

lender in order to obtain the reverse mortgage;³⁵

➤ Adopt clear policies so that originators do not have an inappropriate incentive to sell other products that may appear to be linked to the granting of a mortgage. For example, the institution's policy could state that neither the lender nor any broker will offer to the borrower or refer the borrower to a provider of an annuity or other product or service prior to the closing of the reverse mortgage or, if applicable, the expiration of the borrower's right to rescind the loan; and

➤ Adopt clear compensation policies to guard against other inappropriate incentives for loan officers and third parties, such as mortgage brokers and correspondents, to make a loan.

In addition, conflicts are less likely to be a concern if the borrower has received information and access to independent counseling as described above.

Policies, Procedures, and Internal Controls—Institutions should have policies and procedures to address the concerns expressed in this guidance, including those involving conflicts of interest and the provision of consumer information. In addition, institutions should have effective internal controls to monitor whether actual practices are consistent with their policies and operating procedures relating to reverse mortgages. To achieve these objectives, training should be designed so that relevant lending personnel are able to convey information to consumers about product terms and risks in a timely, accurate, and balanced manner. Furthermore, institutions' independent monitoring should assess how well lending personnel are following internal policies and procedures and evaluate the nature and extent of policy exceptions. Findings should be reported to relevant management. In addition, institutions' legal and compliance

reviews should include oversight of compensation programs to ensure that lending personnel are not improperly encouraged to direct consumers to particular products. Finally, institutions should also review consumer complaints to identify potential compliance and reputation risks.

Third Party Risk Management—When making, purchasing, or servicing reverse mortgages through a third party, such as a mortgage broker or correspondent, institutions should take steps to manage the compliance and reputation risks presented by such relationships. These steps would include: (1) Conducting due diligence and establishing criteria for entering into and maintaining relationships with such third parties; (2) establishing criteria for third-party compensation that are designed to avoid providing incentives for originations inconsistent with the institution's policies and procedures; (3) setting requirements for agreements with such third parties; (4) establishing internal procedures and systems to monitor ongoing compliance with applicable agreements, institution policies, and laws and regulations; and (5) implementing appropriate corrective actions in the event that the third party fails to comply with such agreements, policies, or laws and regulations. In addition, institutions should structure third party relationships so as not to contravene RESPA's general prohibition against paying or receiving any fee or other thing of value in exchange for the referral of business related to a reverse mortgage transaction. Fees must be paid only for the permissible services provided by the third party, consistent with the provisions of Section 8 of RESPA.

Moreover, institutions should not accept fees from any third party without providing appropriate services to warrant any such fee.

Dated: December 11, 2009.

Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council.

Paul Sanford,

Executive Secretary.

[FR Doc. E9-29882 Filed 12-15-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6210-01-P

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Formations of, Acquisitions by, and Mergers of Bank Holding Companies

The companies listed in this notice have applied to the Board for approval, pursuant to the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 (12 U.S.C. 1841 *et seq.*) (BHC Act), Regulation Y (12 CFR Part

225), and all other applicable statutes and regulations to become a bank holding company and/or to acquire the assets or the ownership of, control of, or the power to vote shares of a bank or bank holding company and all of the banks and nonbanking companies owned by the bank holding company, including the companies listed below.

The applications listed below, as well as other related filings required by the Board, are available for immediate inspection at the Federal Reserve Bank indicated. The application also will be available for inspection at the offices of the Board of Governors. Interested persons may express their views in writing on the standards enumerated in the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1842(c)). If the proposal also involves the acquisition of a nonbanking company, the review also includes whether the acquisition of the nonbanking company complies with the standards in section 4 of the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1843). Unless otherwise noted, nonbanking activities will be conducted throughout the United States. Additional information on all bank holding companies may be obtained from the National Information Center website at www.ffiec.gov/nic/.

Unless otherwise noted, comments regarding each of these applications must be received at the Reserve Bank indicated or the offices of the Board of Governors not later than January 11, 2010.

A. Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
(W. Arthur Tribble, Vice President) 2200 North Pearl Street, Dallas, Texas 75201-2272:

1. *Bank4Texas Holdings Inc., Tomball Texas, to become a bank holding company by, acquiring 100 percent of Northern Bancshares, Inc., Chillicothe, Texas, and indirectly acquire The First National Bank of Chillicothe, Chillicothe, Texas.*

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, December 11, 2009.

Robert deV. Frierson,

Deputy Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. E9-29873 Filed 12-15-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6210-01-S

FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

Notice of Agreements Filed

The Commission hereby gives notice of the filing of the following agreements under the Shipping Act of 1984. Interested parties may submit comments on the agreements to the Secretary, Federal Maritime Commission, Washington, DC 20573, within ten days of the date this notice appears in the

³⁵ The anti-tying provisions of Section 106(b) of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1970 applicable to banks, and comparable anti-tying provisions for savings associations, savings and loan holding companies, and their affiliates, prohibit these institutions from, among other things, requiring a customer to purchase certain nonbanking products or services, including insurance and annuity products, as a condition to obtaining or varying the price of credit. See 12 U.S.C. 1972, 1464(q), and 1467a(n), respectively. In addition, banks and savings associations that offer insurance and annuities are specifically prohibited from engaging in practices that would cause a consumer to believe that an extension of credit is conditioned on the purchase of insurance or an annuity from the creditor. See 12 U.S.C. 1831x and Consumer Protection in Sales of Insurance Rules, 12 CFR 14.30, 208.83, 343.30, and 536.30. The Agencies examine institutions for compliance with these legal requirements and will take appropriate action to address any violations.