



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 6, 2008

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WISCONSIN BANKS ARE SAFE AND STRONG

Wisconsin "Main Street" depository institutions are very different from Wall Street investment banks

During these challenging economic times, it is natural for every individual to be concerned about their personal investments and the stability of the companies holding or managing them. As Wisconsin bankers, we know it's easy to get caught up in the fervor the national media and various talking heads have stirred up in recent weeks. However, rest assured that your money is safe in a Wisconsin bank.

Wisconsin's depository banks – which are very different from Wall Street investment banks – didn't make subprime loans, which means they didn't cause this crisis, nor do they need "bailing out." Investment banks such as Lehman Brothers and Merrill Lynch were not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and were not regulated in the same manner as commercial banks and savings associations in Wisconsin.

Across the country, FDIC-insured institutions entered this economic downturn from a position of strength, and 98 percent have the highest possible regulatory rating. Notably, Wisconsin banks have strong management teams equipped with decades of experience to help get through these tough economic times.

In addition to the safety and strength of Wisconsin banks, consumers should understand the protection granted by the FDIC. Your bank deposits are FDIC-insured for \$250,000 per person, per institution, through December 31, 2009. After that date, the basic FDIC insurance amount will be up to \$100,000 except for certain retirement accounts which will continue to receive up to \$250,000 of coverage. FDIC insurance covers all types of deposits received at an insured bank, including deposits in checking, NOW, and savings accounts, money market deposit accounts, and time deposits such as certificates of deposit (CDs).

Remember, any financial decision you make should be based on your specific situation, in consultation with your financial advisor or banker, not on any media report. It is important to follow your investment or financial plan and not make drastic changes simply as a result of current events. Your local bankers are ready to offer assistance and give you straight answers to your questions.

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The Wisconsin Bankers Association is the state's largest financial industry trade association, representing 300 commercial banks and savings institutions, their nearly 2,300 branch offices and 28,000 employees.