

Public Law 96-104  
96th Congress

An Act

To authorize on a temporary basis certain business and agricultural loans, notwithstanding interest limitations in State constitutions or statutes, and for other purposes.

Nov. 5, 1979

[H.R. 2515]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That titles II and III of the Act entitled "An Act to authorize the regulation of interest rates payable on obligations issued by affiliates of certain depository institutions, and for other purposes", approved October 29, 1974 (Public Law 93-501; 88 Stat. 1557), are hereby repealed, except that—

(1) the amendments made by title II of such Act and the provisions of such title shall apply to any loan made in any State during the period specified in section 206 of such Act; and

(2) the amendments made by title III of such Act shall apply to any deposit made or obligation issued in any State during the period specified in section 304 of such Act.

Business and agricultural loans, temporary exemption from State usury ceilings.

Repeal.

12 USC 85, 371b-1, 371b-1 note, 1425b, 1730e, 1828, 1831a, 1831a notes; 15 USC 687.

12 USC 85 note.  
12 USC 85 note.

TITLE I—INTEREST RATE AMENDMENTS REGARDING  
STATE USURY CEILINGS ON CERTAIN LOANS

SEC. 101. Section 5197 of the Revised Statutes, as amended (12 U.S.C. 85), is amended by inserting in the first and second sentences before the phrase "whichever may be the greater", the following: "or in the case of business or agricultural loans in the amount of \$25,000 or more, at a rate of 5 per centum in excess of the discount rate on ninety-day commercial paper in effect at the Federal Reserve bank in the Federal Reserve district where the bank is located,".

SEC. 102. The Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1811-1831) is amended by inserting after section 23 the following new section:

"SEC. 24. (a) In order to prevent discrimination against State-chartered insured banks with respect to interest rates, if the applicable rate prescribed in this subsection exceeds the rate such State bank would be permitted to charge in the absence of this subsection, a State bank may in the case of business or agricultural loans in the amount of \$25,000 or more, notwithstanding any State constitution or statute, which is hereby preempted for the purposes of this section, take, receive, reserve, and charge on any loan or discount made, or upon any note, bill of exchange, or other evidence of debt, interest at a rate of not more than 5 per centum in excess of the discount rate on ninety-day commercial paper in effect at the Federal Reserve bank in the Federal Reserve district where the bank is located, and such interest may be taken in advance, reckoning the days for which the note, bill, or other evidence of debt has to run.

State-chartered insured banks, interest rate charges, limitation.  
12 USC 1831a.

"(b) If the rate prescribed in subsection (a) exceeds the rate such State bank would be permitted to charge in the absence of this paragraph, and such State fixed rate is thereby preempted by the rate described in subsection (a), the taking, receiving, reserving, or charging a greater rate of interest than is allowed by subsection (a) when knowingly done, shall be deemed a forfeiture of the entire interest which the note, bill, or other evidence of debt carries with it, or which

Interest overcharge, forfeiture.

Interest  
payment,  
recovery.

has been agreed to be paid thereon. If such greater rate of interest has been paid, the person who paid it may recover in a civil action commenced in a court of appropriate jurisdiction not later than two years after the date of such payment, an amount equal to twice the amount of the interest paid from the State bank taking or receiving such interest."

SEC. 103. Title IV of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1724-1730f) is amended by inserting after section 411 the following new section:

Insured  
institutions,  
interest rate  
charges,  
limitation.  
12 USC 1730e.

"SEC. 412. (a) If the applicable rate prescribed in this section exceeds the rate an insured institution would be permitted to charge in the absence of this section, such institution may in the case of business or agricultural loans in the amount of \$25,000 or more, notwithstanding any State constitution or statute, which is hereby preempted for the purposes of this section, take, receive, reserve, and charge on any loan or discount made, or upon any note, bill of exchange, or other evidence of debt, interest at a rate of not more than 5 per centum in excess of the discount rate on ninety-day commercial paper in effect at the Federal Reserve bank in the Federal Reserve district where the institution is located, and such interest may be taken in advance, reckoning the days for which the note, bill, or other evidence of debt has to run.

Interest  
overcharge,  
forfeiture.

"(b) If the rate prescribed in subsection (a) exceeds the rate such institution would be permitted to charge in the absence of this section, and such State fixed rate is thereby preempted by the rate described in subsection (a), the taking, receiving, reserving, or charging a greater rate of interest than that prescribed by subsection (a), when knowingly done, shall be deemed a forfeiture of the entire interest which the note, bill, or other evidence of debt carries with it, or which has been agreed to be paid thereon. If such greater rate of interest has been paid, the person who paid it may recover, in a civil action commenced in a court of appropriate jurisdiction not later than two years after the date of such payment, an amount equal to twice the amount of the interest paid from the institution taking or receiving such interest."

