



Standard
Bank PaSB

June 7, 2018

Alfred M. Pollard, General Counsel
Attention: Comments/RIN 2590-AA83
Federal Housing Finance Agency
400 Seventh Street, SW, Eighth Floor
Washington, D.C. 20219

**Re: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Request for Comments –
RIN 2590-AA83 – Affordable Housing Program Amendments**

Mr. Pollard,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your recent release of proposed rulemaking regarding the Affordable Housing Program (“AHP”) of the Federal Home Loan Banks (FHLBanks). I am presently First Vice President of Standard Bank, PaSB. Standard Bank, PaSB is a state chartered bank headquartered in Monroeville, PA that is a member of FHLBank Pittsburgh.

The AHP program has enable Standard Bank to help a number of local group facilitate projects Those projects have helped create low and moderate income housing, transitional housing for the homeless and build a women’s shelter. Those projects were made possible in large part to the AHP funding that they received.

We are concerned with the outcomes framework as proposed in the AHP regulation amendments. The outcomes-based framework prioritizes the Federal Housing Finance Agency’s (FHFA’s) overall housing goals. The unintended consequence of this approach is that the proposed outcomes establish preferences for certain project types, lessen AHP’s connection to and support for community development, and make AHP less transparent.

As an FHLBank member, I have confidence in my FHLBank to direct AHP funds in a way that meets the needs of our local district using a scoring framework. Having required outcomes may also lessen the number of opportunities for my institution to successfully participate in AHP in the future, reducing the number of deep community relationships, Community Reinvestment Act credits, and additional lending and investing opportunities that often come with AHP involvement. A scoring-based system, which has worked well for 28 years, is strongly preferred over an outcomes-based framework and will allow FHLBanks to encourage all project types to apply, connect AHP to community development strategies and maintain program transparency.

We also have the following additional concerns about the proposed amendments:

- Under the proposed amendments, AHP project modifications may be delayed, and AHP sponsors unduly burdened, due to a new “cure-first” requirement. Delays could have negative consequences to our loans and investments in AHP projects. We recommend that the proposed cure-first requirement be eliminated and the FHLBanks retain their current practice of verifying that any modified project would still have scored high enough in the funding round to receive the AHP award had the sponsor applied for AHP funding with the modifications in place.

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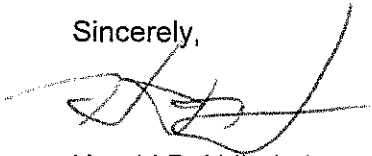


- The amendments add a new provision requiring members to amend current AHP agreements with LIHTC project sponsors, and include in future agreements, a provision that requires the sponsor to report to the FHLBank LIHTC projects that are noncompliant with income targeting or rent requirements during the 15-year retention period. This adds a new requirement and burden on members to amend agreements and on sponsors to actively monitor LIHTC projects for 15 years. We recommend eliminating this proposed new requirement.

The FHLB AHP program has been successful in large part due to the ease of use, transparency, and most importantly, the ability for groups to be able to access AHP funds based on projects they deem necessary in their communities. The changes proposed seem to add undue burden and red tape to a process that have served our local communities for many years. And creating an outcomes based environment where certain types of projects are given preferential treatment appears to remove the ability for local organizations to determine the type of projects most needed in their community.

We commend FHFA for working to update the AHP regulation. However, in light of the concerns above, we respectfully ask that you reconsider parts of the proposed amendments, especially the required outcomes framework. Thank you for hearing our ideas on this very important subject. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at hhribal@standardbankpa.com.

Sincerely,



Harold B. Hribal, Jr.
First Vice President
Standard Bank, PaSB