



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Native CDFI Network Co-Chair Testifies on Community Reinvestment Act

Los Angeles, CA - Tanya Fiddler, Co-Chair of the Native CDFI Network (NCN) and Executive Director of Four Bands Community Fund, testified before an interagency hearing in Los Angeles, California, recommending that modernizations be made to the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA).

Held on August 17th, the hearing was one of four held throughout the country this summer. The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Office of Thrift Supervision held the hearings to solicit public comment regarding the governing procedures for assessing the performance of financial institutions under the CRA. The host agencies are working to ensure that the CRA remains effective for encouraging institutions to meet the credit needs of communities.

Fiddler, who testified on behalf of Four Bands Community Fund and NCN, spoke to regulators about developing strategies to ensure that the CRA effectively promotes financial services to serve Native communities. Her testimony included the following recommendations:

- * Enhancing small business data to include the race and gender of the borrower
- * Collecting census tract data on community development lending, investing, bank deposits and consumer lending
- * Gathering pricing information on lending products
- * Developing tools to make data accessible to the public
- * Utilizing data to ensure accountability by banks
- * Engaging community-based organizations
- * Recognizing innovative practices
- * Imposing consequences for non-compliance with CRA requirements
- * Adding a specific community development test for large banks and removing exemptions for small banks, including long-term unemployment as a criteria for assessing "distressed communities"

"I was honored to have the opportunity to share the needs of Native communities and voice my suggestions to improve the CRA to benefit both individuals on the Cheyenne River Reservation and in other Native communities across the nation," says Fiddler. "I am a passionate advocate for the effectiveness of Native CDFIs in connecting Native people to the financial services they so desperately need. Modernizing the CRA will improve the relationships between financial institutions and borrowers, particularly in Native communities."

The CRA was passed by Congress in 1977 to reduce discriminatory credit practices against low-income neighborhoods. The Act was originally designed to encourage commercial banks and savings associations to meet the needs of borrowers in all segments of their communities, including low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

To learn more about the CRA and the public hearings, visit <http://www.ffiec.gov/cra> or contact Tanya Fiddler at 605-964-3687 or via email at tfiddler@fourbands.org.

NCN was formed in 2009 to unify Native CDFIs serving Native trust land communities, American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. NCN seeks to create opportunities to share best practices among its members, identify collective priorities, and strengthen the CDFI industry and movement to ensure that Native peoples are represented both in the national dialogue and in the policy solutions created by CDFIs. For more information on the Native CDFI Network, email info@nativecdfi.org.

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