

ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS HOLDING CO

Form 424B3

November 08, 2004

Table of Contents

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3)

Registration No. 333-117037

PROSPECTUS

510,697 Shares

ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS HOLDING CO.

Common Stock

This prospectus relates to the sale of up to 510,697 shares of our common stock by the selling stockholder named in this prospectus. The selling stockholder acquired shares of our common stock offered by this prospectus in a private placement that closed on February 20, 2003 concurrently with our initial public offering. The prices at which the selling stockholder may sell the shares will be determined by the prevailing market price for the shares or in negotiated transactions. We will not receive any of the proceeds from the sale of these shares.

Our common stock is listed on The Nasdaq National Market under the symbol LEND. On June 29, 2004, the last reported sale price for our common stock was \$28.20 per share.

Investing In Our Common Stock Involves Risks. See Risk Factors Beginning On Page 2.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is July 14, 2004.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABOUT ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS HOLDING CO.	
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	2
<u>RECENT DEVELOPMENTS</u>	13
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	14
<u>SELLING STOCKHOLDERS</u>	14
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	15
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	16
<u>EXPERTS</u>	16
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	17
<u>DISCLOSURE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	18

You should rely only on the information provided or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with additional or different information. This document may only be used where it is legal to sell these securities. You should not assume that any information in this prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date of this prospectus. Information incorporated by reference in this prospectus is accurate only as of the date of the document incorporated by reference. In this prospectus, unless otherwise indicated, the words we, us, and our refer to Accredited Home Lenders Holding Co. and its subsidiaries and do not refer to the selling stockholders.

Table of Contents

SUMMARY

The following summary highlights selected information from this prospectus and the information incorporated by reference. Because this is a summary, it does not contain all the information about us that may be important to you. You should read the more detailed information in this prospectus and other documents which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

We are a nationwide mortgage banking company that originates, finances, sells, securitizes and services non-prime mortgage loans secured by residential real estate. We focus on borrowers who may not meet conforming underwriting guidelines because of higher loan-to-value ratios, the nature or absence of income documentation, limited credit histories, high levels of consumer debt, or past credit difficulties. We originate loans primarily based upon the borrower's willingness and ability to repay the loan and the adequacy of the collateral. Our experienced management team has developed incentive programs, technology tools and business processes that focus our employees on originating non-prime mortgage loans with the financial and other characteristics that generate profits for us. We believe that this business approach has contributed to our disciplined growth in both origination volume and profits.

In 2003, approximately 89% and 11% of our loan originations were originated through our wholesale and retail channels, respectively. In 2003, our wholesale loan originations were originated through approximately 6,800 brokers. Prior to funding, each loan we originate is underwritten by our employees to confirm that the loan is priced commensurate with its risk as determined in accordance with our underwriting guidelines. We finance the origination of our loans under one of eight secured warehouse facilities. As of April 30, 2004, these facilities provided us with approximately \$2.8 billion of credit capacity.

We conduct an analysis to find and select the optimal disposition strategy for each loan. We have primarily disposed of our loans in whole loan sales and to a lesser extent in securitizations and loan sales with retained interests. We have begun using structures that require financing treatment rather than sale treatment for our securitizations. Since the third quarter of 2002, we completed six securitizations totaling \$2.5 billion which were structured as financings. On all of the loans that we securitize or sell with retained interests, we retain the rights to service the loans.

We have developed incentive programs, technology tools and business processes that reward performance and that we believe result in the optimal balance among these competing factors that are described below. Our incentive programs compensate our employees based upon one or more of these factors. Our technology tools, such as our Revenue Calculator and our profit and loss tools, provide the real-time information that an employee needs to estimate the employee's compensation and simultaneously meet our overall loan quality and profitability goals. Our business processes incorporate cross-departmental review and feedback that are designed to assist each department in maximizing the quality and profitability of each loan originated. We have developed our incentive programs, technology tools and business processes over time, and we are constantly reviewing and updating them to meet our evolving needs.

Our principal executive offices are located at 15090 Avenue of Science, San Diego, California 92128. Our telephone number is (858) 676-2100.

The Offering

Common stock offered by the selling stockholders

510,697 shares

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully consider the following information about these risks, as well as the other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus, before you decide to buy any shares of our common stock. Risks and uncertainties, in addition to those we describe below, that are not presently known to us or that we currently believe are immaterial may also impair our business operations. If any of the following risks occur, our business could be harmed, the price of our common stock could decline and you may lose all or part of your investment.

Risks Related to Our Business

We finance borrowers with lower credit ratings. The non-prime loans we originate generally have higher delinquency and default rates than prime mortgage loans, which could result in losses on loans that we hold or that we are required to repurchase, the loss of our servicing rights and damage to our reputation as a loan servicer.

We are in the business of originating, selling and, to a lesser extent, securitizing and servicing non-prime mortgage loans. Non-prime mortgage loans generally have higher delinquency and default rates than prime mortgage loans. Delinquency interrupts the flow of projected interest income from a mortgage loan and default can ultimately lead to a loss if the net realizable value of the real property securing the mortgage loan is insufficient to cover the principal and interest due on the loan. Also, our cost of financing and servicing a delinquent or defaulted loan is generally higher than for a performing loan. We bear the risk of delinquency and default on loans beginning when we originate them until we sell them and we continue to bear the risk of delinquency and default after we securitize loans or sell loans with a retained interest. Loans that become delinquent prior to sale or securitization may become unsaleable or saleable only at a discount, and the longer we hold loans prior to sale or securitization, the greater the chance that the loans may become delinquent before we have the opportunity to dispose of them. Factors that may increase the time held prior to sale or securitization include the time required to accumulate loans for securitizations or sales of large pools of loans, the amount and timing of third-party due diligence in connection with sales or securitizations, and defects in the loans.

We also reacquire the risks of delinquency and default for loans that we are obligated to repurchase. Repurchase obligations are typically triggered in loan sale transactions if an early payment default occurs on the loan after sale, or in any sale or securitization if the loan materially violates our representations or warranties. At March 31, 2004, mortgage loans held for sale included approximately \$8.1 million of loans repurchased. Our total provision for losses was \$7.4 million for the three months ended March 31, 2004. If we experience higher-than-expected levels of delinquency or default in pools of loans that we service, we may lose our servicing rights, which would result in a loss of future servicing income and may damage our reputation as a loan servicer.

We attempt to manage these risks with risk-based mortgage loan pricing and appropriate underwriting policies and loan collection methods. However, if such policies and methods are insufficient to control our delinquency and default risks and do not result in appropriate loan pricing, our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations could be significantly harmed. Our total delinquency rate (including loans in foreclosure and converted into real estate owned) for our servicing portfolio was 1.4% at March 31, 2004. Historically, our delinquency rate has increased, and may increase in the future, as the mortgage loans in our portfolio age.

Any substantial economic slowdown could increase delinquencies, defaults and foreclosures and reduce our ability to originate loans.

Edgar Filing: ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS HOLDING CO - Form 424B3

Periods of economic slowdown or recession may be accompanied by decreased demand for consumer credit, decreased real estate values, and an increased rate of delinquencies, defaults and foreclosures. Any material decline in real estate values would increase the loan-to-value ratios (LTVs) on loans that we hold pending sale

Table of Contents

and loans in which we have a residual or retained interest, weaken our collateral coverage and increase the possibility and severity of a loss if a borrower defaults. We originate loans to borrowers who make little or no down payment, resulting in higher LTVs. A lack of equity in the home may reduce the incentive a borrower has to meet his payment obligations during periods of financial hardship, which might result in higher delinquencies, defaults and foreclosures. These factors would reduce our ability to originate loans and increase our losses on loans in which we have a residual or retained interest. In addition, loans we originate during an economic slowdown may not be as valuable to us because potential purchasers of our loans might reduce the premiums they pay for the loans to compensate for any increased risks arising during such periods. Any sustained increase in delinquencies, defaults or foreclosures is likely to significantly harm the pricing of our future loan sales and securitizations and also our ability to finance our loan originations.

Our business may be significantly harmed by a slowdown in the economy of California, where we conduct a significant amount of business.

