



First Niagara Receives Regulatory Approval from the OCC for HSBC Branch Acquisition

Path is Now Clear to May 18th Transaction Completion

BUFFALO, N.Y. – April 9, 2012 - The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) has approved First Niagara Bank N.A.'s acquisition of Upstate New York and Connecticut branches from HSBC Bank USA, N.A.

“We are very pleased to have received the OCC’s approval which was the final requirement to completing the transaction on May 18th,” said First Niagara President and Chief Executive Officer John R. Koelmel. “We have begun communicating with our customers as to what they can expect in the weeks ahead and I am fully confident that our team will again deliver a smooth transition. Once complete, our more than 200 locations across Upstate New York will provide customers with even greater access and convenience to the First Niagara team as well as our products and services.”

About First Niagara

First Niagara is a wholly-owned subsidiary of First Niagara Bank, N.A. When First Niagara completes its acquisition of the HSBC branches, the regional bank will have an enhanced leadership position in the Northeast, with nearly 430 locations, \$30 billion in total deposits, \$38 billion in assets and more than 6,000 employees serving consumers, businesses and communities across New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Massachusetts. The transaction will also provide First Niagara with number-one retail market share across Upstate New York, virtually doubling its number of branches in New York State to more than 200, stretching from Buffalo to Albany and down through the Hudson Valley. For more information, visit www.fnfg.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

Certain statements in this document are “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act. Words such as “believe,” “estimate,” “will be,” “will,” “would,” “expect,” “anticipate,” “plan,” “project,” “intend,” “could,” “should” or other similar words or expressions often identify forward-looking statements. Such statements are based on current expectations only, and are subject to certain risks, uncertainties and assumptions, many of which are beyond our control. Should one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or should underlying assumptions prove incorrect, including risks, assumptions and uncertainties relating to the acquired branches, completion of the transaction, regulatory approvals for the transaction, integration of the acquired branches and related operations and any required or planned divestitures and the related process, actual results, performance or achievements may vary materially from those anticipated, estimated or projected. More information about the factors that could cause actual results to materially differ is contained in our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. We undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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