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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to mortgage brokering and lending; amending s. 494.001, F.S.; revising definitions; amending s. 494.0014, F.S.; authorizing the Office of Financial Regulation to impose fines; amending s. 494.0029, F.S.; authorizing the office to take certain adverse actions on permits of certain mortgage business schools; providing additional requirements for such schools; amending s. 494.00295, F.S.; providing an additional professional continuing education requirement; authorizing the office to offer professional continuing education programs; specifying requirements for electronically transmitted and distance education courses; amending s. 494.0033, F.S.; revising mortgage broker license applicant requirements; authorizing an additional fee for reviewing mortgage broker's license tests; providing for review of the testing process; amending s. 494.0038, F.S.; providing additional disclosure requirements for mortgage brokerage businesses; amending s. 494.004, F.S.; specifying an additional notification requirement for mortgage broker licensees; authorizing the commission to adopt rules; amending s. 494.0041, F.S.; specifying additional acts constituting grounds for certain disciplinary actions; providing for fines and penalties; amending s. 494.0064, F.S.; providing additional requirements for renewals of mortgage lender's licenses; amending s. 494.0067, F.S.; providing additional requirements for mortgage lender licenses; providing disclosure requirements; amending s.

494.0072, F.S.; specifying additional acts constituting grounds for certain disciplinary actions; providing fines and penalties; amending s. 494.0073, F.S.; providing for application of certain provisions to mortgage brokerage businesses; providing for adoption of rules by the Financial Services Commission; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsection (2) of section 494.001, Florida Statutes, is amended, and subsections (32), (33), and (34) are added to that section, to read:

494.001 Definitions.--As used in ss. 494.001-494.0077, the term:

- (2) "Act as a loan originator" means being employed by a mortgage lender or correspondent mortgage lender, for compensation or gain or in the expectation of compensation or gain, to negotiate, or offer to negotiate, or assist any licensed or exempt entity in negotiating the making of a mortgage loan, including, but not limited to, working with a licensed or exempt entity to structure a loan or discussing terms and conditions necessary for the delivery of a loan product. A natural person whose activities are ministerial and clerical, which may include quoting available interest rates or loan terms and conditions, is not acting as a loan originator.
- (32) "Mortgage loan application" means a submission of a borrower's financial information in anticipation of a credit

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decision, whether written or computer-generated, relating to a mortgage loan. If the submission does not state or identify a specific property, the submission is an application for a prequalification and not an application for a mortgage loan under this part. The subsequent addition of an identified property to the submission converts the submission to an application for a mortgage loan.

- (33) "Mortgage brokerage fee" means the total compensation to be received by a mortgage business for acting as a mortgage broker.
- (34) "Business day" means any calendar day except Sunday or a legal holiday.
- Section 2. Subsection (4) is added to section 494.0014, Florida Statutes, to read:
- 494.0014 Cease and desist orders; <u>administrative fines;</u> refund orders.--
- (4) The office may impose upon any person who makes or brokers a loan, or any mortgage business school, a fine for violations of any provision of ss. 494.001-494.00295 or any rule or order issued under ss. 494.001-494.00295 in an amount not exceeding \$5,000 for each separate count or offense.
- Section 3. Paragraph (f) is added to subsection (1) and paragraphs (g) and (h) are added to subsection (2) of section 494.0029, Florida Statutes, to read:
- 81 494.0029 Mortgage business schools.--
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(f) In addition to the remedies set forth in s. 494.0014, the office may revoke, suspend, or place on probation the permit

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of any mortgage business school that fails to meet the requirements of this section, subject to all reasonable conditions that the office specifies.

(2)

- (g) A school permitted under this section must conduct classes on the basis of a 50-minute classroom hour in accordance with the requirements of this chapter and commission rules.
- (h) Each school permitted under this section is responsible for developing procedures to confirm, and for actually confirming, the identity of each student attending any course offering.

