



FedFin Daily Briefing

Monday, April 26, 2021

HFSC Democrats Press for Muni-Bond Market Equity

Ahead of its hearing on Wednesday examining municipal bond markets, HFSC's [hearing memorandum](#) indicates Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Democrats will examine ways in which muni-bond issuers and investors could promote economic, racial, and social justice. The memorandum includes no draft or actual legislation under consideration, suggesting that committee efforts are intended to encourage markets, rather than mandate action. Options include social bonds meeting principles established by the International Capital Market Association issued as "use of proceed" bonds and raising funds earmarked for projects with positive social outcomes. The advocacy organization Activist has also proposed "Social Justice Bonds" that would disclose information said to be needed to prioritize socially-just investments. Wednesday's hearing also will explore cost disparities in bond market access between HBCUs and similarly-situated non-HBCUs. Data presented in the hearing may suggest disparate impact or other discriminatory action.

Yellen Reiterates Need for Sanction Alternatives

Treasury Secretary Yellen [today](#) praised the U.K.'s new Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regime in part because it provides opportunities for the U.S. and U.K. to issue complementary sanctions actions to defend human rights, support good governance, and impose costs on those who engage in corruption. However, Ms. Yellen also reinforced Deputy Secretary [Adeyemo's comments](#) last week that additional tools beyond sanctions must also be used to fight corruption, citing guidance to financial institutions, technical assistance, and engagement with both foreign and private sector partners. The Secretary did not, however, provide any more information than Mr. Adeyemo about what the U.S. plans to do to enhance sanction effectiveness.

Recent Files Available for Downloading

The following reports and analyses have been sent to retainer clients recently. Copies are also available to retainer clients on the Archives section of Federal Financial Analytics' website: www.fedfin.com or clients may obtain the reports/analyses by e-mailing info@fedfin.com giving the requested item name, firm, and e-mail address. To learn more about *GSE Activity Reports*, click [here](#).

- [DIVERSITY2](#): The House Financial Services Committee has approved legislation intended to force federal examiners to hold banks accountable for their diversity and inclusion efforts.
- [LIBOR5](#): Following Fed agreement earlier this year that federal legislation is needed (see Client Report [FEDERALRESERVE61](#)), the HFSC Capital Markets Subcommittee today laid the groundwork for rapid introduction and action on Chairman Sherman's draft bill.
- [ILC16](#): As anticipated, HFSC Democrats today continued their attack on non-traditional bank charters, with Chairwoman Waters (D-CA) pushing for no new ILC approvals and revoking the OCC's special-purpose charters.
- [GSE-041421](#): A new study from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York contradicts many assertions that COVID's mortgage-market mania disadvantages first-time homeowners.

- **INFRASTRUCTURE7**: Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) recently reiterated that he believes an “infrastructure bank” would be an appealing way to fund significant U.S. investment without the direct cost associated with President Biden’s plan.
- **GSE-040621**: Just to be sure servicers got the message sent last week that the CFPB has them in its [crosshairs](#), the agency yesterday [proposed](#) sweeping changes to provide far-reaching foreclosure protections on all forbore or delinquent mortgages, not just those subject to the statutory protection afforded federal loans.
- **AI**: Advancing their efforts to ensure “responsible innovation,” federal agencies have taken an initial, cautious step into assessing the prudential, compliance, risk-management, and fairness implications of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML).
- **HEDGE59**: The stunning collapse of the leveraged family office, Archegos, and its impact on the financial system has renewed calls for an array of regulatory initiatives.
- **REFORM204**: Following yesterday’s HFSC session ([see Client Report REFORM203](#)), Secretary Yellen and Chairman Powell today faced Senate Banking and, as before, a raft of questions with little to do with the hearing’s ostensible focus on CARES Act programs.
- **REFORM203**: At today’s HFSC hearing on pandemic-relief programs, Members asked also about key financial-policy questions.
- **GSE-032321**: Last week, [we analyzed](#) a Federal Reserve study showing that unemployment is still inexorably linked to mortgage-default risk.
- **GSE-032221**: As [we predicted](#), federal banking agencies didn’t back down: the [SLR exemption](#) for central-bank reserves and Treasuries is no more as of April 1.
- **GREEN7**: Today’s Senate Banking Committee hearing on climate risk made it clear that the partisan divide evident earlier this week on housing ([see Client Report MORTGAGE119](#)) and much else extends to what financial regulators should do about climate risk.
- **GREEN6**: Reflecting views of the Biden Administration and those of its nominee to chair the SEC, Acting Chair Allison Herren Lee is requesting public views ahead of more formal proposals revising the climate-risk disclosures to be required of publicly registered companies.
- **GSE-031721**: As our in-depth report makes clear, the Senate Banking (and Housing!) Committee’s hearing yesterday showed the wide partisan chasm between what Democrats and Republicans want of the GSEs.
- **MORTGAGE119**: Reflecting Chairman Brown’s (D-OH) prioritization of the “housing” jurisdiction under Senate Banking, the panel’s hearing today addressed not only GSE reform, but a sweeping range of rental and affordable-housing considerations in concert with lending discrimination and housing finance.
- **UDAP7**: Continuing the quick reversal of numerous Trump-era policies, the CFPB has ended a controversial policy statement providing consumer-finance companies with considerable protection from assertions of abusive acts or practices.