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## Topic A: Listening & Learning

By Frank Keating, ABA President and CEO

When I was first running for governor of Oklahoma, I logged a lot of miles visiting voters in some pretty small towns. Some were prosperous, others less so. But regardless of the town's economic health, its local bank seemed always to be the best facility in town. It's not that the buildings and the surrounding property were glitzy -- just attractive, well-manicured, respectable.

To me, that is a perfect metaphor for the role banks play in their communities. A bank's presence is a symbol of hope, a vote of confidence in a town's future. When a bank sets down roots, communities thrive.

I heard a story the other day about a bank in a rural part of Iowa that teamed up with a local community group to bring a grocery store back to town. ABA has collected story after story of [similar efforts](#) by banks across the country. Like the Bank of the Rockies, in White Sulphur Springs, Mont., which developed a financing program to help people with disabilities to buy their own homes. Or Western Bank of Big Springs, Texas, which provided and coordinated the placement of 1,100 large blue pavement reflectors to mark the locations of fire hydrants throughout the county to help speed firefighters' response time. And the Bank of Advance, in Advance, Mo., which donated land and cash to a local non-profit medical center to help it expand and enhance the quality of life in the bank's community.

These are great examples that can help remind people, particularly those in positions of power, what America's banks are really all about. I'll be carrying that message with me everywhere I go as your new president and CEO. I'll also be asking for the support of every bank as ABA advocates on behalf of the industry.

Because just as your success depends on that of your customers, our success depends on you.

You know that what you say carries more weight with policymakers when you speak on behalf of your bank's employees, directors, customers and borrowers -- otherwise known as Main Street. Similarly, ABA's voice carries farther when we speak for all of America's banks.

As someone who has been a state legislator, governor and federal government official, I can vouch for the fact that a united industry is quite a powerful force. And the more effective we are as an industry in Washington, the better off your individual bank, and its stakeholders, will be.

I am looking forward to meeting more of the extraordinary men and women who make up the banking industry. Listening and learning is my top priority. And since I -- and the rest of ABA's staff -- work for you, I hope you will [contact me](#) with any thoughts, concerns or ideas you have for building success, together, in 2011.

## News Highlights

The following highlights are brought to you by ABA Daily Newsbytes. [Click the headline to read more.](#)

**IOLTA Coverage Bill Enacted.** President Obama last week signed into law an ABA-backed bill (H.R. 6398) that continues for two years “full” FDIC protection for Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts -- or IOLTAs. The ABA staff has updated its [frequently asked questions](#) on related disclosure-requirement changes.

**Free ABA Telephone Briefing on Small-Biz Lending Fund.** ABA will host a free, 45-minute telephone briefing -- for ABA banks and service members only -- at 2 p.m. EST on Tuesday, Jan. 11, on the Treasury Department’s Small Business Lending Fund. Two Treasury officials will summarize the SBLF program and answer questions submitted via e-mail before and during the briefing.

**ABA’s Casey-Landry Announces Departure.** ABA Senior EVP and COO Diane Casey-Landry announced this week that she will be leaving ABA, effective March 31, 2011. “It’s been an honor to serve the industry through two wonderful associations,” said Casey-Landry, who was instrumental in the 2007 merger of ABA and America’s Community Bankers. “With the transition from Ed Yingling to Frank Keating, it’s time for me to move on and allow Frank to bring in his own management team, and for me to take on new challenges.”

**CFPB Updates.** The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Conference of State Bank Supervisors signed a memorandum of understanding to coordinate the supervision and implementation of consumer protection rules. Elizabeth Warren also announced this week that Holly Petraeus -- wife of Gen. David Petraeus, top U.S. commander in Afghanistan -- will help establish an Office of Servicemember Affairs at the CFPB to help ensure that military families receive needed financial education and consumer protections.

**Obama Taps JPMorgan Chase’s Daley.** President Obama yesterday named William Daley, JP Morgan Chase executive and former Commerce Department secretary, as his new chief of staff. Daley joined JPMorgan in 2004 and served as Midwest chairman and the bank’s head of corporate responsibility.

**DFA Repeal Introduced.** Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.) yesterday introduced legislation (H.R. 87) to repeal the Dodd-Frank Act. While the bill’s chances of enactment are slim, ABA does expect -- and welcome -- increased congressional scrutiny of the regulatory process is expected.

**ABA: Synchronize Mortgage Rulemakings.** ABA asked the Federal Reserve to postpone finalizing its proposed rule reviewing Truth in Lending Act regulations for mortgage loans under Reg Z until the proposal can be incorporated into the broader Dodd-Frank Act-mandated mortgage-reform initiatives.

“The mortgage sector has experienced unprecedented regulatory scrutiny in the past 24 months, resulting in expensive, disparate and piecemeal regulatory changes that yield complex and even conflicting requirements,” ABA said, urging the Fed to synchronize its mortgage rulemaking with the CFPB.

**Mortgage Originators Registry Almost Live.** The federal banking agencies expect the system for federal registration of residential mortgage loan originators to begin operation on or around Jan. 31.

**ABA Comment Letter Round-Up.** ABA staff experts continue to gather banker input on proposals -- both general and technical -- affecting the banking industry and provide consensus views on those proposals to the regulatory agencies. Recent comment letters filed cover the FDIC’s proposed new assessment base; FDIC’s planned large-bank assessment system; proposed CARD Act clarifications; the Federal Reserve’s appraisal independence rule; and HUD’s warehouse lending disclosure project.

**‘Lights, Camera, Save!’** The ABA Education Foundation yesterday released on YouTube the [eight](#)

[videos](#) selected as finalists in its “Lights, Camera, Save!” video contest that is designed to get teenagers interested in saving. The eight final videos will compete for four grand prizes -- \$3,000, \$1,500 or \$500 U.S. Savings Bonds, and an iPod Touch -- and the winners will be announced March 1.

**[Bank of the Week.](#)** First National Bank in Wewoka, Okla., continuing a three-year tradition, invited its entire community to Christmas Eve dinner, and 1,100 residents showed up. The event, which also included 300 meals-to-go, a food drive and Santa distributing gift bags, was open to anyone looking for food or fellowship during the holiday season. The bank closed at noon on Dec. 24 to enable its employees -- who along with other volunteers cooked, cleaned and contributed food -- to work the event. [Read more about the dinner.](#)

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1120 Connecticut Ave, N.W., Washington D.C. 20036