

**Opening Statement of Rodney E. Hood**

**Board Member Nominee**

**National Credit Union Administration**

**Before the**

**Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs**

**United States Senate**

**October 25, 2005**

Chairman Shelby, Senator Sarbanes, and Distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to meet with you on behalf of my nomination to serve on the Board of the National Credit Union Administration.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to President Bush for nominating me to this position. I would also like to thank Senator Elizabeth Dole and Senator Richard Burr for their generous remarks. I am humbled by their kind and gracious words and would like to acknowledge and applaud their great leadership and service for my home state of North Carolina.

While my parents are not here today in person, I feel the warmth of their presence as they watch from Heaven. I am thankful to them for bequeathing to me a strong value system. A value system that reflects humility, honesty, hard work, and compassion. I believe that these values have helped me make a difference in the lives of many people during my 17 years in the private sector and in public service.

If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of a NCUA Board Member along with my new colleagues. I am committed to listening

carefully, working hard, and doing my best to ensure the safety and soundness of the nation's 8,800 federally-insured credit unions.

Now in existence for more than 150 years, credit unions play an important role as a financial partner for 84 million people. As not-for-profit financial cooperatives, the charter of these institutions centers on servicing the financial needs of their members and empowering Americans from all walks of life to achieve financial stability.

I have a profound appreciation for community empowerment which was developed early on in my youth as a missionary in Africa. There, in the rural landscape, I saw the hard work, struggle, and resilient character of people who made their living from farming. I learned and saw that strong, struggling people are at the heart of what any country is about. That is why I am pleased to now be in a position where I can continue to serve my country by overseeing the institutions that give hardworking people access to capital.

I realize that credit unions are a critical element in helping families achieve the American dream of homeownership; assisting entrepreneurs in creating small businesses; and providing the trusted mechanisms for families to save for the future.

President Bush said it best when he said, "The true measure of compassion is more than good intentions, it is good results." I have been blessed and fortunate to work at some of America's most respected financial institutions which sought to empower stability and prosperity in our local communities. While at North Carolina Mutual and Wells Fargo, I held management posts that allowed me to promote community development and outreach initiatives to underserved communities. I served on the board of the Wells Fargo Housing Foundation, and managed public – private partnerships with results-oriented housing providers such as the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, Habitat for Humanity, and the National Council of La Raza. Having served as a Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Officer at Bank of America and the National Director of Affordable Housing at Wells Fargo, I have been both an advocate and provider of affordable housing and small business lending. In those positions, I oversaw loan

programs, managed teams of regional community development managers and community development loan specialists, and worked with our credit policy group to evaluate and manage credit risks. I have also provided financial education to underserved communities by conducting seminars on homebuyer education, small business lending, and credit repair. In addition, I worked with regulators from the Office of the Comptroller of Currency to review the bank's lending activities, credit quality, and community development outreach efforts. These experiences directly exposed me to the importance of regulatory review, financial soundness, and risk management.

At USDA, I help administer a \$43 billion dollar loan portfolio comprised of over 400,000 loans -- to individuals seeking homeownership, private entities to provide affordable rental housing, and to local government entities to fund schools, hospitals, and first responder services. Throughout my career, I have nurtured and developed the core competencies that I will rely upon in assessing the safety and soundness of America's credit unions.

I come to NCUA with a mindset based on the following tenets:

- First, I will work hard to ensure that credit unions remain safe and sound financial institutions.
- Second, I will strive to be recognized as a fair and thoughtful regulator – one who realizes the value and necessity of regulation while being cognizant of the impact of arduous regulation.
- Third, I will bring focused leadership and management to NCUA while seeking to ensure efficient operations and prudent use of resources.
- Fourth and finally, I understand the importance of disclosure and transparency and will work closely with the Members of this Committee, and all members of

Congress, to ensure the financial integrity of credit unions in a rapidly changing environment.

Since joining the federal government as Associate Administrator for the Rural Housing Service at USDA, I have been honored to work side by side with and lead some of the most dedicated and hard working career staff around. And should I be honored by your confidence, I look forward to doing so at NCUA as well.

Mr. Chairman and the Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you this morning and would like to thank you again for your courtesy and consideration. I welcome any questions you may have.