A Constitutional and Statutory Analysis of State Taxation of Edge Act Corporate Branches

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A CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY ANALYSIS OF STATE TAXATION OF EDGE ACT CORPORATE BRANCHES

INTRODUCTION

An Edge Act corporation is a federally chartered entity engaging in international banking and finance. Section 627 of the Edge Act expressly empowers a state to tax the income of an Edge corporation if its home office is located within the state. Pursuant to a general

Any corporation organized under the provisions of this subchapter shall be subject to tax by the State within which its home office is located in the same manner and to the same extent as other corporations organized under the laws of that State which are transacting a similar character of business. The shares of stock in such corporation shall also be subject to tax as the personal property of the owners or holders thereof in the same manner and to the same extent as the shares of stock in similar State corporations.
Id.
4. Id.
directive in section 3 of the International Banking Act of 1978 (IBA), \(^5\) Federal Reserve Regulation \(K\) \(^6\) was amended in 1979 to permit Edge corporations to establish domestic branches \(^7\) throughout the nation. \(^8\) Section 627 does not indicate, however, whether the income of such a branch is subject to taxation \(^9\) by the state in which it is located if the home office of the Edge corporation is not located within that state. \(^10\)

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7. In general banking terms, a branch office is defined as an entity authorized to perform general banking business, including accepting deposits and lending money. Note, The International Banking Act of 1978, 19 Harv. Int'l L.J. 1011, 1012 n.9 (1978) [hereinafter cited as International Banking]; see 12 U.S.C. § 36(f) (1976); id. § 3101 (Supp. V 1981). By contrast, an agency is generally defined as a banking office that is prohibited from accepting deposits. Id. § 3101; International Banking, supra, at 1012 n.9. An agency, however, is authorized to maintain credit balances and lend money. 12 U.S.C. § 3101 (Supp. V 1981). Prior to the amendment to Regulation \(K\), an Edge corporation was prohibited from establishing domestic branches, but was allowed to establish domestic agencies with prior Federal Reserve approval. 12 C.F.R. § 211.6(a) (1978), amended by 12 C.F.R. § 211.4(e) (1982). The legislative history suggests that these agencies were not to have the same authority as branches, see 58 Cong. Rec. 7857 (1919) (statements of Reps. Haugen & Platt), but rather were allowed to represent the corporation. See id. Thus, the federal regulations governing the establishment of Edge agencies stated that they could only be established for "specific purposes," 12 C.F.R. § 211.6(a) (1978), amended by 12 C.F.R. § 211.4(e) (1982), and could not generally perform the business of the Edge corporation. Id. The location of the home office is contained in the articles of association of the Edge corporation. 12 U.S.C. § 613 (1976).

There are two types of Edge corporations: those that are engaged in banking and those that are engaged solely in investment. The distinctions between the two forms of Edge corporations deal with deposits, lending and capital requirements. Roussakis, Miami's Thrust in International Banking, 13 Law. of the Am. 468, 473 n.4 (1981). An Edge corporation "engaged in banking" accepts deposits in the United States from "nonaffiliated" persons. 12 C.F.R. § 211.2(d) (1982). A credit ceiling of 10% of its capital and surplus limits the ability of the banking Edge corporation to grant credit to any one individual. Id. § 211.6(b)(i). Capital requirements for the corporation are set at 7% of risk assets. Roussakis, supra, at 473 n.4. An Edge corporation engaged in investment does not accept deposits and has no capitalization requirements. Id. (interpreting 12 C.F.R. § 211.2(d), .6(b)(i) (1982)).

8. 12 C.F.R. § 211.4(c) (1982) (amending 12 C.F.R. § 211.6(a) (1978)).

9. This Note solely addresses the issue whether a state may impose a tax upon the income of an Edge corporate branch. An income tax is distinguishable from a bank shares tax, which is a tax upon the shareholders of a corporation. Society For Sav. v. Bowers, 349 U.S. 143, 147-48 (1955). On a practical level, however, a shares tax is paid by the corporation. Zamora, Regulating Foreign Bank Operations in Texas, 19 Hous. L. Rev. 427, 463 (1982). The authority of a state to impose a nondiscriminatory bank shares tax upon the shareholders of an Edge corporation is expressly granted in § 627 without any limitation to the home state. 12 U.S.C. § 627
Although one commentator has posited that the language in section 627 and the amendment to Regulation K have created a loophole which permits branches located outside the home-office state to escape taxation, the current policy of those states in which a substantial number of Edge corporate branches are located is otherwise. Florida, New York, Illinois and California deem Edge corporate branches taxable under state corporate taxation statutes regardless of the location of their home offices. Adding to the uncertainty, the

(1976). In the congressional debates leading to the passage of the Edge Act, the issue arose whether the state in which the corporation is located or whether the state in which the shareholder resides should have the authority to tax the shares. See 58 Cong. Rec. 8107-09 (1919) (general discussion). Two conflicting arguments were presented. See id. at 8107-08 (statements of Reps. Connally & Wingo). One argument was that because a share of stock is personal property, the situs of such property should follow the owner and be taxed in the state in which the owner resides. Id. at 8107 (statement of Rep. Connally). A second argument was that the shares of stock should be taxed in the same manner as the shares of a national bank were taxed. Id. at 8108 (statement of Rep. Wingo). This would have limited the shares tax to the state in which the corporation was located. See Act of June 3, 1864, ch. 106, § 41, 13 Stat. 99, 111-12, amended by Act of Feb. 4, 1868, ch. 6, 15 Stat. 34 (national bank statute). This second argument was initially accepted in the House, 58 Cong. Rec. 8109 (1919), and express language was included in the provision to limit shares taxation to the state in which the home office was located. Id. at 8107. The limitation, however, was later expressly eliminated in conference with the Senate. H.R. Rep. No. 473, 66th Cong., 1st Sess. 3 (1919). See infra notes 69-72 and accompanying text.


11. O'Brien, supra note 10, at 895 (“The history of bank taxation in the United States suggests that Congress intended this result.”). In the sole judicial decision addressing the state taxation of an Edge corporation, Commonwealth v. First Pennsylvania Overseas Fin. Corp., 425 Pa. 143, 229 A.2d 896 (1967), the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in dictum, interpreted § 627 as prohibiting state taxation of an Edge corporation if the home office of the corporation is located outside the state. Id. at 146, 229 A.2d at 898. The issue was whether a federally chartered Edge corporation with its home office in Pennsylvania was subject to a state capital stock tax. Although branching was not permitted at the time of the decision, the court's statement could be relied upon subsequent to the amendment to Regulation K to preclude states' taxation of branches that are not located in the home state.

