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Synergy Credit Union disappointed in federal regulator's decision to ban use of common terms "to bank" and "banking" by credit unions

Lloydminster, Sask. - On Friday, June 30, the federal Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) issued an advisory that essentially banned credit unions from using the term "banking" to describe the services they offer Canadians. Their advisory takes a strict interpretation of the Bank Act, and based on this interpretation, the federal government could lay criminal charges against any credit union that uses the term "bank," "banker," or "banking."

"We are obviously disappointed in this decision. This ruling prohibits the use of everyday common language and puts credit unions at a distinct disadvantage," said Synergy Credit Union CEO Glenn Stang. "Our credit union has the same protection as banks, and offers the same financial services as federally chartered banks. This decision by OSFI makes it extremely difficult for our credit union, and for credit unions across this country, to compete fairly and without the fear of facing criminal penalty."

Credit unions have used the verb "bank" and the term "banking" to describe what they do, without penalty, for years with the tacit support of federal officials.

"This will be a costly and unnecessary transition for credit unions and their members to undertake," said Synergy Board of Directors Chair Don Wheler. "This ruling is out of line with common sense practices that we have come to expect from OSFI."

Locally, Synergy Credit Union contributes to numerous non-profit organizations and events, while employing more than 200 people. In 2016, more than \$2.9 million was paid to members through its ProfitShares program. Nationally, in 2015, credit unions added \$6.5 billion to Canada's economic growth.

To view the Canadian Credit Union Association's response to the advisory, on behalf of the Canadian credit union industry, [click here](#).

About Synergy Credit Union

Synergy Credit Union is a member-owned financial institution serving more than 27,000 members from 10 communities within west-central Saskatchewan. Synergy Credit Union is the fourth largest credit union in the province of Saskatchewan and is one of the leading credit unions in Canada, with more than \$1 billion in assets. Synergy Credit Union provides core banking services through the traditional branch network, the Canada-wide AccuLink ATM network, online banking, automated telephone banking, mobile web banking, as well as through the Member Contact Centre and by SMS texting. More complex and advanced services, such as financial advice and analysis, are delivered by specialists who may be located in select branches or available to meet in a location of the member's choice, by request.