Since inception, a significant portion of the mortgage loans we have originated, purchased or serviced has been secured by property in California. For the three months ended March 31, 2004, approximately 31% of the unpaid principal balance of the loans we originated were collateralized by properties located in California. As of March 31, 2004, approximately 35% of the unpaid principal balance of loans we serviced were collateralized by properties located in California. An overall decline in the economy or the residential real estate market, or the occurrence of a natural disaster that is not covered by standard homeowners' insurance policies, such as an earthquake or wildfire, in California could decrease the value of mortgaged properties in California. This, in turn, would increase the risk of delinquency, default or foreclosure on mortgage loans in our portfolio or that we have sold to others. This could restrict our ability to originate, sell, or securitize mortgage loans, and significantly harm our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations.

We face intense competition that could adversely impact our market share and our revenues.

We face intense competition from finance and mortgage banking companies, Internet-based lending companies where entry barriers are relatively low, and from traditional bank and thrift lenders that have entered the non-prime mortgage industry. As we seek to expand our business further, we will face a significant number of additional competitors, many of whom will be well established in the markets we seek to penetrate. Some of our competitors are much larger, have better name recognition, and have far greater financial and other resources than us.

The government-sponsored entities Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are also expanding their participation in the non-prime mortgage industry. These government-sponsored entities have a size and cost-of-funds advantage that allows them to purchase loans with lower rates or fees than we are willing to offer. While the government-sponsored entities presently do not have the legal authority to originate mortgage loans, including non-prime loans, they do have the authority to buy loans. A material expansion of their involvement in the market to purchase non-prime loans could change the dynamics of the industry by virtue of their sheer size, pricing power and the inherent advantages of a government charter. In addition, if as a result of their purchasing practices, these government-sponsored entities experience significantly higher-than-expected losses, such experience could adversely affect the overall investor perception of the non-prime mortgage industry.

The intense competition in the non-prime mortgage industry has also led to rapid technological developments, evolving industry standards and frequent releases of new products and enhancements. As mortgage products are offered more widely through alternative distribution channels, such as the Internet, we may be required to make significant changes to our current retail and wholesale structure and information and technology systems to compete effectively. Our inability to continue enhancing our current Internet capabilities, or to adapt to other technological changes in the industry, could significantly harm our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations. In addition, we rely on software and other technology-based programs to gather and analyze competitive and other data from the marketplace. Problems with our technology or inability to implement technological changes may, therefore, result in delayed detection of trends.

Table of Contents

Competition in the industry can take many forms, including interest rates and costs of a loan, less stringent underwriting standards, convenience in obtaining a loan, customer service, amount and term of a loan and marketing and distribution channels. The need to maintain mortgage loan volume in this competitive environment creates a risk of price competition in the non-prime mortgage industry. Price competition could prevent us from raising rates in response to a rising cost of funds or cause us to lower the interest rates that we charge borrowers, which could adversely impact our profitability and lower the value of our loans. If our competitors adopt less stringent underwriting standards, we will be pressured to do so as well, which would result in greater loan risk without compensating pricing. If we do not relax underwriting standards in response to our competitors, we may lose market share. Any increase in these pricing and underwriting pressures could reduce the volume of our loan originations and sales and significantly harm our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations.

An increase in interest rates could result in a reduction in our loan origination volumes, an increase in delinquency, default and foreclosure rates and a reduction in the value of and income from our loans.

The following are some of the risks we face related to an increase in interest rates:

A substantial and sustained increase in interest rates could harm our ability to originate loans because refinancing an existing loan would be less attractive and qualifying for a purchase loan may be more difficult.

Existing borrowers with adjustable-rate mortgages may incur higher monthly payments as the interest rate increases, which may lead to higher delinquency and default rates.

If prevailing interest rates increase after we fund a loan, the value that we receive upon the sale or securitization of the loan decreases.

The cost of financing our mortgage loans prior to sale or securitization is based primarily upon the London Inter-Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR). The interest rates we charge on our mortgage loans are based, in part, upon prevailing interest rates at the time of origination, and the interest rates on all of our mortgage loans are fixed for at least the first two or three years. If LIBOR increases after the time of loan origination, our net interest income which represents the difference between the interest rates we receive on our mortgage loans pending sale or securitization and our LIBOR-based cost of financing such loans will be reduced. The weighted average cost of financing our mortgage loans, prior to sale or securitization, was 2.3% for the three months ended March 31, 2004.

