

Bove Briefing Thursday, February 21, 2019

Fannie Mae 8 1/4 Junior Preferred

REFERENCED COMPANIES

EP030612: \$10.00 (Not Rated)

Recommendation

I continue to believe that there is a high probability that the GSEs will be released from their conservatorships in 2019. There are economic reasons related to housing; pressures developing in the courts; and positive movement in the Administration suggesting that this may happen. If it does, there may be substantial capital gains available to the holders of these issues.

Key Point

The Fannie Mae 8 ¼ Junior preferred hit a price of \$10.00 on September 19, 2014. The price then plunged to a low of \$2.80 per share on January 19, 2016. Approximately one year later, on February 15, 2017, the stock was back to \$10.88 per share. Then the roller coaster was down again and the preferred hit an interim low \$5.45 per share on May 10, 2018. On Wednesday, the issue made a new 52-week high of \$10.17 per share.

The question now is whether this time the issue will continue to climb or whether it will plunge once again. I feel strongly that the next major move is higher. There are three reasons for this.

Economic Necessity

The economy appears to be slowing. Housing is a critical factor in changing this trajectory. Housing depends on mortgage finance. The mortgage industry is a mess at both the primary and secondary levels. There must be changes made at both levels for housing to recover enough to stimulate economic growth. The need is clear.

Legal

There are three key cases reaching decision points after years of wrangling. The verbiage of judges in each of these cases suggests that there could be decisions favoring the plaintiffs and against the government. The pressure on the government to act to reach some accommodation prior to potentially hostile decisions is growing.

Congress

The power to direct the future result is slipping out of the hands of Congress. The President's team may have no real program at the moment but the fact that they are intimating they have one suggests that they will have a program in the near future. In a short time, the Administration will have paced a new Director at the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

Make no mistake, he has a plan. He wants the GSEs recapitalized and restructured as banks.

Conclusion

One never knows if the pressure to free the GSEs from their conservatorship will end but it would appear that there are a very strong set of forces moving to make that happen at present. Further capital gains for investors seem likely.

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Ratings definitions revised as of May 7th, 2013.

RISKS

Changes to government policy, changing macroeconomic conditions.

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