



## Reform Pension Board

A Covenant of Trust – ברית אמונה

May 12, 2014

The Honorable Michael Conaway  
Chairman  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Austin Scott  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commodity Exchanges, Energy, and Credit  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1010 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commodity Exchanges, Energy, and Credit  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1010 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Dear Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Peterson, Chairman Scott, and  
Ranking Member Scott:

On behalf of Reform Pension Board, I write to strongly urge that the CFTC reauthorization legislation include a provision expanding the church plan exemption from the commodity pool operator ("CPO") and commodity trading advisor ("CTA") rules under the Commodity Exchange Act ("CEA") to include church plan-related accounts. In light of the fact that church plans are not the intended target of these rules, church plans are generally exempt from the CPO and CTA requirements; however, the exemption does not include church plan-related accounts.

**CHAIR**  
Daryl Messenger

**VICE CHAIRMAN**  
Rabbi Howard Shapiro

**SECRETARY/TREASURER**  
Rabbi Bruce Raff, RJE

**MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**  
Rabbi Martin P. Beifeld Jr.  
Rabbi Richard A. Block  
Rabbi Steven A. Fox  
Rabbi Ronne Friedman  
Melissa S. Johnson  
Gus Kuhn, III  
Michael H. Laufer  
Norman Leopold  
Daryl Messenger  
Sharon Morton, RJE  
Rabbi Bruce Raff, RJE  
Richard Rosenberg  
Barbara G. Sidel  
Rabbi Howard Shapiro  
Rabbi Arnold I. Sher  
Richard M. Shrier  
John R. Stern  
G. Leonard Teitelbaum  
Rabbi Martin S. Weiner

**HONORARY CHAIRMAN**  
Ronald M. Cohen

**HONORARY CHAIRMAN**  
John R. Stern

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Michael A. Kimmel

**CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER  
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**  
Paul T. Rockfeld

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EMERITUS**  
Robert M. Koppel

REPRESENTING:  
CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS • UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM • NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION • ASSOCIATION OF REFORM JEWISH EDUCATORS • PROGRAM  
AND ENGAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS OF REFORM JUDAISM • PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION OF REFORM DAY SCHOOLS • EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS OF REFORM JUDAISM

355 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10017-6603 VOICE: (212) 681-1818 FAX: (212) 681-9340 WEBSITE: www.rpb.org EMAIL: PensionBoard@rpb.org



## Reform Pension Board

ברית אמונה – A Covenant of Trust

The Reform Pension Board is a Church Plan 403(b) Trust established to serve the institutions, congregations, professionals and staff, and professional associations of the Reform Jewish Movement. It provides retirement plans, life insurance and long-term disability insurance programs to benefit the participating organizations and individuals.

Church benefits boards often use investment managers or advisers that engage in commodities transactions for the purposes of diversification and hedging. Church benefits boards also have the ability to pool plan assets with other church-related funds purely for investment management purposes for the benefit of the church.

In contrast to the CEA and implementing regulations, the securities laws contain necessary exemptions for church plans and church plan-related accounts for the same reason noted above. Under these laws, church plans are not required to register or report as investment companies, register securities held, or disclose information about the securities they hold. Church plans and church plan-related accounts should similarly be exempted from the commodity pool definition and from CTA registration requirements. The exemptions would provide parity between securities and commodities laws concerning church plans and church plan-related accounts. Additionally, the exemptions would reduce the cost to church plans and would ensure they have the full benefit of commodities investments that provide diversification, opportunities to hedge, and returns.

The ultimate benefit would be to clergy and church lay worker participants in the retirement and welfare plans, who have devoted their lives to religious institutions. Consequently, this correction has bipartisan support and is non-controversial. We respectfully urge the inclusion of this much-needed provision in the CFTC reauthorization bill. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Kimmel  
Executive Director