Public Law 93-224

93rd Congress, H. R. 5874

December 29, 1973

An Act

87 STAT. 937

To establish a Federal Financing Bank, to provide for coordinated and more efficient financing of Federal and federally assisted borrowings from the public, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled. That this Act may be cited as the "Federal Financing Bank Act of 1973".

FINDINGS AND DECLARATION OF PURPOSE

SEC. 2. The Congress finds that demands for funds through Federal and federally assisted borrowing programs are increasing faster than the total supply of credit and that such borrowings are not adequately coordinated with overall Federal fiscal and debt management policies. The purpose of this Act is to assure coordination of these programs with the overall economic and fiscal policies of the Government, to reduce the costs of Federal and federally assisted borrowings from the public, and to assure that such borrowings are financed in a manner least disruptive of private financial markets and institutions.

DEFINITIONS

SEC. 3. For the purposes of this Act–

(1) The term "Federal agency" means an executive department, an independent Federal establishment, or a corporation or other entity established by the Congress which is owned in whole or in part by the United States.

(2) The term "obligation" means any note, bond, debenture, or other evidence of indebtedness, but does not include Federal Reserve notes or stock evidencing an ownership interest in the issuing Federal agency.

(3) The term "guarantee" means any guarantee, insurance, or other pledge with respect to the payment of all or part of the principal or interest on any obligation, but does not include the insurance of deposits, shares, or other withdrawable accounts in financial institutions, or any guarantee or pledge arising out of a statutory obligation to insure deposits, shares, or other withdrawable accounts.

(4) The term "Bank" means the Federal Financing Bank established by section 4 of this Act.

CREATION OF BANK

SEC. 4. There is hereby created a body corporate to be known as the Federal Financing Bank, which shall have succession until dissolved by an Act of Congress. The Bank shall be subject to the general supervision and direction of the Secretary of the Treasury. The Bank shall be an instrumentality of the United States Government and shall maintain such offices as may be necessary or appropriate in the conduct of its business.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SEC. 5. (a) The Bank shall have a Board of Directors consisting of five persons, one of whom shall be the Secretary of the Treasury as Chairman of the Board, and four of whom shall be appointed by the President from among the officers or employees of the Bank or of any Federal agency. The Chairman and each other member of the Board may designate some other officer or employee of the Government to serve in his place.

(b) The Board of Directors shall meet at the call of its Chairman. The Board shall determine the general policies which shall govern the operations of the Bank. The Chairman of the Board shall select and effect the appointment of qualified persons to fill such offices as may be provided for in the bylaws, and such persons shall be the executive officers of the Bank and shall discharge such executive functions, powers, and duties as may be provided for in the bylaws or by the Board of Directors. The members of the Board and their designees shall not receive compensation for their services on the Board.

FUNCTIONS

SEC. 6. (a) The Bank is authorized to make commitments to purchase and sell, and to purchase and sell on terms and conditions determined by the Bank, any obligation which is issued, sold, or guaranteed by a Federal agency. Any Federal agency which is authorized to issue, sell, or guarantee any obligation is authorized to issue or sell such obligations directly to the Bank.

(b) Any purchase by the Bank shall be upon such terms and conditions as to yield a return at a rate not less than a rate determined by the Secretary of the Treasury taking into consideration (1) the current average yield on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States of comparable maturity, or (2) whenever the Bank's own obligations outstanding are sufficient, the current average yield on outstanding obligations of the Bank of comparable maturity.

(c) The Bank is authorized to charge fees for its commitments and other services adequate to cover all expenses and to provide for the accumulation of reasonable contingency reserves.

TREASURY APPROVAL

SEC. 7. (a) To insure the orderly and coordinated marketing of Treasury and Federal agency obligations and appropriate financing planning with respect thereto, and to facilitate the effective financing of programs authorized by law subject to the applicable provisions of such law, the prior approval of the Secretary of the Treasury shall be required with respect to—

(1) the method of financing,

(2) the source of financing,

(3) the timing of financing in relation to market conditions and financing by other Federal agencies, and

(4) the financing terms and conditions, including rates of interest and maturities,

of obligations issued or sold by any Federal agency; except that the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury shall not be required with respect to (A) obligations issued or sold pursuant to an Act of Congress which expressly prohibits any guarantee of such obligations by the United States, and (B) obligations issued or sold by the Farmers Home Administration.

(b) Upon receipt of a request from a Federal agency for his approval under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary of the Treasury shall act promptly

either to grant his approval or to advise the agency of the reasons for withholding his approval. In no case shall the Secretary of the Treasury withhold such approval for a period longer than sixty days unless, prior to the end of such period, he submits to the Congress a detailed explanation of his reasons for so doing. In no case shall the Secretary withhold such approval for a period longer than one hundred and twenty days. To the maximum extent practicable, withholdings of approval shall be made in a manner which is not disproportionately detrimental to the functioning of any particular type of Federal program. Expedited treatment shall be accorded in any case in which the Federal agency advises the Secretary of the Treasury that unusual circumstances require such treatment.