12. Cal. Rev. & Tax. Code §§ 23,151, 23,181 (West 1979 & Supp. 1982) (the applicability of these tax provisions to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a letter, dated Feb. 11, 1983, from Mr. Benjamin F. Miller, Supervising Counsel, Multistate Research and Regulations Section, California Franchise Tax Board (on file with the Fordham Law Review)); Fla. Stat. Ann. §§ 220.62-.63, .69 (West Supp. 1983) (the applicability of these tax provisions to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a phone inquiry, on Apr. 21, 1983, to Mr. Frank J. Siska, Technical
American Bar Association Committee on Banking and Savings Institutions (ABA Committee) has recommended repeal of section 627\textsuperscript{13} as part of a broader plan to create a uniform system of state taxation of federal depositories.\textsuperscript{14}

This Note contends that no constitutional basis exists for holding Edge corporate branches immune from state taxation. Part I reviews the historical development of the Edge corporation and describes the legislative amendments that have led to the ambiguity concerning branch taxation. Part II examines the congressional intent behind section 627 and concludes that the legislative history does not support an interpretation that would exclude an Edge corporate branch from taxation by the state in which it is doing business. Part III examines the criteria for state tax immunity of a federal instrumentality, and determines that this immunity should not be available to Edge corporations. In addition, policy considerations support subjecting Edge corporate branches to taxation by the states from which they obtain significant benefits. This Note acknowledges that future congressional action is appropriate. The absence of such action, however, should not preclude the judicial determination that an Edge corporate branch may be taxed by the state in which it has an office to do business.

I. THE EDGE ACT CORPORATION

A. Historical Development

Congress authorized banks to create Edge corporations in 1919 under section 25(a) of the Federal Reserve Act\textsuperscript{15} in response to a need to provide Europe with international credit and to secure the nation's


\textsuperscript{14} See id.


18. Id. § 615(b).


20. Id. § 615(c). The powers of an Edge corporation originally were limited in four ways: 1) a minimum capital investment of $2,000,000 was required to obtain a federal charter, id. § 618, amended by Pub. L. No. 95-369, § 3(d), 92 Stat. 607, 609 (1978) (currently codified as amended at 12 U.S.C. § 618 (Supp. V 1981)); 2) United States citizenship was a prerequisite for directorship, id. § 614; 3) the parent company could invest only 10% of its capital and surplus in an Edge corporation, id. §
eral Reserve Regulation K, issued in 1920,\textsuperscript{21} did not allow an Edge corporation to establish any domestic branches.\textsuperscript{22} In order for a bank to establish Edge corporate offices in several states, each office was required to be separately incorporated within the state in which the bank wished to operate, with a minimum capital investment of two million dollars.\textsuperscript{23} Because of this incorporation requirement and the authorization of home state taxation in section 627, a state effectively had the authority to tax an Edge corporation located and incorporated within its borders.

Section 3 of the IBA\textsuperscript{24} was the first major revision of the Edge Act.\textsuperscript{25} Prior to 1978, the “antiquated statutory and regulatory framework”\textsuperscript{26} under which an Edge corporation operated hampered its ability to compete effectively with foreign-based institutions.\textsuperscript{27} Consequently, Edge corporate development lagged prior to the passage of the IBA.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{21} J. Baker & M. Bradford, supra note 16, at 33.
\textsuperscript{22} 12 C.F.R. § 211.6(a) (1978), amended by 12 C.F.R. § 211.4(c) (1982). Regulation K did allow the Edge corporation to establish “agencies” in other states with prior Board approval. Id. However, the “agency” was generally not allowed to “carry on [the Edge Corporation’s] business.” Id. By contrast, a domestic branch of an Edge corporation is now authorized to carry on banking business. See id. § 211.4(c) (1982) (amending 12 C.F.R. § 211.6(a) (1978)). See supra note 7.
\textsuperscript{27} Id.
\textsuperscript{28} By 1929, 15 Edge corporations had been chartered. McGuire, supra note 16, at 436. However, all 15 were liquidated or absorbed within the next decade. Id. Only
The IBA relaxed certain restrictions and allowed Edge corporations greater flexibility in expanding their operations. Pursuant to a general directive of the IBA, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System amended Regulation K in 1979 to allow Edge corporations to establish interstate branches with prior approval of the Board of Governors. The amendments appear to have been successful in expanding Edge corporate development; today, seventy-one Edge corporations with ninety domestic branches engaged in international banking exist nationwide.

Six Edge corporations were in existence as of 1956. Tamagna & Willis, supra note 16, at 1292. After a surge of Edge corporate development in the late 1960's and early 1970's, see The edge is off the Edge Act banks, Bus. Wk., Apr. 7, 1975, at 42, col. 1, only four new Edge corporations were established in 1977 and 1978. Federal Reserve Report, supra note 23, at 1405.

Subsection 3(a) of the IBA stated that the objective of the Act was to modify the provisions of the Edge Act that discriminated against foreign banking institutions and hindered the competitiveness of the Edge corporation. The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System was directed to revise its regulations governing the Edge corporation in light of this congressional objective. Pub. L. No. 95-369, § 3(a), 92 Stat. 607, 608 (1978). Subsection 3(b) established a policy statement for the Edge Act. Id. § 3(b), 92 Stat. at 607, 608-09 (codified in 12 U.S.C. § 611a (Supp. V 1981)). Subsection 3(c) eliminated the United States citizenship requirement for ownership of an Edge corporation. Id. § 3(c), 92 Stat. at 609 (codified in 12 U.S.C. § 614 (Supp. V 1981)). Subsection 3(d) eliminated the restriction on outstanding liabilities. Id. § 3(d), 92 Stat. at 609 (codified in 12 U.S.C. §§ 615(a), 618 (Supp. V 1981)). Originally, the Edge corporation was prohibited from having outstanding liabilities at any one time on its bonds, promissory notes, or debentures in excess of ten times its paid-in capital and surplus. 12 U.S.C. § 615(a) (1976). Subsection 3(e) eliminated the mandatory ten percent reserve requirement on deposits and subjected the Edge corporation to the same requirements as member banks of the Federal Reserve System. Pub. L. No. 95-369, § 3(e), 92 Stat. 607, 609 (1978) (codified in 12 U.S.C. § 615(a) (Supp. V 1981)). Subsection 3(f) allowed foreign-owned banks to acquire a majority interest in an Edge corporation if prior approval of the Board of Governors was obtained. Id. § 3(f), 92 Stat. at 609-10 (codified in 12 U.S.C. § 619 (Supp. V 1981)).

