FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM
Formations of, Acquisitions by, and Mergers of Bank Holding Companies

The companies listed in this notice have applied to the Board for approval, pursuant to the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 (12 U.S.C. 1841 et seq.) (BHC Act), Regulation Y (12 CFR Part 225), and all other applicable statutes and regulations to become a bank holding company and/or to acquire the assets or the ownership of, control of, or the power to vote shares of a bank or bank holding company and all of the banks and nonbanking companies owned by the bank holding company, including the companies listed below.

The applications listed below, as well as other related filings required by the Board, are available for immediate inspection at the Federal Reserve Bank indicated. The applications will also be available for inspection at the offices of the Board of Governors. Interested persons may express their views in writing on the standards enumerated in the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1842(c)). If the proposal also involves the acquisition of a nonbanking company, the review also includes whether the acquisition of the nonbanking company complies with the standards in section 4 of the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1843). Unless otherwise noted, nonbanking activities will be conducted throughout the United States.

Unless otherwise noted, comments regarding each of these applications must be received at the Reserve Bank indicated or the offices of the Board of Governors not later than December 12, 2013.

A. Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond (Adam M. Drimer, Assistant Vice President), 701 East Byrd Street, Richmond, Virginia 23261–4528:

1. CapGen Capital Group III LLC and CapGen Capital Group III LP, both in New York, New York; to acquire additional voting shares, for a total of 25 percent of, the voting shares of Seacoast Bank Corporation of Florida, and thereby indirectly acquire additional voting shares of Seacoast National Bank, both in Stuart, Florida.

Federal Communications Commission
Gary D. Michaels,
Deputy Chief, Auctions and Spectrum Access Division, WTB.
[FR Doc. 2013–27444 Filed 11–14–13; 8:45 am]
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FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
Public Workshop: Follow-On Biologics: Impact of Recent Legislative and Regulatory Naming Proposals on Competition

AGENCY: Federal Trade Commission.
ACTION: Notice of workshop and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Federal Trade Commission (“FTC” or “Commission”) announces it will hold a workshop to explore competition issues involving biologic medicines and follow-on biologics. The workshop will focus on the potential impact of state regulations and naming conventions on such competition, including how regulations may be structured to facilitate competition while still protecting patient health and safety. The experience of developing follow-on competition from small-molecule generic drugs will be considered and, as relevant, compared. Topics will include the circumstances under which potential entrants would be willing to invest in the development of follow-on biologics in order to use the abbreviated regulatory approval pathway created by federal legislation. The workshop will also survey the experience of other countries with regulatory systems that enable follow-on biologic competition. This Notice poses a series of questions about which the FTC seeks public comment. The FTC will take these comments into account in its examination of these topics.

DATES: The workshop will be held on December 10, 2013, in the FTC headquarters at 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC. The FTC workshop is free and open to the public and will also be webcast. Prior to the workshop, the Commission will publish an agenda and further information on its Web site. Comments in response to this notice must be received on or before March 1, 2014.

ADDRESSES: Interested parties may file a comment online or on paper, by following the instructions in the Request for Comment part of the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section below. Write “Workshop on Follow-On Biologics: Project No. P131208” on your comment, and file your comment online at https://ftcpublic.commentworks.com/

ftc/biologicsworkshop, by following the instructions on the web-based form. If you prefer to file your comment on paper, mail or deliver your comment to the following address: Federal Trade Commission, Office of the Secretary, Room H–113 (Annex X), 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20580.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Jex, Attorney Advisor, Office of Policy Planning, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20580; (202) 326–3273; biosimilars@ftc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Trade Commission vigorously promotes competition in the health care industry through enforcement, study, and advocacy. Competition in health care markets benefits consumers by helping to control costs and prices, improve quality of care, promote innovative products, services, and delivery models, and expand access to health care goods and services. As addressed below, this proposed workshop is consistent with these FTC priorities.