15 USC 687.  
Long-term.  
Loans and equity  
funds.

SEC. 104. Subsection (h) of section 308 of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 is amended to read as follows:

"(h)(1) The purpose of this subsection is to facilitate the orderly and necessary flow of long-term loans and equity funds from small business investment companies to small business concerns.

Small business  
investment  
company,  
interest rate  
charges,  
limitation.

"(2) In the case of a business loan the principal amount of which is \$25,000 or more, the small business investment company making such loan may charge interest on such loan at a rate which does not exceed the lowest of the rates described in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C).

"(A) The rate described in this subparagraph is the maximum rate prescribed by regulation by the Small Business Administration for loans made by any small business investment company (determined without regard to any State rate incorporated by such regulation).

"(B) The rate described in this subparagraph is the maximum rate authorized by an applicable State law which is not preempted for purposes of this subsection.

"(C)(i) The rate described in this subparagraph is the higher of the Federal Reserve rate or the maximum rate authorized by applicable State law (determined without regard to the preemption of such State law).

"Federal  
Reserve rate."

"(ii) For purposes of clause (i), the term 'Federal Reserve rate' means the rate equal to the sum of 5 percentage points plus the

discount rate on 90-day commercial paper in effect at the Federal Reserve bank in the Federal Reserve district in which the principal office of the small business investment company is located.

“(iii) The rate described in this subparagraph shall not apply to loans made in a State if there is no maximum rate authorized by applicable State law for such loans or there is a maximum rate authorized by an applicable State law which is not preempted for purposes of this subsection.

“(3) A State law shall be preempted for purposes of paragraph (2)(B) with respect to any loan if such loan is made before the earliest of—

Effective dates.

“(A) July 1, 1981;

“(B) the date, after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, on which such State adopts a law stating in substance that such State does not want this subsection to apply with respect to loans made in such State; or

“(C) the date on which such State certifies that the voters of such State, after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, have voted in favor of, or to retain, any law, provision of the constitution of such State, or amendment to the constitution of such State which prohibits the charging of interest at the rates provided in this subsection.

“(4)(A) If the maximum rate of interest authorized under paragraph (2) on any loan made by a small business investment company exceeds the rate which would be authorized by applicable State law if such State law were not preempted for purposes of this subsection, the charging of interest at any rate in excess of the rate authorized by paragraph (2) shall be deemed a forfeiture of the greater of (i) all interest which the loan carries with it, or (ii) all interest which has been agreed to be paid thereon.

Interest overcharge, forfeiture.

“(B) In the case of any loan with respect to which there is a forfeiture of interest under subparagraph (A), the person who paid the interest may recover from a small business investment company making such loan an amount equal to twice the amount of the interest paid on such loan. Such interest may be recovered in a civil action commenced in a court of appropriate jurisdiction not later than 2 years after the most recent payment of interest.”

Interest payment recovery.

SEC. 105. (a) In order to prevent discrimination against any financial institution chartered pursuant to the statutes of the United States with respect to interest rates, if the applicable rate prescribed in this section exceeds the rate such federally chartered financial institution would be permitted to charge in the absence of this section, the federally chartered financial institution may in the case of business or agricultural loans in the amount of \$25,000 or more, notwithstanding any State constitution or statute, which is hereby preempted for the purposes of this section, take, receive, reserve, and charge on any loan, interest at a rate of not more than 5 per centum in excess of the discount rate on ninety-day commercial paper in effect at the Federal Reserve bank in the Federal Reserve district where the federally chartered financial institution is located.

Business or agricultural loans, rate limitation.  
12 USC 86a.

(b) If the rate prescribed in subsection (a) exceeds the rate such federally chartered financial institution would be permitted to charge in the absence of this section, and such State fixed rate is thereby preempted by the rate described in subsection (a), the taking, receiving, reserving, or charging a greater rate than is allowed by subsection (a), when knowingly done, shall be deemed a forfeiture of the entire interest which the loan carries with it, or which has been agreed to be paid thereon. If such greater rate of interest has been paid, the person who paid it may recover, in a civil action commenced

Interest overcharge, forfeiture.

Interest payment recovery.

in a court of appropriate jurisdiction not later than two years after the date of such payment, an amount equal to twice the amount of interest paid from the federally chartered financial institution taking or receiving such interest.