Subsection 3(g) of the IBA stated that the objective of the Act was to modify the provisions of the Edge Act that discriminated against foreign banking institutions and hindered the competitiveness of the Edge corporation. The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System was directed to revise its regulations governing the Edge corporation in light of this congressional objective. Pub. L. No. 95-369, § 3(g), 92 Stat. 607, 608 (1978). Subsection 3(h) established a policy statement for the Edge Act. Id. § 3(h), 92 Stat. at 607, 608-09 (codified in 12 U.S.C. § 611a (Supp. V 1981)). Subsection 3(i) eliminated the United States citizenship requirement for ownership of an Edge corporation. Id. § 3(i), 92 Stat. at 609 (codified in 12 U.S.C. § 614 (Supp. V 1981)). Subsection 3(j) eliminated the restriction on outstanding liabilities. Id. § 3(j), 92 Stat. at 609 (codified in 12 U.S.C. §§ 615(a), 618 (Supp. V 1981)). Originally, the Edge corporation was prohibited from having outstanding liabilities at any one time on its bonds, promissory notes, or debentures in excess of ten times its paid-in capital and surplus. 12 U.S.C. § 615(a) (1976). Subsection 3(k) eliminated the mandatory ten percent reserve requirement on deposits and subjected the Edge corporation to the same requirements as member banks of the Federal Reserve System. Pub. L. No. 95-369, § 3(k), 92 Stat. 607, 609 (1978) (codified in 12 U.S.C. § 615(a) (Supp. V 1981)). Subsection 3(l) allowed foreign-owned banks to acquire a majority interest in an Edge corporation if prior approval of the Board of Governors was obtained. Id. § 3(l), 92 Stat. at 609-10 (codified in 12 U.S.C. § 619 (Supp. V 1981)).
B. State Taxation of Edge Corporate Branches

Despite this branching authorization, section 627, empowering states in which the home office is located to tax the Edge corporation, was not amended to address the taxation of these branches. This legislative inaction, in combination with the current taxation practice of several states, has led to uncertainty in the taxation of Edge corporate branches. Nevertheless, most of those states in which the majority of Edge branches are located generally have determined that the Edge corporate branch should not escape taxation in the state in which it is doing business. For example, Illinois has deemed an Edge

supra note 12. The IBA was immediately successful in escalating Edge corporate development. In the first 15 months after the passage of the IBA, 39 new Edge corporate offices were approved. Of these 39, 27 were branches of previously existing Edge corporations. Federal Reserve Report, supra note 23, at 1405.

The authority to branch across state lines allows the Edge corporation to expand more efficiently and at lower cost because the minimum capital requirement, 12 U.S.C. § 618 (1976), does not apply to branch expansion. Thus, it is probable that Edge corporate expansion will usually occur through the establishment of branches, rather than through the chartering of new corporations. Roussakis, supra note 7, at 474-80. This trend is made apparent by the frequency of banks consolidating their Edge corporations and establishing a home office with several branches. Id. at 476-78.

32. 12 C.F.R. § 211.4(c) (1982) (amending 12 C.F.R. § 211.6(a) (1978)).
34. See supra notes 11-14 and accompanying text.
35. Cal. Rev. & Tax. Code §§ 23,151, 23,181 (West 1979 & Supp. 1982) (the applicability of these provisions to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a letter, dated Feb. 11, 1983, from Mr. Benjamin F. Miller, Supervising Counsel, Multistate Research and Regulations Section, California Franchise Tax Board (on file with the Fordham Law Review)); Fla. Stat. Ann. §§ 220.62-.63, .69 (West Supp. 1983) (the applicability of these provisions to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a phone inquiry, on Apr. 21, 1983, to Mr. Frank J. Siska, Technical Assistant, Bureau of Technical Assistance, Florida State Department of Revenue); Ill. Ann. Stat. ch. 120, §§ 2-201, 3-304 (Smith-Hurd Supp. 1982-1983) (the applicability of these tax provisions to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a phone inquiry, on Feb. 14, 1983, to Mr. Hal Crandell, Supervisor of Rules and Regulations, Income Tax Legal Division, Illinois Department of Revenue); N.Y. Tax Law § 1451 (McKinney 1975) (the applicability of this tax provision to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a letter, dated Feb. 25, 1983, from Mr. Andrew F. Marchese, Chief of Tax Regulations, Technical Services Bureau, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance (on file with the Fordham Law Review)). There is a trend among the states, however, to exempt international banking facilities from taxation in order to attract and maintain international banking business. Roussakis, supra note 7, at 482; see, e.g., 1981 Cal. Legis. Serv. 825 (West); 1978 N.Y. Laws 288. An international banking facility is defined as "a set of asset and liability
branch taxable under its corporate tax statutes regardless of the location of its home office. Similarly, the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance has determined that Edge corporate branches located in New York with home offices outside the state are taxable because section 627 does not address, and accordingly does not prohibit, the state from taxing Edge corporate branches. In Florida, the income of a branch is taxable provided that it is not attributed to the activity of the home office. This practice would seem to protect the corporation from double taxation. Edge corporate branches in California accounts segregated on the books and records of a depository institution, United States branch or agency of a foreign bank, or an Edge or Agreement Corporation that includes only international banking facility time deposits and international banking facility extensions of credit.” 12 C.F.R. § 204.8(a)(1) (1982).

36. Ill. Ann. Stat. ch. 120, §§ 2-201, 3-304 (Smith-Hurd Supp. 1982-1983) (the applicability of these tax provisions to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a phone inquiry, on Feb. 14, 1983, to Mr. Hal Crandell, Supervisor of Rules and Regulations, Income Tax Legal Division, Illinois Department of Revenue). Approximately ten Edge corporate branches are located in Illinois. See Banking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 2, and Branch Printout, supra note 2. Approximately seven home offices are located in Illinois. See Banking Edge and Agreement Edge Printout, supra note 2, and Nonbanking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 12.

37. N.Y. Tax Law § 1451 (McKinney 1975) (the applicability of this tax provision to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a letter, dated Feb. 25, 1983, from Mr. Andrew F. Marchese, Chief of Tax Regulations, Technical Services Bureau, New York State Department of Taxation and Finance (on file with the Fordham Law Review)). Approximately 12 Edge corporate branches are located in New York. See Banking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 2, and Branch Printout, supra note 2. Approximately 31 Edge corporations have their home offices in New York. See Banking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 2; NonBanking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 12.

38. Fla. Stat. Ann. §§ 220.62-.63, .69 (West Supp. 1982-1983) (the applicability of these tax provisions to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a phone inquiry, on Apr. 21, 1983, to Mr. Frank J. Siska, Technical Assistant, Bureau of Technical Assistance, Florida State Department of Revenue). Approximately 8 Edge corporate branches are located in Florida. See Banking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 2, and Branch Printout, supra note 2. Approximately 28 home offices are located in Florida. See Banking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 2, and Nonbanking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 12. Because of recent amendments to the Florida Tax Code, Edge corporations, as well as all other banks engaged in international transactions, are subject only to a franchise tax in Florida. Roussakis, The Edges Come to Miami, The Bankers Mag. May/June 1981, at 85-86 (interpreting Fla. Stat. Ann. § 220.63 (West Supp. 1983)). This improvement in the Florida tax environment is expected to attract more international banking business to the state. Roussakis, supra, at 86.

39. Generally, a state may not tax income earned outside its borders. Asarco Inc. v. Idaho State Tax Comm’n, 102 S. Ct. 3103, 3109 (1982). If the income of a branch was attributable to both the home office state and the branch state, both states would be taxing the corporation on the same income. Cf. General Motors Corp. v. District of Columbia, 380 U.S. 553, 556-57, 560-61 (1965) (apportionment formulas should not cause multistate taxation of net income).
California are taxable under a unitary apportionment method. The legislative history of section 627 does not appear to preclude these policies.

