
EXPERTS PRESENT ABA PLAN TO STRENGTHEN FIGHT AGAINST FINANCIAL CRIME
Calls for an Independent BSA Gatekeeper

WASHINGTON— The American Bankers Association today unveiled the New Framework for Partnership, a set of recommendations developed by leading experts in anti-money laundering to help the next administration fight financial crime.

"Improving the effectiveness of our efforts against financial crime needs to be a key part the next president's regulatory reform agenda," said Edward Yingling, president and CEO of the American Bankers Association. "We need to build upon the current system by improving efficiency and focusing our priorities squarely on apprehending financial felons and guarding against terrorism financing."

The report is the work of ABA's Chairman's Committee on Bank Secrecy Act Reform. This 10 member panel includes two former FinCEN directors and draws from a diverse group of AML leaders with a deep set of experiences in banking industry management, law enforcement, and regulatory agencies.

The report offers several key recommendations including the creation of an independent BSA Gatekeeper or –coordinating authority- to oversee the BSA regime and promote the integrity of the financial system.

"Positioning an independent Gatekeeper within the financial/payments system is essential to strengthening the effectiveness of the BSA regime," said Yingling. "It is important that the Gatekeeper serve and support both law enforcement and regulatory agencies while retaining enough independence to hold each accountable for fulfilling their respective roles in the BSA regime."

The New Framework for Partnership recommendations for BSA/anti-money laundering reform include:

1. Create an independent BSA Gatekeeper to oversee and coordinate the BSA regime and to promote system integrity and efficiency;
2. Bank regulatory agencies should explicitly endorse a priority-focused, risk-based approach to BSA regulation;
3. Increase the quality of feedback and transparency;
4. Streamline reporting and validate its utility; and
5. Law enforcement agencies should avoid sanctions that impose administrative compliance standards that can redefine procedures for taking criminal actions against banks.

The members of the Chairman's Committee on BSA Reform are

- Jeff Austin, III, Vice Chairman, Austin Bank;
- William Fox, Senior VP and Global AML Executive, Bank of America;
- Michael Kelsey, Managing VP, AML Compliance, Capital One;
- William D. Langford, Senior VP and Director of Global AML, JP Morgan Chase;
- Thomas Laursen, General Counsel, Zions Bancorporation;
- Rick Maltz, Senior VP and Chief Risk Officer, Bangor Savings Bank;
- Anna Rentschler, VP and BSA Officer, Central Bancompany;
- Rick Small, VP, Enterprise Wide AML and Sanctions Risk Management, American Express;
- Daniel D. Soto, Senior VP, AML/BSA Officer, Wachovia Corporation; and
- Robert W. Werner, Managing Director, Merrill Lynch.

The American Bankers Association brings together banks of all sizes and charters into one association. ABA works to enhance the competitiveness of the nation's banking industry and strengthen America's economy and communities. Its members – the majority of which are banks with less than \$125 million in assets – represent over 95 percent of the industry's \$13.3 trillion in assets and employ over 2 million men and women.