulate or otherwise affect their credit activities, except to the extent provided in paragraph (c) of this section or § 560.110 of this part. For purposes of this section, "state law" includes any state statute, regulation, ruling, order or judicial decision.

(b) *Illustrative examples.* Except as provided in § 560.110 of this part, the types of state laws preempted by paragraph (a) of this section include, without limitation, state laws purporting to impose requirements regarding:

(1) Licensing, registration, filings, or reports by creditors;

(2) The ability of a creditor to require or obtain private mortgage insurance, insurance for other collateral, or other credit enhancements;

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- (3) Loan-to-value ratios;
- (4) The terms of credit, including amortization of loans and the deferral and capitalization of interest and adjustments to the interest rate, balance, payments due, or term to maturity of the loan, including the circumstances under which a loan may be called due and payable upon the passage of time or a specified event external to the loan;
- (5) Loan-related fees, including without limitation, initial charges, late charges, prepayment penalties, servicing fees, and overlimit fees;
- (6) Escrow accounts, impound accounts, and similar accounts;
- (7) Security property, including leaseholds;
- (8) Access to and use of credit reports;
- (9) Disclosure and advertising, including laws requiring specific statements, information, or other content to be included in credit application forms, credit solicitations, billing statements, credit contracts, or other credit-related documents and laws requiring creditors to supply copies of credit reports to borrowers or applicants;
- (10) Processing, origination, servicing, sale or purchase of, or investment or participation in, mortgages;
- (11) Disbursements and repayments;
- (12) Usury and interest rate ceilings to the extent provided in 12 U.S.C. 1735f-7a and part 590 of this chapter and 12 U.S.C. 1463(g) and § 560.110 of this part; and
- (13) Due-on-sale clauses to the extent provided in 12 U.S.C. 1701j-3 and part 591 of this chapter.

(c) *State laws that are not preempted.* State laws of the following types are not preempted to the extent that they only incidentally affect the lending operations of Federal savings associations or are otherwise consistent with the purposes of paragraph (a) of this section:

- (1) Contract and commercial law;
- (2) Real property law;
- (3) Homestead laws specified in 12 U.S.C. 1462a(f);
- (4) Tort law;
- (5) Criminal law; and
- (6) Any other law that OTS, upon review, finds:

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- (i) Furthers a vital state interest; and
- (ii) Either has only an incidental effect on lending operations or is not otherwise contrary to the purposes expressed in paragraph (a) of this section.

§ 560.3 Definitions.

For purposes of this part and any determination under 12 U.S.C. 1467a(m):

Consumer loans include loans for personal, family, or household purposes and loans reasonably incident thereto, and may be made as either open-end or closed-end consumer credit (as defined at 12 CFR 226.2(a) (10) and (20)). Consumer loans do not include credit extended in connection with credit card loans, bona fide overdraft loans, and other loans that the savings association has designated as made under investment or lending authority other than section 5(c)(2)(D) of the HOLA.

Credit card is any card, plate, coupon book, or other single credit device that may be used from time to time to obtain credit.

Credit card account is a credit account established in conjunction with the issuance of, or the extension of credit through, a credit card. This term includes loans made to consolidate credit card debt, including credit card debt held by other lenders, and participation certificates, securities and similar instruments secured by credit card receivables.

Home loans include any loans made on the security of a home (including a dwelling unit in a multi-family residential property such as a condominium or a cooperative), combinations of homes and business property (*i.e.*, a home used in part for business), farm residences, and combinations of farm residences and commercial farm real estate.

Loan commitment includes a loan in process, a letter of credit, or any other commitment to extend credit.

Real estate loan, for purposes of this part, is a loan for which the savings association substantially relies upon a security interest in real estate given by the borrower as a condition of making the loan. A loan is made on the security of real estate if: