



**National Association
of Federal Credit Unions**

3138 10th Street North
Arlington, VA 22201-2149

NAFCU | Your Direct Connection to Education, Advocacy & Advancement

August 10, 2015

Jessica Khouri
National Credit Union Administration
1775 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3428

RE: Comments on Notice of Final Interagency Policy Statement; Request for Comments on the Proposed Collection of Information.

Dear Ms. Khouri:

On behalf of the National Association of Federal Credit Unions (NAFCU), the only national trade association focusing exclusively on federal issues affecting the nation's federally insured credit unions, I am writing to you regarding the National Credit Union Administration's (NCUA) request for comment on the collection of information related to the final interagency policy statement on diversity policies and practices. See 80 FR 33016 (June 10, 2015). NAFCU and its member credit unions support diversity as the industry has long been, and will continue to be, at the forefront of community involvement and improvement. However, NAFCU recommends the agency provide credit unions with the option to submit anonymous self-assessments, which would encourage increased participation and candor.

Section 342 of the *Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010* (Dodd-Frank Act) requires the directors of the Offices of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI) at NCUA and five other federal financial regulators to develop joint standards for assessing their regulated entities' diversity policies and practices. As a result, on June 10, 2015, the agencies published a final policy statement establishing those standards. At the same time, NCUA released a Letter to Credit Unions (15-CU-05) which detailed the finalized standards and provided a sample voluntary self-assessment checklist. It is important to emphasize that use of the standards and any subsequent submission of a self-assessment is entirely voluntary. See 80 FR 33016, 33022.

While NAFCU and its member credit unions acknowledge the joint agency's efforts to develop straight forward and relatively concise forms, NAFCU has concerns over the additional burden that may result after a credit union chooses to voluntarily submit a self-assessment to NCUA. As stated in the Letter to Credit Unions, each year NCUA will request that credit unions voluntarily submit self-assessments so that the agency may aggregate the data to be used in its annual OMWI report to Congress. NCUA notes that any credit union electing to submit diversity

information is permitted to designate such information as confidential. However, if a member of the public requests the information from NCUA under the *Freedom of Information Act* (FOIA), then the agency will be required to notify the credit union of the request and provide an opportunity for the credit union to substantiate its position that the material should be withheld. This process creates a situation where a credit union could potentially have its volunteered information released to the public.

NAFCU believes that in order to “enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collection” and “minimize the ... burden on respondents” credit unions should be given the option to submit information anonymously, not just confidentially. For example, a credit union could instead be allowed to classify itself through generalized categories such as approximated asset size, number of employees, and geographic location. Such a policy would permit credit unions to freely submit information to NCUA while completely avoiding any negative consequences in the examination process or public exposure of sensitive information. In fact, if an option to provide anonymous information is provided, then the minimized risk is likely to encourage more credit unions to voluntarily submit self-assessments and create a more accurate picture of the industry.

NAFCU believes NCUA should consider allowing credit unions to submit anonymous self-assessments in order to minimize any possibility of additional burden while encouraging increased participation and candor. NAFCU appreciates the opportunity to share its thoughts on the joint diversity standards information collection. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at amonterrubio@nafcu.org or (703) 842- 2244.

Sincerely,



Alexander Monterrubio
Regulatory Affairs Counsel