I. Background: Follow-On Competition in Pharmaceutical Markets

In particular, the Commission has sought to protect competition among pharmaceutical products, including generic drugs providing price competition against brand-name drugs. Until relatively recently, the potential for follow-on competition was limited to products involving traditional “small-molecule” generic drugs. Producers of these drugs obtain approval from the Food & Drug Administration (“FDA”) pursuant to an abbreviated regulatory pathway established by the Hatch-Waxman Act.1

Biologic medicines have now become among the most important pharmaceutical products in the United States. Biologics comprise the fastest growing sector within pharmaceuticals, and target such difficult to treat diseases as cancer, diabetes, and multiple sclerosis. “Biologics” include, for


example, vaccines, antibiotics, blood products, proteins, and monoclonal antibodies. Although their characteristics vary widely, "biologics are typically larger and more structurally complex than traditional drugs (also known as 'small-molecule' drugs)." Thus, "[they] are substantially more expensive to develop, manufacture, and monitor [than small-molecule drugs]." Biologics generally are very expensive; the cost of one year of treatment can range from $50,000 to $250,000, and access to therapeutic biologics is often restricted because of cost. Currently, biologics account for approximately 25 percent of the $320 billion spent annually in the United States for pharmaceutical treatments.

The FDA approves biologics under the Public Health Service Act ("PHSA"). To encourage competition in the market for biologic, in 2010 Congress passed the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act ("BPCIA"), which amended the PHSA to establish an abbreviated regulatory pathway for FDA approval of follow-on biologics. The provisions of the BPCIA differ in some respects from those of the Hatch-Waxman Act. Still, some brief background information on the development of generic drug competition is helpful to understand how follow-on biologic competition may develop.

A. Competition From Generic Drugs

To facilitate follow-on competition to brand-name small-molecule drugs, in 1984 Congress passed the Hatch-Waxman Act. This Act created an abbreviated regulatory pathway through which safe and effective generic drugs could obtain approval from the FDA to enter a market without replicating all of the costly testing required for a brand-name drug. To be approved under Hatch-Waxman, the applicant must show that its generic drug product is "bioequivalent" to its "brand-name" counterpart, the generic drug is given the same active ingredient name as the branded drug product.

Since 1984, the FDA has "approved more than 8,000 generic drugs, which has resulted in hundreds of billions of dollars in cost savings to consumers." Overall, generic drug competition has substantially reduced the price of certain prescription drug prices and total prescription drug expenditures, and increased access to therapeutic drugs for more Americans.

B. Competition From Follow-On Biologics

No abbreviated approval process for follow-on biologics ("FOBs") existed until 2010. The BPCIA created an abbreviated licensure pathway for two types of follow-on biologics: Biosimilars and interchangeable biologicals.
products.18 Under the BPCIA, a “biosimilar” product is “highly similar to the reference product notwithstanding minor differences in clinically inactive components,” and “there are no clinically meaningful differences between the biological product and the [FDA-licensed biological] reference product in terms of safety, purity, and potency of the product.” 19 The BPCIA requirements for an “interchangeable” biologic product are more stringent. An interchangeable biologic product is expected to produce the same clinical result as the FDA-licensed biological reference product in any given patient. Furthermore, for a product administered more than once, the safety and reduced efficacy risks of switching from the reference drug to an interchangeable drug, or alternating between the reference drug and an interchangeable drug, cannot be greater than the risks posed by use of the reference product without alternating or switching.20

BPCA provides that interchangeable biologics “may be substituted for the reference biologic without the intervention of the health care provider who prescribed the reference product.” 21 It does not address substitution of non-interchangeable biosimilars. The FDA is authorized to issue regulations that define the requirements for applicants claiming “interchangeability” or “biosimilar” status, but the agency has not finalized guidelines on these issues.22