(c) Federal agencies subject to this section shall submit financing plans to the Secretary of the Treasury at such times and in such forms as he shall prescribe.

INITIAL CAPITAL

SEC. 8. The Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to advance the funds necessary to provide initial capital to the Bank. Each such advance shall be upon such terms and conditions as to yield a return at a rate not less than a rate determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, taking into consideration the current average yield on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States of comparable maturity. Interest payments on such advances may be deferred, at the discretion of the Secretary, but any such deferred payments shall themselves bear interest at the rate specified in this section. There is authorized to be appropriated not to exceed $100,000,000, which shall be available for the purposes of this section without fiscal year limitation.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE BANK

SEC. 9. (a) The Bank is authorized, with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, to issue publicly and have outstanding at any one time not in excess of $15,000,000,000, or such additional amounts as may be authorized in appropriations Acts, of obligations having such maturities and bearing such rate or rates of interest as may be determined by the Bank. Such obligations may be redeemable at the option of the Bank before maturity in such manner as may be stipulated therein. So far as is feasible, the debt structure of the Bank shall be commensurate with its asset structure.

(b) The Bank is also authorized to issue its obligations to the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Treasury may in his discretion purchase or agree to purchase any such obligations, and for such purpose the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to use as a public debt transaction the proceeds of the sale of any securities hereafter issued under the Second Liberty Bond Act, and the purposes for which securities may be issued under the Second Liberty Bond Act are extended to include such purchases. Each purchase of obligations by the Secretary of the Treasury under this subsection shall be upon such terms and conditions as to yield a return at a rate not less than a rate determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, taking into consideration the current average yield on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States of comparable maturity. The Secretary of the Treasury may sell, upon such terms and conditions and at such price or prices as he shall determine, any of the obligations acquired by him under this subsection. All purchases and sales by the Secretary of the Treasury of such obligations under this subsection shall be treated as public debt transactions of the United States.

(c) The Bank may require the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase obligations of the Bank issued pursuant to subsection (b) in such amounts as will not cause the holding by the Secretary of the Treasury resulting from such required purchases to exceed $5,000,000,000 at any one time. This

subsection shall not be construed as limiting the authority of the Secretary to purchase obligations of the Bank in excess of such amount.

(d) Obligations of the Bank issued pursuant to this section shall be lawful investments, and may be accepted as security for all fiduciary, trust, and public funds, the investment or deposit of which shall be under the authority or control of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any territory or possession of the United States, or any agency or instrumentality of any of the foregoing, or any officer or officers thereof.

GENERAL POWERS

SEC. 10. The Bank shall have power—

(1) to sue and be sued, complain, and defend, in its corporate name;

(2) to adopt, alter, and use a corporate seal, which shall be judicially noticed;

(3) to adopt, amend, and repeal bylaws, rules, and regulations as may be necessary for the conduct of its business;

(4) to conduct its business, carry on its operations, and have offices and exercise the powers granted by this Act in any State without regard to any qualification or similar statute in any State;

(5) to lease, purchase, or otherwise acquire, own, hold, improve, use, or otherwise deal in and with any property, real, personal, or mixed, or any interest therein, wherever situated;

(6) to accept gifts or donations of services, or of property, real, personal, or mixed, tangible or intangible, in aid of any of the purposes of the Bank;

(7) to sell, convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange, and otherwise dispose of its property and assets;

(8) to appoint such officers, attorneys, employees, and agents as may be required, to define their duties, to fix and to pay such compensation for their services as may be determined, subject to the civil service and classification laws, to require bonds for them and pay the premium thereof;

(9) to enter into contracts, to execute instruments to incur liabilities, and to do all things as are necessary or incidental to the proper management of its affairs and the proper conduct of its business;

(10) to act through any corporate or other agency or instrumentality of the United States, and to utilize the services thereof on a reimbursable basis, and any such agency or instrumentality is authorized to provide services as requested by the Bank; and

(11) to determine the character of and the necessity for its obligations and expenditures, and the manner in which they shall be incurred, allowed, and paid, subject to provisions of law specifically applicable to Government corporations.

EXEMPTIONS

SEC. 11. (a) The Bank, its property, its franchise, capital, reserves, surplus, security holdings, and other funds, and its income shall be exempt from all taxation now or hereafter imposed by the United States or by any State or local taxing authority; except that (1) any real property and any tangible personal property of the Bank shall be subject to Federal, State, and local taxation to the same extent according to its value as other such property is taxed, and (2) any obligations issued by the Bank shall be subject to Federal taxation to the same extent as the obligations of private corporations are taxed.