II. THE LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF SECTION 627

Section 627, by its terms, authorizes taxation of Edge corporate income only by the state in which the home office is located. Under the plain meaning rule, therefore, a state would be prohibited from taxing an Edge corporate branch if the home office was not located within the state. Assuming this result, a conflicting state taxation statute that imposes a tax upon a branch when its home office is not located within the state would be considered unconstitutional as a violation of the supremacy clause. The failure of Congress to revise section 627 in light of the amendment to Regulation K, however, has rendered section 627 ambiguous. Accordingly, an examination of the legislative history and purpose of section 627 is necessary to determine

40. See Cal. Rev. & Tax. Code §§ 23,151, 23,181 (West 1979 & Supp. 1982) (the applicability of these tax provisions to Edge corporations and branches was verified in a letter, dated Feb. 11, 1983, from Mr. Benjamin F. Miller, Supervising Counsel, Multistate Research and Regulations Section, California Franchise Board (on file with the Fordham Law Review)). A unitary method of apportioning income includes the income of the corporation within the state in addition to the income of related corporations if the activities of the related corporation outside the state are dependent upon, or contribute to, the corporation’s business within the state. State Taxation of Interstate Commerce and Worldwide Corporate Income: Hearing Before the Subcomm. on Taxation and Debt Management Generally of the Senate Comm. on Finance, 96th Cong., 2d Sess. 689 (1980) [hereinafter cited as Corporate Income Hearings]. Approximately 17 Edge corporate branches and 13 home offices are located in California. See Banking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 2, and Branch Printout, supra note 2, and Nonbanking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 12.

A substantial number of Edge corporate branches exist in Texas as well. See Banking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 2, and Branch Printout, supra note 2. Because Texas specifically exempts all banks from the state franchise tax, Texas Tax Code Ann. § 171.078 (Vernon 1981); Zamora, supra note 9, at 462-63, one commentator has suggested that Edge corporations, like other banks, would therefore only be subject to the bank shares tax and real property tax. Id. at 463 (interpepting Texas Tax Code Ann. § 171.078 (Vernon 1982)).

41. If the statutory language is clear, there is no need to examine legislative history to determine congressional purpose. United States v. American Trucking Ass'ns, 310 U.S. 534, 543 (1940); District of Columbia Nat'l Bank v. District of Columbia, 348 F.2d 808, 810 (D.C. Cir. 1965); see Federal Land Bank v. Priddy, 295 U.S. 229, 231-32 (1935).


whether states impliedly are forbidden from imposing a tax on Edge branches if the home office is not located in the state.\textsuperscript{45} The legislative history, however, is not entirely clear. It can be interpreted either to support or prohibit this taxation.

Upon introduction in the Senate,\textsuperscript{46} the taxation provision of the Edge Act provided that an Edge corporation would pay taxes "in like manner as is paid by other banking corporations transacting business in the United States."\textsuperscript{47} The debates preceding Senate approval of this language give some indication that Edge corporations would not be exempt from state taxation.\textsuperscript{48} Senator Edge, the sponsor of the legislation, stated: "[A] corporation organized under [the Edge Act] would be taxed in every way that any other similar corporation is taxed if there is nothing said to the contrary. In other words, we define it when we exempt, and when we do not define it they are not exempted."\textsuperscript{49} Senator Norris also stated that Edge corporations should be taxed by any state in which they were located and doing business in the same manner as other similar financial corporations:

[There] is no reason why [an Edge corporation] should be relieved from taxes that other corporations doing business in those cities have to pay to the States. They ought to be taxed like any other banks. There ought to be no exemption about it. If they are located in New York they get the protection of the laws of New York, and


\textsuperscript{46} 58 Cong. Rec. 2579 (1919) (S. 2472). The bill was initially referred to the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency. \textit{Id}.

\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Id}. at 4969.

\textsuperscript{48} See \textit{id}. at 4968-69 (general discussion). As was the case with national banks, the underlying intent of Congress was to guarantee that a state would not discriminatorily tax a federally chartered corporation in order to favor state-chartered organizations. \textit{Id}. at 8083 (statement of Rep. Phelan); First Fed. Sav. & Loan Ass’n v. Tax Comm’n, 437 U.S. 255, 258 & n.2 (1978). One Senator, however, contended that Edge corporations should not be subject to any state or local taxation because the corporation would only be conducting international business. 58 Cong. Rec. 4969 (1919) (statement of Sen. Owen).

\textsuperscript{49} 58 Cong. Rec. 4969 (1919) (statement of Sen. Edge). The Senator further stated that "we want to make it doubly sure, and inasmuch as no one wants [Edge corporations] to escape any taxation, State or Federal, I am entirely satisfied to have language inserted to make it clear." \textit{Id}. 
they ought to be required to pay a tax to the State of New York the
same as any other corporation doing business in that State.\footnote{50}

Senate and House analogies to national banks, however, support a
more restrictive interpretation. Senator Norris endorsed a proposal
that would have taxed Edge corporations in the same manner "as
member banks of the Federal Reserve System.\"\footnote{51} Because member
banks include national banks, this phrase could be interpreted to
restrict state taxation of Edge corporations to the limited taxes im-
posed on national banks.\footnote{52} Although the Senate ultimately passed over
the "member banks" language,\footnote{53} Senator Norris and members of the
House drew more specific analogies to national bank taxation. Senator
Norris stated that it would be "satisfactory" if Edge corporations were
taxed like national banks.\footnote{54} Representative Wingo further stated that
the House version of the tax provision was to be interpreted as requir-
ing Edge corporations and their shares to be taxed in the same manner
as national banks and their shares.\footnote{55} At that time, a state could not tax
the income of national banks, but rather was limited to real property
taxation and shares taxation by the state in which the bank was
"located."\footnote{56}

These analogies drawn to national bank taxation, however, are
somewhat ambiguous. The statements of Senator Norris and Repre-

\footnote{50. Id. (statement of Sen. Norris).}
\footnote{51. Id.}
\footnote{52. Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, The Federal Reserve
System 64 (1961).}
\footnote{53. 58 Cong. Rec. 4969 (1919) (statement of the Presiding Officer).}
\footnote{54. Id. (statement of Sen. Norris).}
\footnote{55. Id. at 8108 (statement of Rep. Wingo). Representative Dunbar also made a
comparison to national banks. Id. at 8083 (statement of Rep. Dunbar). Representative
Dunbar's statement, unlike Representative Wingo's, was made solely in the
context of shares taxation. Id.}
Owensboro Nat'l Bank v. Owensboro, 173 U.S. 664, 669 (1899). In 1926, Congress
amended R.S. 5219 to allow states to tax the net income of national banks. Act of
548 (1976)). Until 1969, a state could only subject a national bank to taxation in the
four ways that Congress had expressly authorized in the statute. Id. (state could tax
the shares of a national bank, include dividends in the taxable income of a share-
holder, tax the national bank on its net income, or measure such tax by net income).
One commentator has suggested that a comparison of Edge corporate taxation to
national bank taxation indicates a congressional intent to limit state taxation to the
home state. O'Brien, \textit{supra} note 10, at 894-95. Because Congress only specified state
taxation authority over Edge corporations by the state in which the home office is
located, 12 U.S.C. § 627 (1976), Congress may have intended that the manner of
state taxation of Edge corporations be limited to the express provision. O'Brien, \textit{supra}
note 10, at 895 ("Unless Congress assumed that the same principle would apply to
Edge Act corporations, the enactment of this [home state] provision is enigmatic.").}
sentative Wingo indicate that they were not entirely familiar with the nature of the restrictions on national bank taxation at the time. Senator Norris believed that national banks were taxed by any state in which they were doing business. Representative Wingo suggested that Edge corporate taxation would not only be similar to national bank taxation, but would also be similar to the taxation of other corporations, such as state banks and oil corporations. Furthermore, the analogies made in the House should not be deemed adequate to restrict state income taxation to the home office state because they were made principally in the context of the House discussion of shares taxation.

A second argument against branch taxation can be premised on these analogies to national banks. Because the national bank statute restricted the taxation of national bank shares to the state in which the bank was located, Congress may have intended to restrict Edge corporate taxation to the state in which the home office was located. This language, however, should not be interpreted to prohibit state taxation of a branch merely because the home office is not located in that state. At the time of the Edge Act’s enactment, “located” was necessarily restricted to the state of incorporation. Today, however, an Edge branch may be located and doing business in states other than the state in which the home office is located. In 1919, Congress did not envision that an Edge corporation would be able to establish domestic branches. This may have reflected the concern that branch banking would lead to a dangerous concentration of power in the banking field. Accordingly, one year after the Edge Act was passed in 1919, the Federal Reserve enacted Regulation K which prohibited

58. Id. at 8108 (statement of Rep. Wingo).
59. Id. at 8107-09 (general discussion). There were only a few inconclusive references to the taxation of corporate assets. See id. at 8109 (statement of Rep. Black); id. at 8108 (statement of Rep. Wingo).
60. See supra note 56 and accompanying text.
61. This was a result of the restriction on domestic branching, see 12 C.F.R. § 211.6(a) (1978), amended by 12 C.F.R. § 211.4(c) (1982), and the need to incorporate separately each corporate office, Federal Reserve Report, supra note 23, at 1404; see 12 U.S.C. §§ 611-614, 618 (1976), amended by 12 U.S.C. § 618 (Supp. V 1981).
62. See 12 C.F.R. § 211.4(c) (1982).
63. 58 Cong. Rec. 8100-01 (1919) (statements of Reps. Platt, Young, Cannon & McFadden); see Tamagna & Willis, supra note 16, at 1288.
64. Tamagna & Willis, supra note 16, at 1288; see 58 Cong. Rec. 8100 (1919) (statement of Rep. Cannon). This sentiment is consistent with the prevailing view that a few large financial institutions may monopolize the banking industry if branch banking is permitted. See Note, Interstate Branch Banking: That Someday is Today, 21 Washburn L.J. 266, 278 (1982).
65. Tamagna & Willis, supra note 16, at 1288.
the Edge corporation from establishing domestic branches.\textsuperscript{66} Therefore, dictum in \textit{Commonwealth v. First Pennsylvania Overseas Finance Corp.},\textsuperscript{67} which suggests that a state may not tax an Edge corporation when its home office is not within state boundaries,\textsuperscript{68} can best be understood in light of this prohibition against Edge corporate branching. Because the taxation statute exhibited no apparent ambiguity, this strict reading was appropriate.

A third argument against the taxation of branches could be based on language deleted from the final version of section 627. The House version of the tax provision\textsuperscript{69} originally stated that shares of the corporation "owned by nonresidents of any State shall be taxed only in the city or town in which the corporation's home office is located, and not elsewhere."\textsuperscript{70} In response to the argument that the state in which a stockholder resides should be allowed to tax the shares,\textsuperscript{71} this location

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{66} 12 C.F.R. § 211.6(a) (1978), amended by 12 C.F.R. § 211.4(c) (1982).
\item \textsuperscript{67} 425 Pa. 143, 229 A.2d 896 (1967).
\item \textsuperscript{68} Id. at 146, 229 A.2d at 898. There is only one Edge corporate branch in Pennsylvania. \textit{See Banking Edge and Agreement Printout, supra note 2, and Branch Printout, supra note 2}. The author was unable to obtain a response whether the state department of revenue exempts branches from taxation.
\item \textsuperscript{69} 58 Cong. Rec. 8107 (1919). The only difference between the House version and the final version of § 627 is that the shares restriction was deleted in the final provision. \textit{See H.R. Rep. No. 473, 66th Cong., 1st Sess. 3 (1919) (Conference Report)}.
\item \textsuperscript{70} 58 Cong. Rec. 8107 (1919).
\item \textsuperscript{71} \textit{See, e.g.}, id. at 8107-09 (statements of Reps. Connally & Wingo). \textit{See supra note 9}.
\end{itemize}
Because Congress expressly deleted the language in the Edge Act restricting shares taxation to the state in which the home office was located "and not elsewhere," but did not delete the language restricting corporate income taxation to the home office state, it may be argued that an intent to restrict corporate taxation to the home office state should be inferred. However, the wording of the deleted shares taxation language was more restrictive than the language that now appears in the income taxation provision. The terms "only in the city or town in which" and "not elsewhere" in the deleted shares provision of the House version suggested an absolute ban on state shares taxation if the home office was not located within the state. No equivalent language was in the corporate income tax provision of the House version. Thus, it may be argued that Congress did not change the language of the corporate income tax provision because it did not view the language as an absolute ban. In addition, reliance upon a comparison of the home state specification in the corporate income tax provision with the deleted bank shares tax restriction should not be dispositive because the taxes are conceptually different.

A fourth argument against Edge branch taxation can be based on the recent amendments to the national bank statutes. Because Congress repealed the ban of multi-state taxation of national banks in the 1969 amendments to the National Bank Act of 1864 (NBA) and did
not authorize state taxation of Edge corporate branches in the IBA, the congressional silence in section 627 could be interpreted as a deliberate omission.\textsuperscript{79} The date of, and authorization for, Regulation K, however, clearly indicates that the omission was not intentional. Although section 3 of the IBA directed the Federal Reserve to amend its regulations so as to provide Edge corporations greater flexibility, it did not specifically direct the Federal Reserve to authorize domestic branching.\textsuperscript{80} The Board, however, relied on the general directive to provide for this branching authorization.\textsuperscript{81} The drafters of the IBA therefore had no reason to address the taxation of branches because the issue did not arise until after the amendment to Regulation K.

Finally, despite the possible arguments in favor of a restrictive reading of section 627, it is phrased as an affirmative grant of state taxation authority.\textsuperscript{82} The ambiguity in both the final version of section 627 and its legislative history therefore should not be interpreted to reflect congressional intent to preclude state taxation of an Edge corporation in states in which the home office is not located. Accord-

\textsuperscript{79} This is an application of the maxim of statutory construction known as \textit{expressio unius est exclusio alterius}. See supra note 74.


\textsuperscript{81} See 44 Fed. Reg. 36,005, 36,005-06 (1979).

