

**Opening Statement of Congressman Tom Feeney
To the Committee on Financial Services
Regarding Hearing on Regulatory Oversight of the Government Sponsored
Enterprises
September 10, 2003**

Mr. Chairman thank you for the opportunity to speak on these very important issues. It is good to see you again, my friend, Secretary Martinez, as well as you, Secretary Snow. For a number of years I have been involved in the real estate industry in Florida and have seen first hand the impact that homeownership can have on families and communities. I can tell you that homeownership helps promote a safer and a more involved community. America was the first country on Earth where the average family could own the home they lived in and the land they lived on. As we hear today from Secretary Snow and Martinez, I would encourage all of us to listen to and understand the competing view in this debate to ensure homeownership opportunities remain available to millions of Americans. I would also reinforce with all the members of the committee and the Administration that whatever action is taken following these hearings we should take great care to not alter the mission, charter or status of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

Nothing we know about the events that have been uncovered at Freddie Mac suggest that there is any fundamental need to change the way the housing finance system operates. It is clear that what we have here is a failure of individuals both at Freddie Mac and at OFHEO. While it's completely appropriate of us to make adjustments to the regulator, we must not regulate, micromanage or centrally plan individual human behavior. However, we can do tremendous harm to the most successful housing finance system in

the world if we overreact. It's also critical that we not be tempted by those who would have us do in legislation what they have failed to do in the marketplace.

I look forward to hearing from Secretaries Snow and Martinez and working with the Committee on a successful resolution to this very important issue that will impact millions of homebuyers across this nation for years to come.