In 2009, the Commission issued a report, Emerging Healthcare Issues: Follow-On Biologic Drug Competition (“FTC FOB Report”).23 which discussed the results of its November 21, 2008 workshop to examine “whether the price of biologics might be reduced by competition if there were a statutory process to encourage [FOBs] to enter and compete with pioneer biologics once a pioneer drug’s patents have expired.” 24 In its report, the Commission noted that the scientific differences between biologic and small-molecule drug products would complicate efforts to devise an approval process for FOBs.25 Biologics are often three-dimensional folded proteins, derived from living matter or manufactured within living cells using recombinant DNA biotechnologies.26 They are generally more complex and immunogenic, and more complex to manufacture, than traditional small-molecule drugs.27

Indeed, “[s]mall changes in the manufacturing process can lead to variations in the final product, which can in turn affect safety and clinical effectiveness. Even biologics produced in the same manufacturing facility will have some variation between lots.”28 As of 2011, FDA experts concluded that, “for the foreseeable future,” at least some clinical trials would likely to be required in order to assure the therapeutic equivalence of FOBs.29 Thus, compared to the relatively inexpensive and simple abbreviated approval pathway for generic drugs, the abbreviated pathway for biosimilars and interchangeables will likely be expensive and time consuming.30

Accordingly, the Commission’s report predicted that FOB competitors would offer less price competition to reference biologics than the price competition generated by generic drugs to branded drugs.31 Nonetheless, the Commission pointed out, given the enormous costs of biologics, even modest FOB discounts could lead to significant consumer savings.32 As the Congressional Budget Office (“CBO”) has estimated,33 increased FOB competition leading to lower biologics prices could save consumers millions of dollars each year.

II. Workshop Topics

“Biologics are among the biggest-selling medicines today. In 2010, seven out of the top 20 selling drugs in the U.S. were biologics.”34 Currently, fourteen biosimilars are believed to be in clinical development in the United States, but to date, no FOBs have been approved by the FDA under the abbreviated pathway offered by the BPCA.35

As was the case with small-molecule generic drugs, the future of FOB competition may be influenced by state laws that regulate the substitution of biosimilars or interchangeable biologic products for reference biologic products. The ability of FOBs to compete against reference biologic products will also depend on whether they are allowed to have the same nonproprietary names. The workshop will also examine the evolution of FOB competition in the United States so far, including possible


23 FTC FOB Report, supra note 11, exec. summ. at i.

24 Id. exec. summ. at ii.

25 Id. at 8–9.


27 Health Policy Brief: Biosimilars, supra note 2, at 1.


29 Id. at v; CBO Report, supra note 7, at 1.


31 Nature Biotech., supra note 27.


33 The CBO predicted that the BCPIA, if enacted, would “reduce total expenditures on biologics in the United States by $0.2 billion over the 2009–2013 period and by about $25 billion over the 2014–2018 period.” CBO Report, supra note 7, at 1.


35 Steven Kozlowski, Director, Office of Biotechnology Products, U.S. Food & Drug Admin., Remarks at 11th EGA International Symposium on Biosimilar Medicines: U.S. FDA Perspectives on Biosimilar Development and Approval (April 26, 2013). Whether any applications have been filled with the FDA is not public.
updates to information included in the FTC’s 2009 FOB Report, and the experience with FOB competition to date in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

A. How State Substitution Laws May Affect the Development of FOB Competition

Whether a follow-on pharmaceutical product is as safe and effective as the brand-name product is a critical issue for doctors and patients considering whether to switch from a brand-name to a follow-on pharmaceutical product. States struggled with this issue as generic drug competition evolved during the 1970s. At first, many state laws prevented the substitution of generic for branded drugs. As states began to consider whether and, if so, how to modify these laws, the FTC also examined whether state anti-substitution laws then in effect struck the appropriate balance between legitimate public health concerns and free market competition.30

The FTC Staff’s report, Drug Product Selection, concluded that the FDA approval process would result in the approval of safe and effective generic drugs that would be therapeutically equivalent to the reference branded drugs; therefore, the use of such drugs would not create undue public health risks.37 Moreover, the FTC Staff concluded, if pharmacists were free to dispense generic drugs without unnecessary regulatory hurdles, generic drugs would generate price competition that would benefit consumers.38

