

SUBCHAPTER III—TRUST INDENTURES

§ 77aaa. Short title

This subchapter may be cited as the “Trust Indenture Act of 1939.”

(May 27, 1933, ch. 38, title III, § 301, as added Aug. 3, 1939, ch. 411, 53 Stat. 1149.)

SHORT TITLE OF 1990 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 101-550, title IV, § 401, Nov. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 2721, provided that: “This title [amending sections 77ccc to 77eee, 77iii to 77rrr, and 77vvv of this title] may be cited as the ‘Trust Indenture Reform Act of 1990.’”

§ 77bbb. Necessity for regulation**(a) Practices adversely affecting public**

Upon the basis of facts disclosed by the reports of the Securities and Exchange Commission made to the Congress pursuant to section 78jj of this title and otherwise disclosed and ascertained, it is hereby declared that the national public interest and the interest of investors in notes, bonds, debentures, evidences of indebtedness, and certificates of interest or participation therein, which are offered to the public, are adversely affected—

(1) when the obligor fails to provide a trustee to protect and enforce the rights and to represent the interests of such investors, notwithstanding the fact that (A) individual action by such investors for the purpose of protecting and enforcing their rights is rendered impracticable by reason of the disproportionate expense of taking such action, and (B) concerted action by such investors in their common interest through representatives of their own selection is impeded by reason of the wide dispersion of such investors through many States, and by reason of the fact that information as to the names and addresses of such investors generally is not available to such investors;

(2) when the trustee does not have adequate rights and powers, or adequate duties and responsibilities, in connection with matters relating to the protection and enforcement of the rights of such investors; when, notwithstanding the obstacles to concerted action by such investors, and the general and reasonable assumption by such investors that the trustee is under an affirmative duty to take action for the protection and enforcement of their rights, trust indentures (A) generally provide that the trustee shall be under no duty to take any such action, even in the event of default, unless it receives notice of default, demand for action, and indemnity, from the holders of substantial percentages of the securities outstanding thereunder, and (B) generally relieve the trustee from liability even for its own negligent action or failure to act;

(3) when the trustee does not have resources commensurate with its responsibilities, or has any relationship to or connection with the obligor or any underwriter of any securities of the obligor, or holds, beneficially or otherwise, any interest in the obligor or any such underwriter, which relationship, connection, or interest involves a material conflict with the interests of such investors;

(4) when the obligor is not obligated to furnish to the trustee under the indenture and to such investors adequate current information as to its financial condition, and as to the performance of its obligations with respect to the securities outstanding under such indenture; or when the communication of such information to such investors is impeded by the fact that information as to the names and addresses of such investors generally is not available to the trustee and to such investors;

(5) when the indenture contains provisions which are misleading or deceptive, or when full and fair disclosure is not made to prospective investors of the effect of important indenture provisions; or

(6) when, by reason of the fact that trust indentures are commonly prepared by the obligor or underwriter in advance of the public offering of the securities to be issued thereunder, such investors are unable to participate in the preparation thereof, and, by reason of their lack of understanding of the situation, such investors would in any event be unable to procure the correction of the defects enumerated in this subsection.

(b) Declaration of policy

Practices of the character above enumerated have existed to such an extent that, unless regulated, the public offering of notes, bonds, debentures, evidences of indebtedness, and certificates of interest or participation therein, by the use of means and instruments of transportation and communication in interstate commerce and of the mails, is injurious to the capital markets, to investors, and to the general public; and it is hereby declared to be the policy of this subchapter, in accordance with which policy all the provisions of this subchapter shall be interpreted, to meet the problems and eliminate the practices, enumerated in this section, connected with such public offerings.

(May 27, 1933, ch. 38, title III, § 302, as added Aug. 3, 1939, ch. 411, 53 Stat. 1150.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 78jj of this title, referred to in subsec. (a), was omitted from the Code.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions of Securities and Exchange Commission, with certain exceptions, to Chairman of such Commission, see Reorg. Plan No. 10 of 1950, §§ 1, 2, eff. May 24, 1950, 15 F.R. 3175, 64 Stat. 1265, set out under section 78d of this title.

§ 77ccc. Definitions

When used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise requires—

(1) Any term defined in section 2 of the Securities Act of 1933 [15 U.S.C. 77b], and not otherwise defined in this section shall have the meaning assigned to such term in such section 2 [15 U.S.C. 77b].

(2) The terms “sale”, “sell”, “offer to sell”, “offer for sale”, and “offer” shall include all transactions included in such terms as provided in paragraph (3) of section 2(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 [15 U.S.C. 77b(a)], except that an offer or sale of a certificate of interest

or participation shall be deemed an offer or sale of the security or securities in which such certificate evidences an interest or participation if and only if such certificate gives the holder thereof the right to convert the same into such security or securities.