Section 4. Section 494.00295, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

494.00295 Professional continuing education .--

(1) Mortgage brokers, and the principal representatives and loan originators of a mortgage lender, correspondent mortgage lender, or mortgage lender pursuant to s. 494.0065, must successfully complete at least 14 hours of professional continuing education covering primary and subordinate mortgage financing transactions and the provisions of this chapter during the 2-year period immediately preceding the renewal deadline for a mortgage broker, mortgage lender, correspondent mortgage lender, or mortgage lender pursuant to s. 494.0065. A minimum of 4 hours shall cover the provisions of this chapter and the rules adopted under this chapter. At the time of license renewal, a licensee must certify to the office that the professional continuing education requirements of this section have been met. Licensees shall maintain records documenting compliance with

this subsection for a period of 4 years. The requirements for professional continuing education are waived for the license renewal of a mortgage broker who has completed the 24-hour prelicensing classroom education requirement of s. 494.0033(3) within 90 days of for the biennial license period immediately following the period in which the person became licensed as a mortgage broker. The requirements for professional continuing education for a principal representative are waived for the license renewal of a mortgage lender, correspondent mortgage lender, or mortgage lender pursuant to s. 494.0065 for the biennial license period immediately following the period in which the principal representative completed the 24 hours of classroom education and passed a written test in order to qualify to be a principal representative.

- (2) Professional continuing education programs must contribute directly to the professional competency of the participants, may only be offered by permitted mortgage business schools, the office, or entities specifically exempted from permitting as mortgage business schools, and may include electronically transmitted or distance education courses.
- (3) (a) All electronically transmitted courses shall require that the time spent attending electronically transmitted professional education courses is equal to the number of qualifying hours awarded to participants for course attendance. Before allowing a course participant to complete a course and receive a certificate of course completion, the course provider shall ensure that the course participant has:

1. Logged the required number of hours for the particular timed module.

- 2. Completed a test that comprehensively covers the course content for the particular timed module.
- 3. Correctly answered all test questions for the particular timed module.

- (b) All distance education course participants shall successfully complete a test that comprehensively covers course content in order to receive a certificate of course completion.

 Distance education providers shall not provide answers to test questions to course participants and shall not issue a certificate of course completion to any course participant who has failed to correctly answer at least 75 percent of the total test questions. The test must consist of at least 100 questions.
- (4) (3) The commission shall adopt rules <u>pursuant to ss.</u>

 120.536(1) and 120.54 necessary to administer this section, including rules governing qualifying hours for professional continuing education programs and standards for electronically transmitted or distance education courses, including course completion requirements.
- Section 5. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (2) of section 494.0033, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
 - 494.0033 Mortgage broker's license.--
- (2) Each initial application for a mortgage broker's license must be in the form prescribed by rule of the commission. The commission may require each applicant to provide any information reasonably necessary to make a determination of

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the applicant's eligibility for licensure. The office shall issue an initial license to any natural person who:

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- (a) Is at least 18 years of age and has a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- Has passed a written test adopted and administered by the office, or has passed an electronic test adopted and administered by the office or a third party approved by the office, which is designed to determine competency in primary and subordinate mortgage financing transactions as well as to test knowledge of ss. 494.001-494.0077 and the rules adopted pursuant thereto. The commission may prescribe by rule an additional fee that may not exceed \$100 for the electronic version of the mortgage broker test. The commission may waive by rule the examination requirement for any person who has passed a test approved by the Conference of State Bank Supervisors, the American Association of Residential Mortgage Regulators, or the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development if the test covers primary and subordinate mortgage financing transactions. The commission may adopt rules prescribing an additional fee that may not exceed \$50 for an applicant to review his or her completed and graded mortgage broker test. The commission may adopt rules regarding the administration of the testing process, including, but not limited to, procedures relating to pretest registration, test security, scoring, content, result notification, retest procedures and fees, postexamination review, and challenge provisions.

The commission may require by rule information concerning any such applicant or person, including, but not limited to, his or her full name and any other names by which he or she may have been known, age, social security number, qualifications and educational and business history, and disciplinary and criminal history.

Section 6. Section 494.0038, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

494.0038 Mortgage broker disclosures.--

- (1) (a) 1. A person may not receive a mortgage brokerage fee for acting as a mortgage brokerage business except pursuant to a written mortgage brokerage agreement between the mortgage brokerage business and the borrower that is signed and dated by the business and the borrower.
- 2. The written mortgage brokerage agreement must be executed within 3 days after accepting a mortgage loan application, describe the services to be provided by the mortgage brokerage business, and specify the amount and terms of the mortgage brokerage fee that the mortgage brokerage business is to receive.
- (b)1. If the mortgage brokerage business is to receive any payment of any kind from the lender, the maximum total dollar amount of the payment must be disclosed to the borrower in the written mortgage brokerage agreement as described in paragraph (a). The commission may prescribe by rule an acceptable form for disclosure of brokerage fees received from the lender. The mortgage brokerage agreement must state the nature of the relationship with the lender, describe how compensation is paid

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by the lender, and describe how the mortgage interest rate

affects the compensation paid to the mortgage brokerage

business. If any of the rates, points, fees, and other terms

quoted by or on behalf of the lender are to be received by the

mortgage brokerage business, such fact shall be specifically

disclosed to the borrower.

