



January 6, 2021

Monica R. Valentine, Executive Director
Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board
441 G Street, NW, Suite 1155
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Ms. Valentine:

The Greater Washington Society of Certified Public Accountants (GWSCPA) Federal Issues and Standards Committee (FISC) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) Exposure Draft (ED) Interpretation, *Clarification of Non-federal Non-entity FBWT Classification (SFFAS 1, Paragraph 31): An Interpretation of SFFAS 1 and SFFAS 31*.

The GWSCPA consists of approximately 3,300 members, and the FISC includes nearly 20 GWSCPA members who are active in financial management, accounting, and auditing in the Federal sector. We sincerely appreciate the opportunity by the Board to share our views.

Our responses to the ED questions are included below.

Q1. Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards (SFFAS) 1, *Accounting for Selected Assets and Liabilities*, paragraph 31 provides:

A federal entity's fund balance with the Treasury (FBWT) is the aggregate amount of funds in the entity's accounts with Treasury for which the entity is authorized to make expenditures and pay liabilities. FBWT is an intragovernmental item, except for fiduciary or other non-federal non-entity FBWT. From the reporting entity's perspective, the reporting entity's FBWT is an asset because it represents the entity's claim to the federal government's resources. However, from the perspective of the federal government as a whole, it is not an asset; and while it represents a commitment to make resources available to federal departments, agencies, programs and other entities, it is not a liability. In contrast, fiduciary and other non-federal non-entity FBWT is not intragovernmental, and it represents a liability of the appropriate Treasury component and of the federal government as a whole to the non-federal beneficiaries.

SFFAS 1, paragraph 31 was amended by SFFAS 31, *Accounting for Fiduciary Activities*, in an effort to clarify the definition and reporting for fiduciary amounts on deposit in the U.S. Treasury and to distinguish fiduciary FBWT from federal component entities' FBWT. While making this distinction, the amendment added the phrase "other non-federal non-entity FBWT." The Board acknowledges that the amendments did not define the phrase "other non-

federal non-entity FBWT” and the added phrase contributed to the lack of clarity regarding classification and presentation of non-federal non-entity FBWT. The proposed Interpretation would clarify the classification by explaining the inclusion of the phrase “other non-federal non-entity FBWT” was intended to provide for similar treatment of activities that are comparable with fiduciary activity but that had not been identified specifically in SFFAS 31. The Board did not intend to require similar treatment for activities that were explicitly excluded from the provisions of SFFAS 31. Although amounts received in deposit accounts may come from non-federal non-entity sources for unfilled orders, these amounts do not qualify as fiduciary activity because SFFAS 31 specifically excludes unearned revenue from fiduciary activity reporting. Therefore, it would be inconsistent to apply the phrase “other non-federal non-entity” to unearned revenue, including amounts received from non-federal sources for unfilled orders. Hence, non-federal non-entity amounts received for unfilled orders that are reflected in FBWT should be reported as an intragovernmental asset of the component reporting entity.

a. Do you agree or disagree with the proposed guidance? Please provide the rationale for your answer.

A1. The FISC generally agrees that the proposed guidance clarifies that non-federal non-entity amounts received for unfilled orders that are reflected in Fund Balance with Treasury (FBWT) should be reported as an intragovernmental asset of the component reporting entity. The FISC recommends that the Board also provides a definition and further guidance on what would be considered “other non-federal non-entity FBWT”, as referred to in the Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards 1, *Accounting for Selected Assets and Liabilities* (SFFAS No. 1). Without a clear definition and the specific guidance, reporting entities may not consistently report FBWT in their financial statements.

Additional Comment:

The term “Treasury component” used in paragraph 31 of SFFAS No. 1 needs to be defined to clarify which entities are referred to in the last sentence.

This comment letter was reviewed by the members of FISC, and represents the consensus views of our members.

Very truly yours,

Sherif R. Ettefa
FISC Chair