



March 31, 2009



LETTER OF COMMENT NO. 209

Mr. Russell Golden
Technical Director
Financial Accounting Standards Board
301 Merritt 7
P.O. Box 5116
Norwalk, CT 06856-5116

Via email: director@fasb.org

RE: Comments on Proposed FSP FAS 115-a, FAS 124-a and EITF 99-20b: *Recognition and Presentation of Other-Than-Temporary Impairments*

Dear Mr. Golden:

BankWest, Inc. (BankWest) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed FSP FAS 115-a, FAS 124-a and EITF 99-20b: *Recognition and Presentation of Other-Than-Temporary Impairments* (proposed FSP).

BankWest is a community bank (assets \$720 million) actively providing loans to the communities that we serve in South Dakota. BankWest is both a preparer of financial data and a consumer of financial data.

We believe that the standards currently in effect have diminished and will continue to diminish our ability to provide lending by reducing our capital unnecessarily. We are supportive of the provisions contained in the proposed FSP and would like to see the FSP proposal adjusted to include a retrospective application of OTTI adjustments to December 2008.

As a preparer of financial reports, we were affected under the current standards due to recognition of a charge for OTTI to private label mortgage backed securities we own. If the proposed FSP would have been in effect last quarter, the OTTI adjustment we recognized as a charge to income would have been 90% less and would have been mostly recognized as an adjustment to other comprehensive income, thus not affecting our regulatory capital.

As a consumer of financial reports, we could see a loss of capital if our investment in Federal Home Loan Bank Stock becomes downgraded due to the Federal Home Loan Bank taking OTTI write-offs. We have seen massive adjustments by other Federal Home Loan Banks resulting from very small projected losses. It appears that accountants, both as preparers and auditors tend to take the most conservative interpretation of the current standards, resulting in destruction of capital when the economic performance of the assets receiving write offs would not indicate the need to record losses of the magnitude reported. We would encourage that the guidance be specific enough to reduce the subjectivity in the application of the proposed FSB.



We are providing this information of the impact of the current standards on BankWest to demonstrate the fact that just at the time that our communities need more lending support, our capital is being eroded unnecessarily. If it is the goal of the Administration of the United States to encourage the Nation's financial institutions to lend, the adoption of the proposed FSB and our recommendations will go a long ways towards improving our economy.

BankWest supports the proposed FSP, and we encourage consideration that OTTI be based on credit losses rather than market losses and furthermore we urge that consideration be given to apply the proposed FSP retrospectively to allow all market based OTTI to be trued up to treat reporting companies consistently.

We thank you for consideration of our thoughts on this proposed FSP.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Charles H. Burke III'.

Charles H. Burke III
President and CEO