- 2. The exact amount of any payment of any kind by the lender to the mortgage brokerage business must be disclosed in writing to the borrower within 3 business days after the mortgage brokerage business is made aware of the exact amount of the payment from the lender but no later than 3 business days prior to the execution of the closing or settlement statement. The licensee bears the burden of proving such notification was provided to the borrower. If the mortgage brokerage fee is for brokering a loan for a particular program under which the brokerage fee waries according to the terms of the loan, the brokerage fee may be disclosed as a range of fees at the time of application. The mortgage broker shall, in such instance, disclose the nature of the fee arrangement to the borrower, and the exact amount of the fee must be disclosed at settlement or closing.
- (c) The commission may prescribe by rule <u>what constitutes</u> a mortgage brokerage fee and the form of disclosure of brokerage fees.
- (2) At the time a written <u>mortgage brokerage</u> agreement is executed by the borrower or at the time the mortgage brokerage business accepts an application fee, credit report fee, property appraisal fee, or any other third-party fee, but not fewer than

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3 business days prior to execution of the closing or settlement statement, the mortgage brokerage business shall disclose in writing to any applicant for a mortgage loan the following information:

- (a) That such mortgage brokerage business may not make mortgage loans or commitments. The mortgage brokerage business may make a commitment and may furnish a lock-in of the rate and program on behalf of the lender when the mortgage brokerage business has obtained a written commitment or lock-in for the loan from the lender on behalf of the borrower for the loan. The commitment must be in the same form and substance as issued by the lender.
- (b) That such mortgage brokerage business cannot guarantee acceptance into any particular loan program or promise any specific loan terms or conditions.
- (c) A good faith estimate, signed and dated by the borrower, that discloses of the total amount of each of the fees that the borrower may reasonably expect to pay if the loan is closed, including, but not limited to, fees earned by the mortgage brokerage business, lender fees, third-party fees, and official fees, together with credit report fee, property appraisal fee, or any other third party fee and the terms and conditions for obtaining a refund of such fees, if any. Any amount collected in excess of the actual cost shall be returned within 60 days after rejection, withdrawal, or closing. The good faith estimate must identify the recipient of all payments charged the borrower and, except for all fees to be received by the mortgage brokerage business, may be disclosed in generic

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terms, such as, but not limited to, paid to lender, appraiser, officials, title company, or any other third-party service provider. This requirement does not supplant or is not a substitute for the written mortgage brokerage agreement described in subsection (1).

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- The disclosures required by this subsection must be furnished in writing at the time an adjustable rate mortgage loan is offered to the borrower and whenever the terms of the adjustable rate mortgage loan offered materially change prior to closing. The broker shall furnish the disclosures relating to adjustable rate mortgages in a format prescribed by ss. 226.18 and 226.19 of Regulation Z of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, as amended, its commentary, as amended, and the federal Truth in Lending Act, 15 U.S.C. ss. 1601 et seq., as amended, together with the Consumer Handbook on Adjustable Rate Mortgages, as amended, published by the Federal Reserve Board and the Federal Home Loan Bank Board or a suitable substitute for such handbook. The licensee bears the burden of proving such disclosures were provided to the borrower. The commission may adopt rules establishing criteria as to what constitutes a material change and what constitutes a suitable substitute for the handbook.
- $\underline{(4)}$ If the mortgage brokerage agreement includes a nonrefundable application fee, the following requirements are applicable:
- (a) The amount of the application fee, which must be clearly denominated as such, shall be clearly disclosed.

(b) The specific services that will be performed in consideration for the application fee shall be disclosed.