Many state legislatures reached the same conclusion and legislated a variety of methods to encourage generic drug substitution. In response, and to support state efforts, the FDA created the so-called “Orange Book” to simplify the states’ efforts, the FDA created the so-called “Orange Book” to simplify the

30 See Drug Product Selection, supra note 12, at 1.
31 See id. at 1.
32 In sum, the FTC Staff Report concluded that (1) “antisubstitution laws impose substantial unwarranted costs on consumers by unduly restricting price competition in the multisource prescription drug market;” and (2) repeal of antishubstitution laws would “produce significant consumer benefits without compromising the quality of health care.” Id. To remedy the situation and facilitate pharmacists’ use of therapeutically equivalent, but less expensive generic drugs, the FTC Staff recommended that the states adopt a Model Drug Product Selection Act. See id. at 1.
34 See Editorial, supra note 30, at 264 (“The question for policymakers is whether they realize how meager the economic advantages are likely to be of introducing a biosimilar onto the market compared with a generic small molecule, especially under the constraints currently being constructed by some state legislatures.”).
35 There may be a federal preemption issue raised by some state restrictions on FOB substitution by pharmacists.

the states may raise costs, and lessen incentives, to develop FOBs, thereby deterring FOB competition. One commentor has questioned whether policymakers realize how “constraints currently being constructed by some state legislatures” reduce the economic rewards of introducing an FOB as compared with a generic drug.45 Questions arise about the costs of complying with all of the provisions in a variety of state laws; whether such provisions are necessary to protect consumers; whether alternative, less burdensome proposals might be sufficient; and whether such proposals and laws are consistent with the standards and definitions established pursuant to the BCPIA.46 The workshop will consider these and related questions, as listed below.

Questions Regarding State FOB Legislative Proposals and Laws

1. How would new state substitution laws passed in 2013, or similar proposals pending in other states, affect competition expected to develop between biosimilar or interchangeable biologics and reference biologics? In the context of state substitution laws, what is the likely competitive impact of a biologic product being designated “interchangeable”?

2. What are the compliance costs associated with new state law requirements? How are those costs likely to affect competition from biosimilar and interchangeable biologics?

3. What are the rationales behind new state proposals and laws for regulating FOB substitution? Which provisions are most important? Are some provisions redundant or otherwise unnecessary?

4. Could an FDA publication concerning biologics and FOBs, comparable to the Orange Book, provide an authoritative listing of FOBs that are biosimilar to or interchangeable with reference biologics? Would such a publication facilitate substitution? Would such a publication need to be limited to interchangeable FOBs, or should it include both biosimilar and interchangeable FOBs?

5. Does the potential for many different state laws regulating FOBs affect the prospects for the development of FOBs? Does the answer differ
between biosimilar versus interchangeable biologic products?

6. Would it be helpful to develop a model state substitution biosimilar law? If so, what provisions should the law include? Should state laws coordinate their guidance with provisions in the BPCIA and guidance from FDA?

B. How Naming Conventions May Affect FOB Competition

As the FTC noted in its FOB report, an FOB’s name can influence physician and patient acceptance of the product as a substitute for the branded biologic.47 “[Institutionalized uncertainty about interchangeability and safety differences between pioneer and FOB products] may be heightened if the FOB product does not share the same name as the pioneer biologic product.”48

B. How Naming Conventions May Affect FOB Competition

A lack of consensus exists regarding the nomenclature to use for FOBs. At

issue is whether biosimilar and interchangeable FOBs should have the same nonproprietary name as the reference biologic. The resolution of this issue has implications for both competition and consumer safety. Differences in the nonproprietary name between a biologic and FOB could affect pharmacy substitution of the FOB for the reference biologic and might cause consumer confusion in the market. On the other hand, some have argued that the absence of adequate “track and trace” systems for biologics requires different FOB and biologic nonproprietary names in order to gather and differentiate adverse events caused by the use of branded biologic or FOB products.51 This workshop will explore the implications of various nonproprietary naming conventions in FOBs for the development of FOBs, FOB competition, and consumer protection.