\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Compare} 12 U.S.C. § 627 (1976) (Edge corporation) ("Any corporation organized under . . . this subchapter shall be subject to tax by the State within which its home office is located in the same manner and to the same extent as other corporations . . . .") \textit{with} Act of Mar. 25, 1926, ch. 88, 44 Stat. (pt II) 223 (national bank) ("The legislature of each State may determine and direct, subject to the provisions of this section, the manner and place of taxing . . . .") and 12 U.S.C. § 2055 (1976) (Federal Land Bank) ("Every Federal land bank . . . shall be exempt from Federal, State, municipal, and local taxation.").
ingly, states should have the power to tax Edge corporate branches unless the Constitution, under the federal instrumentality doctrine, mandates otherwise.

III. Edge Corporations and Federal Instrumentality Analysis

A. Federal Instrumentality Defined

A federal instrumentality is an entity so closely connected to the federal government that it becomes "one of its constituent parts." As such, it is not subject to the plenary taxation powers of the states. A state therefore may not, without the express consent of Congress, levy a tax upon it. Thus, if the Edge corporation is considered to be a federal instrumentality, a state may tax it only as Congress expressly authorizes. Section 627 expressly provides for taxation only by the state in which the home office is located. Therefore, assuming that the Edge corporation is a federal instrumentality, the absence of statutory language authorizing state taxation of branch offices prohibits a state from imposing a tax on an Edge corporate branch if the home office is not located within that state.


The basis for this exemption from state taxation is found in the supremacy clause of the Constitution, as initially interpreted in *McCulloch v. Maryland.* Since then, the distinction between a taxable entity and an immune instrumentality “has been drawn by an unsteady hand” in a field of law that has been “much litigated and often confused.” Today, no simple test is available for determining the existence of a federal instrumentality. Courts generally have looked to organizational and operational characteristics that suggest that the entity is virtually “an arm of the Government.”

Note 84, § 6-28, at 391-92. By contrast, some courts have suggested that when statutory language providing for state taxation exists, but is at variance with the intent of the legislature, a court should go beyond the plain words of the statute and look to the underlying legislative intent as revealed by the statute’s legislative history. See, e.g., First Agricultural Nat’l Bank v. State Tax Comm’n, 392 U.S. 399, 343 (1968) (legislative history examined in determining whether the federal bank taxation statute prescribed the only method of state taxation of a national bank); District of Columbia Nat’l Bank v. District of Columbia, 348 F.2d 808, 810 (D.C. Cir. 1965) (legislative history examined in determining that a national bank was subject to a District of Columbia gross earnings tax even though the federal taxation statutes did not expressly provide for gross earnings taxation); Comptroller of the Treasury v. Maryland Nat’l Bank, 44 Md. App. 366, 373-74, 408 A.2d 753, 757 (1979) (legislative history examined in determining whether a national bank is exempt from a local retail sales tax). For a discussion of the legislative history of the Edge Act, see *supra* pt. II.

Note 88. U.S. Const. art. VI, cl. 2; see United States v. New Mexico, 455 U.S. 720, 733 (1982); B. Schwartz, *supra* note 84, § 2.6, at 55-56; L. Tribe, *supra* note 84, § 6-29, at 395. In addition, at least one court has held that federal restrictions on interstate taxation of banks can be upheld under Congress’ power under the commerce clause. See Pacific First Fed. Sav. & Loan Ass’n v. Department of Revenue, 645 P.2d 27, 28-29 (Or.), cert. denied, 103 S. Ct. 216 (1982) (upholding the 1973 moratorium on interstate taxation of federal depositories on the basis of Congress’ commerce clause power).

Note 89. 17 U.S. 59, 4 Wheat. 316 (1819). Stating that the “power to tax involves the power to destroy,” *id.* at 210, 4 Wheat. at 431, Chief Justice Marshall struck down a Maryland stamp tax on bank notes issued by the Baltimore branch of the Bank of the United States and held the bank to be a tax-immune federal instrumentality. *Id.* at 213, 4 Wheat. at 436. He reasoned that a state infringes upon the supremacy clause of the Constitution when it attempts to tax the operations of organizations with federal charters and supervision. *Id.* at 212-13, 4 Wheat. at 435-36.


Note 93. Department of Employment v. United States, 385 U.S. 355, 359-60 (1966); Standard Oil Co. v. Johnson, 316 U.S. 481, 485 (1942); see, e.g., Federal Reserve Bank v. Metrocentre Improvement Dist. #1, 657 F.2d 183, 185-86 (8th Cir. 1981), aff’d, 455 U.S. 995 (1982); United States v. City of Adair, 539 F.2d 1185, 1191 (8th
sis focuses on whether the imposition of the tax would significantly interfere with the exercise of a federal function. The key factors weighing in favor of tax immunity can be summarized as follows: 1) whether the chartering body of the entity is federal; 2) whether the federal government exerts substantial supervision and financial involvement; and 3) whether the entity performs an essential governmental function. In addition, whether the entity is operated for profit has been deemed important in certain circumstances. Nevertheless, many financial institutions that operate for private profit have been deemed federal instrumentalities because they significantly affect the national economy and therefore perform an important governmental function.

B. Application of Federal Instrumentality Analysis to Edge Act Corporations

Various organizational aspects of an Edge corporation may be characterized as federal. The chartering body of the Edge corporation is


the federal government. Among the numerous federal statutory provisions and regulations governing the activities of the Edge corporation, the Edge Act prescribes capital requirements. In addition, approval of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System is required for both the initial incorporation and any branch expansion of an Edge corporation. Like Federal Reserve Banks that have been determined to further national monetary policy, Edge corporations may be considered to further the nation's foreign trade policy. Congress created the Edge corporation to provide credit to organizations in foreign countries in order to secure an effective international market for American products. The legislative history of the Edge Act also reveals that the House wanted to require the use of the word "Federal" in the name of each Edge corporation and prevent state corporations not associated with the federal government from using this term.

Nevertheless, these federal characteristics should not be sufficient to grant tax immunity to the Edge corporation under the federal instrumentality doctrine. The Supreme Court has held that only those

101. E.g., 12 U.S.C. §§ 611-632 (1976 & Supp. V 1981); 12 C.F.R. §§ 211.4-.7 (1982). The deposits of an Edge corporation are subject to federally prescribed reserve requirements. Id. § 211.4(d). The domestic activity of the Edge corporation must be incidental to international business transactions. Id. § 211.4(e). The corporation is required to keep records concerning financial performance and management decisions. Id. § 211.7(a). Examiners appointed by the Board of Governors must review the corporation's records annually. Id. § 211.7(b). The corporation must file two reports annually with the Board dealing with the condition of the corporation. Id. § 211.7(c).
104. Although the following courts refer to the furtherance of fiscal policy, it is clear from the context that they were actually referring to the furtherance of monetary policy. Lewis v. United States, 680 F.2d 1239, 1242 (9th Cir. 1982); Federal Reserve Bank v. Metrocentre Improvement Dist. #1, 657 F.2d 183, 185-86 (8th Cir. 1981), aff'd, 455 U.S. 995 (1982).
108. A federal charter alone is not adequate to hold an organization immune from state taxation. Broad River Power Co. v. Query, 288 U.S. 178, 181 (1933); Western
organizations that are essential for the performance of governmental functions can be classified as tax immune under this doctrine.\textsuperscript{109} Although an Edge corporation performs a service that is beneficial to the nation's economy,\textsuperscript{110} it is a privately-owned corporation operated for