- (c) The application fee must be reasonably related to the services to be performed and may not be based upon a percentage of the principal amount of the loan or the amount financed.
- (5)(4) A mortgage brokerage business may not accept any fee in connection with a mortgage loan other than an application fee, credit report fee, property appraisal fee, or other third-party fee prior to obtaining a written commitment from a qualified lender.
- (6)(5) Any third-party fee entrusted to a mortgage brokerage business shall immediately, upon receipt, be placed into a segregated account with a financial institution located in the state the accounts of which are insured by the Federal Government. Such funds shall be held in trust for the payor and shall be kept in the account until disbursement. Such funds may be placed in one account if adequate accounting measures are taken to identify the source of the funds.
- $\underline{(7)}$ All mortgage brokerage fees shall be paid to a mortgage brokerage business licensee.
- (8)(7) This section does not prohibit a mortgage brokerage business from offering products and services, in addition to those offered in conjunction with the loan origination process, for a fee or commission.
- Section 7. Subsection (8) is added to section 494.004, Florida Statutes, to read:
 - 494.004 Requirements of licensees. --

(8) In every mortgage loan transaction, each licensee under ss. 494.003-494.0043 shall notify a borrower of any material changes in the terms of a mortgage loan previously offered to the borrower within 3 business days after being made aware of such changes by the lender but not less than 3 business days before the signing of the settlement or closing statement. The licensee bears the burden of proving such notification was provided and accepted by the borrower. The commission may adopt rules establishing criteria as to what constitutes a material change.

Section 8. Paragraph (v) is added to subsection (2) of section 494.0041, Florida Statutes, to read:

494.0041 Administrative penalties and fines; license violations.--

- (1) Whenever the office finds a person in violation of an act specified in subsection (2), it may enter an order imposing one or more of the following penalties against the person:
 - (a) Revocation of a license or registration.
- (b) Suspension of a license or registration subject to reinstatement upon satisfying all reasonable conditions that the office specifies.
- (c) Placement of the licensee, registrant, or applicant on probation for a period of time and subject to all reasonable conditions that the office specifies.
 - (d) Issuance of a reprimand.

- (e) Imposition of a fine in an amount not exceeding \$5,000 for each count or separate offense.
 - (f) Denial of a license or registration.

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(2) Each of the following acts constitutes a ground for which the disciplinary actions specified in subsection (1) may be taken:

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- (v) In any mortgage transaction, violating any provision of the federal Real Estate Settlement Procedure Act, as amended, 12 U.S.C. ss. 2601 et seq., the federal Truth In Lending Act, as amended, 15 U.S.C. ss. 1601 et seq., or any regulations adopted under such acts.
- Section 9. Subsection (1) of section 494.0064, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
- 494.0064 Renewal of mortgage lender's license; branch office license renewal.--
- (1) (a) The office shall renew a mortgage lender license upon receipt of a completed renewal form, certification from the licensee that the licensee currently meets the minimum net worth requirements of s. 494.0061 or s. 494.0065, certification from the licensee that during the preceding 2 years the licensee's principal representative and loan originators have completed the professional continuing education requirements of s. 494.00295, and the nonrefundable renewal fee of \$575. The office shall renew a correspondent lender license upon receipt of a completed renewal form, certification from the licensee that the licensee currently meets the minimum net worth requirements of s. 494.0062, certification from the licensee that during the preceding 2 years the licensee's principal representative and loan originators have completed the professional continuing education requirements of s. 494.00295, and a nonrefundable renewal fee of \$475. Each licensee shall pay at the time of

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renewal a nonrefundable fee of \$325 for the renewal of each branch office license.

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- (b) A licensee shall also submit, as part of the renewal form, certification that during the preceding 2 years the licensee's principal representative and loan originators have completed the professional continuing education requirements of s. 494.00295.
- Section 10. Subsection (8) and paragraph (a) of subsection (10) of section 494.0067, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsections (11) and (12) are added to that section, to read:

 494.0067 Requirements of licensees under ss. 494.006-
- Each licensee under ss. 494.006-494.0077 shall provide an applicant for a mortgage loan a good faith estimate of the costs the applicant can reasonably expect to pay in obtaining a mortgage loan. The good faith estimate of costs shall be mailed or delivered to the applicant within a reasonable time after the licensee receives a written loan application from the applicant. The estimate of costs may be provided to the applicant by a person other than the licensee making the loan. The good faith estimate must identify the recipient of all payments charged to the borrower and, except for all fees to be received by the mortgage brokerage business and the mortgage lender or correspondent mortgage lender, may be disclosed in generic terms, such as, but not limited to, paid to appraiser, officials, title company, or any other third-party service provider. The licensee bears the burden of proving such disclosures were provided to the borrower. The commission may

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adopt rules that set forth the disclosure requirements of this section.