(b) All obligations issued by the Bank pursuant to this Act shall be deemed to be exempted securities within the meaning of section 3(a)(2) of the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77c(a)(2)), of section 3(a)(12) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(12)), and of section 304(a)(4) of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 (15 U.S.C. 77ddd(a)(4)).

(c) Nothing herein shall affect the budget status of the Federal agencies selling obligations to the Bank under section 6(a) of this Act, or the method of budget accounting for their transactions. The receipts and disbursements of the Bank in the discharge of its functions shall not be included in the totals of the budget of the United States Government and shall be exempt from any general limitation imposed by statute on expenditures and net lending (budget outlays) of the United States.[1]

PREPARATION OF OBLIGATIONS

SEC. 12. In order to furnish obligations for delivery by the Bank, the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to prepare such obligations in such form as the Bank may approve, such obligations when prepared to be held in the Treasury subject to delivery upon order by the Bank. The engraved plates, dies, bed pieces, and other material executed in connection therewith, shall remain in the custody of the Secretary of the Treasury. The Bank shall reimburse the Secretary of the Treasury for any expenditures made in preparation, custody, and delivery of such obligations.

ANNUAL REPORT

SEC. 13. The Bank shall, as soon as practicable after the end of each fiscal year, transmit to the President and the Congress an annual report of its operations and activities.

OBLIGATIONS ELIGIBLE FOR PURCHASE BY NATIONAL BANKS

SEC. 14. The sixth sentence of the seventh paragraph of section 5136 of the Revised Statutes, as amended (12 U.S.C. 24), is amended by inserting "or obligations of the Federal Financing Bank" immediately after "or obligations, participations, or other instruments of or issued by the Federal National Mortgage Association or the Government National Mortgage Association,".

GOVERNMENT CORPORATION CONTROL ACT

SEC. 15. The budget and audit provisions of the Government Corporation Control Act (31 U.S.C. 841 et seq.) shall be applicable to the Federal Financing Bank in the same manner as they are applied to the wholly owned Government corporations named in section 101 of such Act (31 U.S.C. 846).

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[1] The second sentence of section 11(c) was effectively superseded by section 214 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (Pub. L. No. 99-177), which amended the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 by adding a new section 406(b), which reads as follows:

> "All receipts and disbursements of the Federal Financing Bank with respect to any obligations which are issued, sold, or guaranteed by a Federal agency shall be treated as a means of financing such agency for purposes of section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, and for purposes of this Act."

PAYMENTS ON BEHALF OF PUBLIC BODIES

SEC. 16. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the purchase by the Bank of the obligations of any local public body or agency within the United States shall be made upon such terms and conditions as may be necessary to avoid an increase in borrowing costs to such local public body or agency as a result of the purchase by the Bank of its obligations. The head of the Federal agency guaranteeing such obligations, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, shall estimate the borrowing costs that would be incurred by the local public body or agency if its obligations were not sold to the Bank.

(b) The Federal agency guaranteeing obligations purchased by the Bank may contract to make periodic payments to the Bank which shall be sufficient to offset the costs to the Bank of purchasing obligations of local public bodies or agencies upon terms and conditions as prescribed in this section rather than as prescribed by section 6. Such contracts may be made in advance of appropriations therefor, and appropriations for making payments under such contracts are hereby authorized.

NO IMPAIRMENT

SEC. 17. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as impairing any authority or responsibility of the President or the Secretary of the Treasury under any other provision of law, nor shall anything in this Act affect in any manner any provision of law concerning the right of any Federal agency to sell obligations to the Secretary of the Treasury or the authority or responsibility of the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase such obligations.

PROGRAM LIMITATION

SEC. 18. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as authorizing an increase in the amounts of obligations issued, sold, or guaranteed by any Federal agency which issues, sells, or guarantees obligations purchased by the Bank.

SEPARABILITY

SEC. 19. If any provision of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the validity of the remainder of the Act, and the application of such provisions to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected.

EFFECTIVE DATE

SEC. 20. This Act becomes effective upon the date of its enactment, except that section 7 becomes effective upon the expiration of thirty days after such date.

Approved December 29, 1973.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 93-299 (Comm. on Ways and Means) and No. 93-700 (Comm. of Conference).
SENATE REPORT No. 93-166 accompanying S. 925 (Comm. on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 119 (1973):
June 22, S. 925 considered and passed Senate.
Nov. 6, considered and passed House.
Nov. 7, considered and passed Senate, amended, in lieu of S. 295.
Dec. 19, House and Senate agreed to Conference report.