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Union Tel. Co. v. Massachusetts, 125 U.S. 530, 548 (1888); Railroad v. Peniston, 85 U.S. (18 Wall.) 5, 31-33 (1873); Midwest Fed. Sav. & Loan Ass'n v. Commissioner, 259 N.W.2d 596, 598 (Minn. 1977); Winchester v. Porterfield, 27 Ohio St. 2d 122, 129, 271 N.E.2d 786, 791 (1971); B. Schwartz, supra note 84, § 2.6, at 56; L. Tribe, supra note 84, § 6-28, at 392 n.7; see, e.g., Indian Territory Illuminating Oil Co. v. Board of Equalization, 288 U.S. 325, 326 (1933); Alward v. Johnson, 252 U.S. 509, 514 (1931); William v. City of Talladega, 226 U.S. 404, 416 (1912). The rationale was best explained in Railroad v. Peniston, 85 U.S. (18 Wall.) 5 (1873). A railroad that had been chartered by Congress to create national roads was deemed not to be immune from taxation under the federal instrumentality doctrine. Id. at 31-32, 34-35. The Supreme Court reasoned that the federal government would have "no more ownership of the road authorized by Congress than they had in [a] road authorized by Kansas." Id. at 34. One court, in dictum, has suggested that constitutional due process limitations may prevent a state from taxing an Edge corporation because of its federal charter. Commonwealth v. First Pa. Overseas Fin. Corp., 425 Pa. 143, 146-47, 229 A.2d 896, 898 (1967). The due process clause restricts the ability of a state to tax an interstate corporation in two ways: 1) a tax may not be imposed unless there is some relation between the corporate activity and the taxing state, Moorman Mfg. Co. v. Bair, 437 U.S. 267, 272-73 (1978); and 2) the income attributed to the taxing state must be rationally related to "values connected with the taxing State." Id. at 273 (quoting Norfolk & W. Ry. v. Missouri State Tax Comm'n, 390 U.S. 317, 325 (1968)). It does not appear, however, that the mere existence of a federal charter is sufficient to limit state taxation on due process grounds.

Federal supervision of an entity also has been considered inadequate for granting state tax immunity. See Broad River Power Co. v. Query, 288 U.S. 178, 181 (1933) ("[T]he fact that a privilege has been received from the Federal Government does not exempt that property or the local business in producing and selling it from the burdens of taxation otherwise valid."); Midwest Fed. Sav. & Loan Ass'n v. Commissioner, 259 N.W.2d 596, 598 (Minn. 1977) ("The mere fact that an entity received its charter from the Federal government and is regulated by the Federal government is accordingly not sufficient to bring it within the statutory exemption."). In fact, federal supervision of the Edge corporation is limited in order to provide the corporation with the flexibility needed to compete with foreign banks. See Federal Reserve Report, supra note 23, at 1404. In 1979, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System stated that there would be some disadvantages in allowing Edge corporations to become members of the Federal Reserve System. Id. at 1407. The Edge corporation would be subject to some greater restrictions as a member bank. Id.


110. See supra notes 104-06 and accompanying text. While Congress has considered Edge corporations important in assisting the United States' import and export markets, see supra note 16 and accompanying text, mere performance of a service for the federal government is not sufficient to confer tax immunity. See United States v. Boyd, 378 U.S. 39, 44 (1964) (contractor that did work for the federal government
A federally chartered private corporation that only incidentally benefits the national economy generally is not considered to perform a substantial governmental function.

In addition, Edge corporations can be distinguished from those few private entities that the Supreme Court has deemed immune from taxation as federal instrumentalities. For example, the Court has held that the Red Cross, a private organization, is tax immune as a federal instrumentality. The Court emphasized that the Red Cross performs substantial governmental functions and is subject to substantial federal supervision:

It is subject to periodic federal audit; its chairman and certain members of its executive board are federally appointed; it is authorized to meet national obligations arising out of


115. Id. at 359.


of certain foreign treaties;\textsuperscript{118} and it receives significant federal assistance.\textsuperscript{119}

Congress has historically viewed the Red Cross as a quasi-governmental institution.\textsuperscript{120} By contrast, the federal government's role in supervising the activities of Edge corporations is administrative and more limited in nature.\textsuperscript{121} While the federal government regulates the banking activities of the Edge corporation, it is not authorized to control the appointment of directors or to involve itself in the corporation's policy-making.\textsuperscript{122} Moreover, no comparable legislative tradition of holding the Edge corporation tax immune exists.\textsuperscript{123}

Nevertheless, courts have held various private financial institutions to be federal instrumentalities even though they exhibit few federal characteristics.\textsuperscript{124} For example, the Supreme Court has held that Fed-
eral Land Banks\textsuperscript{125} and national banks\textsuperscript{126} are federal instrumentalities immune from unauthorized state taxation. Certain factors, however, compelled those conclusions. In holding that the Federal Land Bank is immune from state taxation, the Court had a clear legislative directive upon which to base its decision.\textsuperscript{127} Section 26 of the Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916\textsuperscript{128} states that the Federal Land Bank is to be considered a federal instrumentality and expressly prohibits state taxation.\textsuperscript{129} Section 627 of the Edge Act contains no comparable language. Rather, the language in section 627 affirmatively grants state taxation authority.\textsuperscript{130}

Similarly, despite the private characteristics of national banks, the Supreme Court traditionally has held them to be federal instrumental-

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ties on the basis of the clear intent in the legislative history of the NBA. In the Court's most recent analysis of national banks, it refused to reach the instrumentality issue in light of this clear congressional intent to limit state taxation of these banks. In 1969, however, Congress amended the NBA to authorize nondiscriminatory state taxation of national banks. Congress determined that there was "no longer any justification for . . . continuing to grant national banks immunities from State taxation which are not afforded State banks." Therefore, the prior congressional intent to exempt a national bank from state taxation is no longer present.

Both courts and the legislature have noted similarities between the statutes governing Edge corporations and those governing national banks. For example, their respective taxation statutes were passed to prevent discriminatory state taxation favoring state-chartered institutions. The substantial erosion of state tax immunity for national


135. Id. at 341; see Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess. 1893-95 (1864).


138. See S. Rep. No. 530, 91st Cong., 1st Sess. 2, reprinted in 1969 U.S. Code Cong. & Ad. News 1594, 1595 ("The committee is in full accord with the [principle] that every State government should be allowed the greatest possible degree of autonomy with regard to the formulation of its tax structure [with respect to national banks].")


