"Never underestimate the power of the eyebrow."

? comedian Jack Black was born on this day in 1969

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State Regulators Seek Industry Input on Mortgage Loan Originators Licensing Test

State financial service regulators launched a survey of licensed mortgage loan originators today to gather information on various job functions as part of a process to validate the nationwide licensing exam.

All state-licensed mortgage loan originators received an email invitation to participate in the survey from the State Regulatory Registry, which manages the Nationwide Multistate Licensing System on behalf of state regulators. License holders who do not complete the survey will receive a follow-up email. The survey closes on Sept. 25.

The survey will inform a job analysis of mortgage originators as part of a process to ensure the validity of the SAFE MLO National Test. A job analysis is a standard practice
in the testing industry to ensure licensure or certification exams reflect the knowledge and skills needed for a given profession.

Justin Accola, chair of the Mortgage Testing and Education Board, and supervisory compliance examiner at the Texas Department of Savings and Mortgage Lending: “I hope every licensee will take the survey to make sure we accurately test the knowledge and skills an MLO needs today. Restricting licenses to proficient new mortgage loan originators will help protect consumers from would-be bad actors.”

On July 30, 2008, The Secure and Fair Enforcement for Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 (SAFE Act) established standards for the licensing and registration of all mortgage originators. The Act requires the Nationwide Multistate Licensing System to develop a qualified written test to measure candidates’ knowledge in ethics; federal law; state law; laws and regulations covering fraud, consumer protection, fair lending and the nontraditional mortgage marketplace; among other topics.

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**Students to Study Community Bank Response to Pandemic and Racial Inequality**

The Conference of State Bank Supervisors is calling on students to examine how community banks have responded to major forces that impacted the nation this year: the COVID-19 pandemic and a renewed commitment to diversity and inclusion.

“This year brought enormous health, economic and social challenges to the nation,” said CSBS Senior Executive Vice President Michael L. Stevens. “Students will provide a vital look at how community banks pivoted to serve their communities during the pandemic and resulting economic crisis, as well as how they are evaluating their culture and practices after the outcry of racial injustice across the nation this summer.”
Registration for the 2021 Community Bank Case Study will begin on Tuesday, September 8, with all statements of interest due by Jan. 11, 2021.

The annual competition is open to undergraduate students in all fields of study as an opportunity to gain valuable first-hand knowledge of the banking industry. Student teams will partner with local community banks to conduct original case studies.

The top three winners receive scholarships, and their work will be published in the CSBS Journal of Community Bank Case Studies. The first-place winner will also be invited to present at the CSBS-Federal Reserve-FDIC Community Banking in the 21st Century Research and Policy Conference.

A team from Mississippi State University won the 2020 case study competition, which focused on the impact of the Bank Secrecy Act and anti-money laundering requirements on community banks. The students will present their findings at this year’s research conference on October 1.