(3) The term “prospectus” shall have the meaning assigned to such term in paragraph (10) of section 2(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 [15 U.S.C. 77b(a)], except that in the case of securities which are not registered under the Securities Act of 1933 [15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.], such term shall not include any communication (A) if it is proved that prior to or at the same time with such communication a written statement if any required by section 77fff of this title was sent or given to the persons to whom the communication was made, or (B) if such communication states from whom such statement may be obtained (if such statement is required by rules or regulations under paragraphs (1) or (2) of subsection (b) of section 77fff of this title) and, in addition, does no more than identify the security, state the price thereof, state by whom orders will be executed and contain such other information as the Commission, by rules or regulations deemed necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors, and subject to such terms and conditions as may be prescribed therein, may permit.

(4) The term “underwriter” means any person who has purchased from an issuer with a view to, or offers or sells for an issuer in connection with, the distribution of any security, or participates or has a direct or indirect participation in any such undertaking, or participates or has a participation in the direct or indirect underwriting of any such undertaking; but such term shall not include a person whose interest is limited to a commission from an underwriter or dealer not in excess of the usual and customary distributors’ or sellers’ commission.

(5) The term “director” means any director of a corporation, or any individual performing similar functions with respect to any organization whether incorporated or unincorporated.

(6) The term “executive officer” means the president, every vice president, every trust officer, the cashier, the secretary, and the treasurer of a corporation, and any individual customarily performing similar functions with respect to any organization whether incorporated or unincorporated, but shall not include the chairman of the board of directors.

(7) The term “indenture” means any mortgage, deed of trust, trust or other indenture, or similar instrument or agreement (including any supplement or amendment to any of the foregoing), under which securities are outstanding or are to be issued, whether or not any property, real or personal, is, or is to be, pledged, mortgaged, assigned, or conveyed thereunder.

(8) The term “application” or “application for qualification” means the application provided for in section 77eee of this title or section 77ggg of this title, and includes any amendment thereto and any report, document,

or memorandum accompanying such application or incorporated therein by reference.

(9) The term “indenture to be qualified” means (A) the indenture under which there has been or is to be issued a security in respect of which a particular registration statement has been filed, or (B) the indenture in respect of which a particular application has been filed.

(10) The term “indenture trustee” means each trustee under the indenture to be qualified, and each successor trustee.

(11) The term “indenture security” means any security issued or issuable under the indenture to be qualified.

(12) The term “obligor”, when used with respect to any such indenture security, means every person (including a guarantor) who is liable thereon, and, if such security is a certificate of interest or participation, such term means also every person (including a guarantor) who is liable upon the security or securities in which such certificate evidences an interest or participation; but such term shall not include the trustee under an indenture under which certificates of interest or participation, equipment trust certificates, or like securities are outstanding.

(13) The term “paying agent”, when used with respect to any such indenture security, means any person authorized by an obligor thereon (A) to pay the principal of or interest on such security on behalf of such obligor, or (B) if such security is a certificate of interest or participation, equipment trust certificate, or like security, to make such payment on behalf of the trustee.

(14) The term “State” means any State of the United States.

(15) The term “Commission” means the Securities and Exchange Commission.

(16) The term “voting security” means any security presently entitling the owner or holder thereof to vote in the direction or management of the affairs of a person, or any security issued under or pursuant to any trust, agreement, or arrangement whereby a trustee or trustees or agent or agents for the owner or holder of such security are presently entitled to vote in the direction or management of the affairs of a person; and a specified percentage of the voting securities of a person means such amount of the outstanding voting securities of such person as entitles the holder or holders thereof to cast such specified percentage of the aggregate votes which the holders of all the outstanding voting securities of such person are entitled to cast in the direction or management of the affairs of such person.

(17) The terms “Securities Act of 1933” [15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.] and “Securities Exchange Act of 1934” [15 U.S.C. 78a et seq.] shall be deemed to refer, respectively, to such Acts, as amended, whether amended prior to or after the enactment of this subchapter.

(18) The term “Bankruptcy Act” means the Bankruptcy Act or title 11.

(May 27, 1933, ch. 38, title III, §303, as added Aug. 3, 1939, ch. 411, 53 Stat. 1151; amended Aug. 10, 1954, ch. 667, title III, §301, 68 Stat. 686; Pub. L. 95-598, title III, §307, Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2674; Pub. L. 100-181, title V, §§501, 502, Dec. 4, 1987, 101

Stat. 1260; Pub. L. 101-550, title IV, § 402, Nov. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 2722; Pub. L. 105-353, title III, § 301(e)(1), Nov. 3, 1998, 112 Stat. 3237; Pub. L. 111-203, title IX, § 986(b)(1), July 21, 2010, 124 Stat. 1935.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Securities Act of 1933, referred to in pars. (3) and (17), is act May 27, 1933, ch. 38, title I, 48 Stat. 74, which is classified generally to subchapter I (§ 77a et seq.) of this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 77a of this title and Tables.

The Securities Exchange Act of 1934, referred to in par. (17), is act June 6, 1934, ch. 404, 48 Stat. 881, which is classified principally to chapter 2B (§ 78a et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 78a of this title and Tables.