Questions Related to the Naming of FOBs

1. What has been learned from the experience under Hatch-Waxman about the incentives necessary to encourage physicians and patients to switch


to the approval of biosimilars. Reports indicate that biosimilars have offered price competition in various EU markets, resulting in ten to forty percent price discounts from branded biologics pricing.

At the workshop, the FTC will explore the status of the development of biosimilars in the United States. Further, the FTC will examine other countries’ experiences with the regulation and marketing of biosimilars. The Commission will explore how biosimilar competition has developed and the extent of biosimilar price competition, along with related questions listed below.

Questions Related to Biosimilar Competition in the United States and in Other Countries

1. What, if any, predictions made in the FTC’s 2009 FOB Report should be revised in light of more recent data available on approved biological products or biosimilar development programs?

2. What has been the competitive effect of the market entry of biosimilar competitors in countries with drug regulatory approval standards comparable to those of the U.S. FDA, such as the EU, Australia, or New Zealand? After such entry, have reference biologic manufacturers lowered their prices, offered discounts, engaged in enhanced marketing activities, or increased innovation or next-generation developments?

3. Are there empirical models that could predict the nature of U.S. biosimilar or interchangeable biologics competition based on existing biologic product competition in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, or other countries? Are there empirical models that could predict the nature of U.S. biosimilar or interchangeable biologics competition based on existing competition in specialty drug markets? What factors increase or detract from robust competition between reference biologic and biosimilars or interchangeable biologics in other countries?

4. Based on the experiences in other countries, does competition from biosimilars influence investments in research and development for new biologics, improvements to existing biologics, and the timing and rollout of new and/or improved biologics? Does the market experience with generic drugs provide insights into these issues?

5. What data or empirical evidence exist in Europe or other countries regarding immunogenicity or other serious adverse events, if any, caused by substitution or switching between biosimilar and reference biologics?

III. Request for Comment

You can file a comment online or on paper. For the Commission to consider your comment, we must receive it on or before March 1, 2014. Write “Workshop on Follow-On Biologics: Project No. P131208” on your comment and on the envelope, and mail or deliver it to the following address: Federal Trade Commission, Office of the Secretary, Room H–113 (Annex X), 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20580. If possible, submit your paper comment to the Commission by courier or overnight service. Visit the Commission Web site at http://www.ftc.gov to read this Notice and the news release describing it. The FTC Act and other laws that the Commission administers permit the collection of public comments to consider and use in this proceeding as appropriate. The Commission will consider all timely and responsive public comments that it receives on or before March 1, 2014. You can find more information, including routine uses permitted by the Privacy Act in the Commission’s privacy policy, at http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/privacy.htm.

By direction of the Commission, Donald S. Clark, Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2013–27406 Filed 11–14–13; 8:45 am] BILLSING CODE 6750–01–P


54 See European Comm’n, supra note 53, at 16. See also Health Policy Brief: Biosimilars, supra note 2, at 2 (average price discount on EU biosimilars is “about 25 percent,” and overall EU savings by 2020 “are projected to total $16–43 billion,” although level of biosimilar penetration varies substantially among EU countries, depending on “differences in payment systems and policies, laws related to drug substitution, and the overall size of the generics market within each country”).

55 See European Comm’n, supra note 53, at 9–10 (“The EU is the first region in the world to have set up a legal framework and a regulatory pathway for ‘similar biological medicinal products’, more commonly called ‘biosimilars’. The EU regulatory framework inspired many countries around the world, e.g., Australia, Canada, Japan, Turkey, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, USA etc. as well as the World Health Organisation (WHO ).”). The concept of a “similar biological medicinal product” was adopted in EU pharmaceutical legislation in 2004 and came into effect in 2005. The first biosimilar medicine was approved by the European Commission in 2006.”) The FTC will focus on countries with regulatory approval schemes comparable to those of the FDA.

56 In particular, the written request for confidential treatment that accompanies the comment must include the factual and legal basis for the request, and must identify the specific portions of the comment to be withheld from the public record. See FTC Rule 4.9(c), 16 CFR 4.9(c).