

April 22, 2011

The Honorable Mary L. Schapiro
Chairman
Securities and Exchange Commission
100 F Street NE
Washington, DC 20549

Dear Chairman Schapiro,

Re: Proposed Rules to Implement Section 1502 (Conflict Minerals) of the “Dodd-Frank Act” (S7-40-10)

I’m writing to thank you for all the great work that you and the SEC are doing to formulate the rules in order to implement Section 1502 (Conflict Minerals) of the “Dodd Frank Act.” I support these efforts to make clear for investors and consumers where their dollars are going and to hold us all, consumers, investors, and companies alike, responsible for the consequences of our economic choices.

I am also writing to endorse the position taken by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, as represented in the letter to you from CRS President Ken Hackett and Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard on February 8, 2011.

As the son and brother of people who have worked in the investment business for many years, I have always been keen to understand where my invested money has been going and the unintended consequences of unknowingly investing in companies who may source materials from conflict areas like the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I continue to look for socially responsible opportunities to invest, and I know I am not alone. However, it is often difficult to find this information. Having Section 1502 of the “Dodd Frank Act” properly implemented with strong rules should more readily allow for information on where a company sources its minerals. As a consequence, I and many other investors like me are more likely to invest in a company that is transparent about its supply chain. If there is any doubt in my mind about any possible detrimental effects of my investment, I am far less likely to invest at all.

As a consumer, I want to be able to hold my cell phone and computer and know that I don’t have the blood of Congolese men, women, and children on my hands. Not only do I want to be able to support companies who make it a priority to certify their minerals as conflict-free, but I am more likely to purchase items containing these minerals if I am confident in the ethical nature of the supply chain that has been used to produce them. As it stands now, I purchase as few products as possible that potentially have conflict minerals because I don’t know where those minerals come from. For example, one year ago, I walked into a cell phone store to look at buying a new cell phone. I asked the customer service representative if he knew anything about where the minerals in their phones came from. He had no idea what I was talking about. I didn’t blame him personally, but I did turn around and walk out of the store knowing that that company clearly had not even begun to sensitize their employees to this important issue. Rather than buy a new cell phone, I am currently using an old phone of my brother’s. Until I can walk into a store and receive a sufficient response to my question on mineral sourcing, I will avoid buying a new phone.

As someone who lived in Uganda for over 4 years, I understand the region that these rules are meant to affect. The people of the Great Lakes region of Africa have suffered far too long as a result of conflict minerals. It is time that we in the United States, as significant consumers and investors in the global economy, recognize and take responsibility for the consequences of our consumption and investment.

I am an educator at the University of Notre Dame in a development studies program. A strong focus of our program is to educate our students to think about the ethics of development and the unintended negative consequences of progress and modernization. As we strive to improve the well-being of peoples anywhere, we must also be concerned about how that might increase the misery of people elsewhere.

Ms. Shapiro, as a recipient of the Visionary Award from the National Council on Economic Education, you understand how important economic and financial literacy is. I, too, would like my students to better understand the global economy, including the effects of their personal economic choices and our collective economic choices as a society or nation. Strong rules resulting from the implementation of Section 1502 of the "Dodd Frank Act" will serve to increase transparency and the flow of information allowing us all to understand our daily investment and consumer choices and the globalized nature of our every purchase.

I encourage you to make rules that do the following:

- **Require companies to comply with all reporting requirements immediately upon release of the final rules. We must stop the long suffering of the people of the DRC immediately, as this law was intended to do.**
- **Detail what companies must do to verify whether they source minerals that benefit armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.**
- **Require companies labeling products "DRC conflict-free" to meet a high standard of proof. This proof must be readily available to the consumer. I would absolutely pay more for a product that I was confident was conflict-free.**
- **Ensure that the information reported by companies is easily available to the public. I am more likely to invest and purchase items that I am confident are conflict-free**
- **The rules should cover all conflict minerals (gold, tin, tungsten and tantalum) and all companies, without exception.**

Again, I want to thank you and the commission for all the work you are doing to ensure that the rules which are formulated as a result of implementing Section 1502 (Conflict Minerals) of the "Dodd-Frank Act" have the strength to give me and others like me the peace of mind to invest and consume responsibly.

It is with great confidence in the SEC that I write this letter. I look forward to seeing the results of your work on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Anthony Pohlen