



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

September 23, 2013

Edward DeMarco  
Acting Director  
Federal Housing Finance Agency  
1700 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20552-0003

Re: PACE Program in California; Resolution of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac Issues

Dear Mr. DeMarco:

Last year, I asked President Obama to direct the Federal Housing Finance Agency to work with California to revive Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs, which provide home owners with funding for energy-efficiency retrofits. The Federal Housing Finance Agency prohibited Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac from purchasing mortgages subject to PACE liens in certain types of PACE programs.

California has devised a mechanism that will address the concerns raised by FHFA and protect the interest of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which I describe below.

The California Alternative Energy and Advanced Transportation Financing Authority (Authority), an existing state agency chaired by the California State Treasurer (Division 16 [commencing with Section 26000] of the Public Resources Code), will create a reserve fund for PACE programs. Any PACE program that wishes to use the reserve fund will enter an agreement that requires the PACE program to make Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac whole, as follows:

1. In any foreclosure, for any losses to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac resulting from the payment of any PACE assessment paid while in possession of the property, and
2. In any forced sale for unpaid taxes or special assessments, for any losses to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac that result from PACE assessments being paid before the outstanding mortgage.

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PACE programs that enroll in the Authority reserve fund will meet basic structural criteria, comply with underwriting criteria set by the Authority, and pay an annual premium based on the size of their portfolio. In the event of foreclosure, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac will be able to claim from the PACE program any amounts paid to keep the PACE assessment current until the property is sold to a new buyer. If the property is sold for back taxes or special assessments, and the sale results in insufficient funds to satisfy the outstanding mortgage because of PACE lien priority payments, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac will be able to recover that amount from the PACE program. In both instances, upon a showing that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have been paid by the PACE program, the Authority will reimburse the PACE program.

This process addresses the issues raised by the Federal Housing Finance Agency and ensures that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac will not be adversely impacted by the PACE first lien. The next step in moving this approach to fruition will be for the Authority to issue draft regulations for public comment, setting forth the requirements for PACE programs to participate in the reserve account. We will provide you with notice of that process and invite your participation.

I look forward to moving ahead on a much larger scale with PACE in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edmund G. Brown Jr.", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Edmund G. Brown Jr.

cc: Valerie Jarrett, Senior Advisor to the President, The White House  
Alfred Pollard, General Counsel, Federal Housing Finance Agency  
Bill Lockyer, Treasurer, State of California  
Members of the California Congressional Delegation