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- lender licensee shall require the principal representative and all loan originators, not currently licensed as mortgage brokers pursuant to s. 494.0033, who perform services for the licensee to complete 14 hours of professional continuing education during each biennial license period. The education shall cover primary and subordinate mortgage financing transactions and the provisions of this chapter and the rules adopted under this chapter.
- The disclosures in this subsection must be furnished in writing at the time an adjustable rate mortgage loan is offered to the borrower and whenever the terms of the adjustable rate mortgage loan offered have a material change prior to closing. The lender shall furnish the disclosures relating to adjustable rate mortgages in a format prescribed by ss. 226.18 and 226.19 of Regulation Z of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, as amended, its commentary, as amended, and the federal Truth in Lending Act, 15 U.S.C. ss. 1601 et seq., as amended, together with the Consumer Handbook on Adjustable Rate Mortgages, as amended, published by the Federal Reserve Board and the Federal Home Loan Bank Board or a suitable substitute for the handbook. The licensee bears the burden of proving such disclosures were provided to the borrower. The commission may adopt rules establishing criteria as to what constitutes a material change and what constitutes a suitable substitute for the handbook.

under ss. 494.006-494.0077 shall notify a borrower of any material changes in the terms of a mortgage loan previously offered to the borrower within 3 business days after being made aware of such changes by the lender but not less than 3 business days before the signing of the settlement or closing statement. The licensee bears the burden of proving such notification was provided and accepted by the borrower. The commission may adopt rules establishing criteria as to what constitutes a material change.

Section 11. Paragraph (v) is added to subsection (2) of section 494.0072, Florida Statutes, subsection (3) of that section is amended, and subsection (5) is added to that section, to read:

494.0072 Administrative penalties and fines; license violations.--

- (1) Whenever the office finds a person in violation of an act specified in subsection (2), it may enter an order imposing one or more of the following penalties against that person:
 - (a) Revocation of a license or registration.
- (b) Suspension of a license or registration, subject to reinstatement upon satisfying all reasonable conditions that the office specifies.
- (c) Placement of the licensee or applicant on probation for a period of time and subject to all reasonable conditions that the office specifies.
 - (d) Issuance of a reprimand.

(e) Imposition of a fine in an amount not exceeding \$5,000 for each count or separate offense.

(f) Denial of a license or registration.

- (2) Each of the following acts constitutes a ground for which the disciplinary actions specified in subsection (1) may be taken:
- (v) In any mortgage transaction, violating any provision of the federal Real Estate Settlement Procedure Act, as amended, 12 U.S.C. ss. 2601 et seq., the federal Truth In Lending Act, as amended, 15 U.S.C. ss. 1601 et seq., or any regulations adopted under such acts.
- (3) A mortgage lender or correspondent mortgage lender is subject to the disciplinary actions specified in subsection (1) if any officer, member, director, control person, joint venturer, or ultimate equitable owner of a 10-percent or greater interest in the mortgage lender or correspondent mortgage lender, associate, or employee of the mortgage lender or correspondent mortgage lender violates or has violated any provision of subsection (2).
- (5) A principal representative of a mortgage lender or correspondent mortgage lender is subject to the disciplinary actions specified in subsection (1) for violations of subsection (2) by associates or employees in the course of an association or employment with the correspondent mortgage lender or the mortgage lender. The principal representative is only subject to suspension or revocation for associate or employee actions if there is a pattern of repeated violations by associates or

employees or if the principal broker or principal representative had knowledge of the violations.

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Section 12. Section 494.0073, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

494.0073 Mortgage lender or correspondent mortgage lender when acting as a mortgage brokerage business.--Sections 494.006-494.0077 do not prohibit a mortgage lender or correspondent mortgage lender from acting as a mortgage brokerage business. However, in mortgage transactions in which a mortgage lender or correspondent mortgage lender acts as a mortgage brokerage business, the provisions of ss. 494.0038, 494.0042, 494.004(8), and 494.0043(1), (2), and (3) apply.

Section 13. This act shall take effect October 1, 2007.