

New York State
BANKING
DEPARTMENT



NEWS RELEASE

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State Subprime Task Force Hosts Second HALT Summit in Buffalo

New York, NY: On Thursday, June 28, 2007, Governor Spitzer's interagency subprime task force, in conjunction with Mayor Byron Brown and the Western New York Law Center, will host the second HALT (Halt Abusive Lending Transactions) Summit in Buffalo, New York. The summit will be held at the Frank E. Merriweather Library, 1324 Jefferson Avenue, Buffalo, NY from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The first summit was held in New York City on April 11, 2007.

The task force, chaired by Banking Superintendent Richard H. Neiman, was formed by Governor Spitzer and charged with combating predatory lending practices by taking a comprehensive look at the subprime lending industry and recommending steps to protect borrowers. The task force directly solicits input from community and advocacy groups and industry representatives as it designs initiatives to combat predatory lending and mortgage fraud.

The task force has been reaching out directly to impacted communities through a planned series of regional summits--day-long symposiums that bring together regulators, law enforcement, local community and advocacy groups, and industry representatives to discuss the problems facing a particular region.

With delinquency rates for subprime loans among the highest in the state at 13.69% for year-end 2006, Buffalo is a community that is being directly impacted by the current challenges in the mortgage market. Last year alone, nearly 3,000 households in the greater Buffalo area entered the foreclosure process. The second HALT Summit has been convened by the task force to address this situation and identify solutions.

In addition to hosting the series of HALT Summits, the task force is:

- Analyzing foreclosure and lending data to identify borrowers and communities most at risk;
- Developing loan and refinance programs to help homeowners whose current loans are inappropriate for their financial circumstances;
- Creating statewide outreach and educational campaigns to assist the state's most vulnerable borrowers;
- Proposing legislative and regulatory changes to expand consumer protections;

- Identifying lenders, industry participants and others who benefit from steering minorities, recent immigrants, senior citizens, members of low income communities or military families into inappropriate loan products; and
- Continuing to pursue enforcement actions against those engaging in wrongful conduct and, where appropriate, coordinate these actions with other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.



The HALT task force consists of agency heads from the Department of State, the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA), the Division of Human Rights, the Consumer Protection Board, the Division of Housing and Community Renewal, the Governor's Office of Regulatory Reform, and members of the Governor's Executive Chamber.

The New York State Banking Department is the regulator for all state-chartered banking institutions, virtually all of the United States offices of international banking institutions, all of the State's mortgage brokers, mortgage bankers, check cashers, money transmitters and budget planners. The aggregate assets of the depository institutions supervised by the Banking Department are more than \$1.8 trillion.

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