The Bankruptcy Act, referred to in par. (18), is act July 1, 1898, ch. 541, 30 Stat. 544, as amended, which was classified generally to former Title 11, Bankruptcy. The Act was repealed effective Oct. 1, 1979, by Pub. L. 95-598, §§ 401(a), 402(a), Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2682, section 101 of which enacted revised Title 11.

AMENDMENTS

2010—Par. (17). Pub. L. 111-203 added par. (17) and struck out former par. (17) which read as follows: “The terms ‘Securities Act of 1933,’ ‘Securities Exchange Act of 1934,’ and ‘Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935’ shall be deemed to refer, respectively, to such Acts, as amended, whether amended prior to or after the enactment of this subchapter.”

1998—Pars. (2), (3). Pub. L. 105-353 substituted “section 2(a)” for “section 2”.

1990—Par. (8). Pub. L. 101-550 inserted “section 77eee of this title or” after “provided for in”.

1987—Par. (4). Pub. L. 100-181, § 501, substituted “undertaking” for “undertakng”.

Par. (12). Pub. L. 100-181, § 502, inserted “(including a guarantor)” after “person” in two places.

1978—Par. (18). Pub. L. 95-598 substituted “Bankruptcy Act or title 11” for “Act entitled ‘An Act to establish a uniform system of bankruptcy throughout the United States’, approved July 1, 1898, as amended, whether amended prior to or after August 3, 1939”.

1954—Pars. (1) to (4). Act Aug. 10, 1954, made formal changes in order to conform to amendments made by act Aug. 10, 1954, to sections 77b, 77e, and 77j of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2010 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 111-203 effective 1 day after July 21, 2010, except as otherwise provided, see section 4 of Pub. L. 111-203, set out as an Effective Date note under section 5301 of Title 12, Banks and Banking.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1978 AMENDMENT

Amendment effective Oct. 1, 1979, see section 402(a) of Pub. L. 95-598 set out as an Effective Date note preceding section 101 of Title 11, Bankruptcy.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1954 AMENDMENT

Amendment by act Aug. 10, 1954, effective 60 days after Aug. 10, 1954, see note under section 77b of this title.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions of Securities and Exchange Commission, with certain exceptions, to Chairman of such Commission, see Reorg. Plan No. 10 of 1950, §§ 1, 2, eff. May 24, 1950, 15 F.R. 3175, 64 Stat. 1265, set out under section 78d of this title.

§ 77ddd. Exempted securities and transactions

(a) Specific securities exempted

The provisions of this subchapter shall not apply to any of the following securities:

(1) any security other than (A) a note, bond, debenture, or evidence of indebtedness, whether or not secured, or (B) a certificate of interest or participation in any such note, bond, debenture, or evidence of indebtedness, or (C) a temporary certificate for, or guarantee of, any such note, bond, debenture, evidence of indebtedness, or certificate;

(2) any certificate of interest or participation in two or more securities having substantially different rights and privileges, or a temporary certificate for any such certificate;

(3) Repealed. Pub. L. 101-550, title IV, § 403(1)(A), Nov. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 2722.

(4)(A) any security exempted from the provisions of the Securities Act of 1933 [15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.] by paragraphs (2) to (8), (11), or (13) of section 3(a) thereof [15 U.S.C. 77c(a)];

(B) any security exempted from the provisions of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended [15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.], by paragraph (2) of subsection 3(a) thereof, as amended by section 401 of the Employment Security Amendments of 1970 [15 U.S.C. 77c(a)(2)];

(5) any security issued under a mortgage indenture as to which a contract of insurance under the National Housing Act [12 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.] is in effect; and any such security shall be deemed to be exempt from the provisions of the Securities Act of 1933 [15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.] to the same extent as though such security were specifically enumerated in section 3(a)(2) of such Act [15 U.S.C. § 77c(a)(2)];

(6) any note, bond, debenture, or evidence of indebtedness issued or guaranteed by a foreign government or by a subdivision, department, municipality, agency, or instrumentality thereof;

(7) any guarantee of any security which is exempted by this subsection;

(8) any security which has been or is to be issued otherwise than under an indenture, but this exemption shall not be applied within a period of twelve consecutive months to an aggregate principal amount of securities of the same issuer greater than the figure stated in section 3(b) of the Securities Act of 1933 [15 U.S.C. 77c(b)] limiting exemptions thereunder, or such lesser amount as the Commission may establish by its rules and regulations;

(9) any security which has been or is to be issued under an indenture which limits the aggregate principal amount of securities at any time outstanding thereunder to \$10,000,000, or such lesser amount as the Commission may establish by its rules and regulations, but this exemption shall not be applied within a period of thirty-six consecutive months to more than \$10,000,000 aggregate principal amount of securities of the same issuer, or such lesser amount as the Commission may establish by its rules and regulations; or

(10) any security issued under a mortgage or trust deed indenture as to which a contract of insurance under title XI of the National Housing Act [12 U.S.C. 1749aaa et seq.] is in effect; and any such security shall be deemed to be exempt from the provisions of the Securities Act of 1933 [15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.] to the same extent as though such security were specifically enumerated in section 3(a)(2), as amend-