140. First Fed. Sav. & Loan Ass'n v. Tax Comm'n, 437 U.S. 255, 258 & n.2 (1978). In addressing the state taxation of a Federal Credit Bank, the Supreme Court recently stated that "there has been no departure from the principle that state taxes
banks suggests that the similarities of a national bank to an Edge corporation should not be relied upon to grant the Edge corporation state tax immunity.\textsuperscript{141} In light of this erosion, it is unlikely that Congress would prohibit nondiscriminatory taxation of Edge corporate branches in states in which the home office is not located.\textsuperscript{142}

IV. POLICY CONCERNS

A. The Need for Legislative Action

The banking field traditionally is an area of congressional concern.\textsuperscript{143} Accordingly, it has been suggested that the issue of Edge corporate branch taxation can only be resolved through congressional action.\textsuperscript{144} The ABA Committee has recommended repeal of section 627 as part of a broader plan to establish a uniform method of state taxation of federal depositories.\textsuperscript{145} Given the existing ambiguity between the taxation practice of certain states and the lack of a provision expressly authorizing this practice, congressional action is indeed warranted. Nevertheless, in the interim, congressional inaction should not preclude the judiciary from resolving the issue by upholding the application of state taxation statutes to Edge corporate branches in non-home office states.\textsuperscript{146}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[141] See supra notes 139-40 and accompanying text.
\item[142] Cf. Memphis Bank & Trust Co. v. Garner, 103 S. Ct. 692, 696 n.7 (1983) ("The scope of the Federal Government's Constitutional tax immunity has been interpreted more narrowly in recent years.").
\item[144] See O'Brien, supra note 10, at 897; New Rules, supra note 10, at 219.
\item[145] Committee on Banking and Sav. Insts., Tax Section Recommendation No. 1981-3, 34 Tax Law. 861, 862 (1981). Currently, there is no uniform jurisdictional standard for taxation of federal depositories, \textit{id.}, nor is there a uniform standard for apportioning the tax base among the states in which the bank is located, \textit{id}. The ABA recommendation presents a uniform standard for interstate taxation of federal depositories. \textit{Id.} at 861. While this Note supports the ABA's recommendation to repeal § 627, the broader issue is beyond the scope of this Note. While the ABA proposal expressly includes Edge corporations, two bills have been introduced in Congress that conceivably would have had an impact on § 627. The Interstate Taxation of Depositories Act of 1979 would have provided for a uniform system of interstate taxation of financial institutions. 125 Cong. Rec. 5739-41 (1979) (interpreting S. 719, 96th Cong., 1st Sess. (1979)). The Interstate Taxation Act of 1979 would have established a uniform method of apportioning corporate income among the states. S. 983, 96th Cong., 1st Sess. 19 (1979), \textit{reprinted in Corporate Income Hearings, supra note 40, at 22; Staff of the Joint Comm. on Taxation, 96th Cong., 2d Sess., Description of S. 983 and S. 1688 Relating to State Taxation of Interstate Business and Foreign Source Corporate Income} 4 (Joint Comm. Print 1980) [hereinafter cited as Staff Report].
\item[146] See supra notes 35-40 and accompanying text.
\end{footnotes}
B. State Fiscal Concerns

The Edge corporation should not be able to escape paying its fair share of taxes in a state in which it is doing business.\textsuperscript{147} Generally, if a corporation does business within a state, the state may tax the income of the corporation attributable to business activities within the state.\textsuperscript{148} When an Edge corporation does business within a state, it uses state services and is under the protection of state law.\textsuperscript{149} It would be inappropriate to shield the Edge corporate branch from paying for such services and benefits merely because its home office is not located in the state.

Moreover, if a court were to interpret section 627 as preventing non-home office states from taxing branches, the anomalous result is that states in effect would lose taxation power over Edge corporations that they had prior to the amendment of Regulation K. Because each Edge corporation initially had to be separately incorporated in the state in which it conducted business,\textsuperscript{150} the corporation was subject to taxation by any state in which it was located. Under this interpretation, the amendment allowing the establishment of domestic branches without requiring separate incorporation would deprive home states of the taxation authority they previously possessed over Edge corporations located and doing business within the state.\textsuperscript{151}

Since \textit{McCulloch}, the determination whether an entity is tax immune has implicitly rested on traditional theories of federalism.\textsuperscript{152} The theory is that state taxation of an entity that has been deemed to be closely connected to the federal government may create an interference with substantive federal policy.\textsuperscript{153} Authorizing state taxation of

\textsuperscript{147} Zamora, \textit{supra} note 9, at 464.

\textsuperscript{148} Northwestern States Portland Cement Co. v. Minnesota, 358 U.S. 450, 452 (1959); Smith v. Lummis, 149 Fla. 660, 667, 6 So. 2d 625, 627-28 (1942); International Textbook Co. v. Connelly, 67 Misc. 49, 58, 124 N.Y.S. 603, 609, \textit{aff'd per curiam}, 140 A.D. 939, 125 N.Y.S. 1125 (1910), \textit{aff'd}, 206 N.Y. 188, 99 N.E. 722 (1912); \textit{see Corporate Income Hearings, supra} note 40, at 689; Staff Report, \textit{supra} note 145, at 3. See \textit{supra} note 39 and accompanying text.


\textsuperscript{150} \textit{Federal Reserve Report, supra} note 23, at 1404.

\textsuperscript{151} Nothing in the legislative history to the IBA suggests that Congress wished to limit the authority of a state to tax an Edge corporation. \textit{See S. Rep. No. 1073, 95th Cong., 2d Sess. 2-6, reprinted in 1978 U.S. Code Cong. & Ad. News 1421, 1422-26.}


\textsuperscript{153} James v. Dravo Contracting Co., 302 U.S. 134, 161 (1937); Metcalf & Eddy v. Mitchell, 269 U.S. 514, 523 (1926); United States v. City of Leavenworth, 443 F.
the Edge corporate branch in a state in which the home office is not located does not create such an interference with federal policy because the Edge corporation is not closely connected with the federal government.\textsuperscript{154} To suggest that state taxation of these branches would interfere with federal policy in light of permissible home-state taxation would be inconsistent.\textsuperscript{155} The expansion of tax immunity to encompass the Edge corporate branch would interfere instead with state sovereignty,\textsuperscript{156} and would represent a "manipulation" of federal tax laws that has "no proper place in determining the allocation of power between co-existing sovereignties."\textsuperscript{157}

**CONCLUSION**

The federal government should restrict state authority to tax a corporate organization doing business within state boundaries only under the clearest and narrowest of circumstances. The supremacy clause of the Constitution should not be construed so as to alter traditional notions of federalism. An Edge corporation should not be deemed a federal instrumentality, and thus its branches should be subject to state taxation. Because Congress has not explicitly intended to preclude state taxation of branches, and in light of existing policy considerations, a state should have the authority to tax the Edge corporate branch doing business in that state. The rapid escalation of Edge corporate development requires that the issue be resolved and that the current state policy of taxing Edge corporate branches in non-home office states be endorsed.

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\textsuperscript{155} See *supra* notes 108-42 and accompanying text.

\textsuperscript{156} Such a policy would expand immunity to institutions primarily on the basis of a federal charter or federal regulation. State fiscal interests would be invaded, and tax immunity would be extended beyond all reasonable boundaries. See *supra* pt. III(A).

\textsuperscript{157} United States v. New Mexico, 455 U.S. 720, 737 (1982).