12 USC 1831a  
note.

SEC. 106. If any provision of this title or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance shall be held invalid, the remainder of the title and the application of such provision to any person or circumstance other than that as to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

Effective dates.  
12 USC 1831a  
note.

SEC. 107. The amendments made by this title and the provisions of this title shall apply only with respect to loans made in any State during the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending on the earlier of—

(1) July 1, 1981;

(2) the date, after the date of the enactment of this Act, on which such State adopts a law stating in substance that such State does not want the amendments made by this title and the provisions of this title to apply with respect to loans made in such State; or

(3) the date on which such State certifies that the voters of such State, after the date of the enactment of this Act, have voted in favor of, or to retain, any law, provision of the constitution of such State, or amendment to the constitution of such State which prohibits the charging of interest at the rates provided in the amendments made by this title and the provisions of this title.

## TITLE II—APPLICABILITY OF STATE USURY CEILINGS TO CERTAIN OBLIGATIONS ISSUED BY BANKS AND AFFILIATES

SEC. 201. Section 19 of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. 461 et seq.) is amended by inserting after subsection (j) the following new subsection:

12 USC 371b-1.

“(k) No member bank or affiliate thereof, or any successor or assignee of such member bank or affiliate or any endorser, guarantor, or surety of such member bank or affiliate may plead, raise, or claim directly or by counterclaim, setoff, or otherwise, with respect to any deposit or obligation of such member bank or affiliate, any defense, right, or benefit under any provision of a statute or constitution of a State or of a territory of the United States, or of any law of the District of Columbia, regulating or limiting the rate of interest which may be charged, taken, received, or reserved, and any such provision is hereby preempted, and no civil or criminal penalty which would otherwise be applicable under such provision shall apply to such member bank or affiliate or to any other person.”

SEC. 202. Section 18 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1828) is amended by inserting after subsection (j) the following new subsection:

“(k) No insured nonmember bank or affiliate thereof, or any successor or assignee of such bank or affiliate or any endorser, guarantor, or surety of such bank or affiliate may plead, raise, or claim, directly or by counterclaim, setoff, or otherwise, with respect to any deposit or obligation of such bank or affiliate, any defense, right, or benefit under any provision of a statute or constitution of a State or of a territory of the United States, or of any law of the District of Columbia, regulating or limiting the rate of interest which may be charged, taken, received, or reserved, and any such provision is hereby preempted, and no civil or criminal penalty which would

otherwise be applicable under such provision shall apply to such bank or affiliate or to any other person.”

SEC. 203. Section 5B of the Federal Home Loan Bank Act (12 U.S.C. 1425b) is amended by inserting after subsection (d) the following new subsection:

“(e) No member or nonmember association, institution, or bank or affiliate thereof, or any successor or assignee, or any endorser, guarantor, or surety thereof may plead, raise, or claim, directly or by counterclaim, setoff, or otherwise, with respect to any deposit or obligation of such member or nonmember association, institution, bank, or affiliate, any defense, right, or benefit under any provision of a statute or constitution of a State or of a territory of the United States, or of any law of the District of Columbia, regulating or limiting the rate of interest which may be charged, taken, received, or reserved, and any such provision is hereby preempted, and no civil or criminal penalty which would otherwise be applicable under such provision shall apply to such member or nonmember association, institution, bank, or affiliate or to any other person.”

SEC. 204. The amendments made by this title shall apply only with respect to deposits made or obligations issued in any State during the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending on the earlier of—

(1) July 1, 1981;

(2) the date, after the date of the enactment of this Act, on which such State adopts a law stating in substance that such State does not want the amendments made by this title to apply with respect to such deposits and obligations; or

(3) the date on which such State certifies that the voters of such State, after the date of the enactment of this Act, have voted in favor of, or to retain, any law, provision of the constitution of such State, or amendment to the constitution of such State which limits the amount of interest which may be charged in connection with such deposits and obligations.

### TITLE III—LIMITATION

SEC. 301. This Act shall apply only in those States having a constitutional provision which provides that all contracts for a greater rate of interest than 10 per centum per annum shall be void, as to principal and interest.

Approved November 5, 1979.

#### LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

SENATE REPORT No. 96-364 (Comm. on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs).  
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 125 (1979):

Sept. 24, considered and passed House.

Oct. 12, considered and passed Senate, amended.

Nov. 1, House concurred in Senate amendment.

Effective dates.  
12 USC 371b-1  
note.

12 USC 86a note.