When we securitize loans or sell loans with retained interests, the value of and the income we receive from the securitized loans subject to portfolio-based accounting and the mortgage-related securities we retain are also based on LIBOR to the extent the underlying loans have an adjustable interest rate. This is because the income we receive from these mortgage loans and mortgage-related securities is based on the difference between the fixed rates payable on the loans for the first two or three years, and an adjustable LIBOR-based yield payable to the senior security holders or loan purchasers. We also have interest rate risk when the loans become adjustable after their two or three year fixed rate period. This is due to the loan rates resetting every six months, subject to various caps and floors, versus the monthly reset on the rate passed through to the investors in the mortgage-related securities and holders of the securitization bonds.

Accordingly, our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations may be significantly harmed as a result of increased interest rates.

Our hedging strategies may not be successful in mitigating our risks associated with interest rates.

We use various derivative financial instruments to provide a level of protection against interest rate risks, but no hedging strategy can protect us completely. When rates change, we expect to record a gain or loss on derivatives which would be offset by an inverse change in the value of loans held for sale, securitized loans

Table of Contents

subject to portfolio-based accounting and mortgage-related securities. We cannot assure you, however, that our use of derivatives will offset the risks related to changes in interest rates. There have been periods, and it is likely that there will be periods in the future, during which we will not have offsetting gains or losses in loan values after accounting for our derivative financial instruments. The derivative financial instruments we select may not have the effect of reducing our interest rate risk. In addition, the nature and timing of hedging transactions may influence the effectiveness of these strategies. Poorly designed strategies, improperly executed transactions, or inaccurate assumptions could actually increase our risk and losses. In addition, hedging strategies involve transaction and other costs. We cannot assure you that our hedging strategy and the derivatives that we use will adequately offset the risk of interest rate volatility or that our hedging transactions will not result in losses.

Our business requires a significant amount of cash and if it is not available our business will be significantly harmed.

Our primary sources of cash are our warehouse credit facilities and the proceeds from the sales and securitizations of our loans. We require substantial cash to fund our loan originations, to pay our loan origination expenses and to hold our loans pending sale or securitization. Also, as a servicer of loans, we are required to advance delinquent principal and interest payments, unpaid property taxes, hazard insurance premiums, and foreclosure and foreclosure-related costs. Our warehouse credit facilities also require us to observe certain financial covenants, including the maintenance of certain levels of cash and general liquidity in our company.

As of March 31, 2004, we financed substantially all of our loans through eight separate warehouse lenders. Each of these facilities is cancelable by the lender for cause at any time and at least one is cancelable at any time without cause. These facilities generally have a renewable, one-year term. Because these are short-term commitments of capital, the lenders may respond to market conditions, which may favor an alternative investment strategy for them, making it more difficult for us to secure continued financing. If we are not able to renew any of these warehouse credit facilities or arrange for new financing on terms acceptable to us, or if we default on our covenants or are otherwise unable to access funds under any of these facilities, or if the lenders do not honor their commitments for any reason, we will have to curtail our loan origination activities. This would result in decreased revenues and profits from loan sales.

The timing of our loan dispositions (which are periodic) is not always matched to the timing of our expenses (which are continuous). This requires us to maintain significant levels of cash to maintain acceptable levels of liquidity. When we securitize our loans or sell our loans with a retained interest, we may not receive any amounts in excess of the principal amount of the loan for up to 12 months or longer. Further, any decrease in demand in the whole loan market such that we are unable to timely and profitably sell our loans could inhibit our ability to meet our liquidity demands.

Our warehouse credit facilities contain covenants that restrict our operations and may inhibit our ability to grow our business and increase revenues.

Our warehouse credit facilities contain extensive restrictions and covenants that, among other things, require us to satisfy specified financial, asset quality and loan performance tests. If we fail to meet or satisfy any of these covenants, we would be in default under these agreements and our lenders could elect to declare all amounts outstanding under the agreements to be immediately due and payable, enforce their interests against collateral pledged under such agreements and restrict our ability to make additional borrowings. These agreements also contain cross-default provisions, so that if a default occurs under any one agreement, the lenders under our other agreements could also declare a default.

The covenants and restrictions in our warehouse credit facilities may restrict our ability to, among other things:

incur additional debt;

make certain investments or acquisitions;

Table of Contents

repurchase or redeem capital stock;

engage in mergers or consolidations;

finance loans with certain attributes;

reduce liquidity below certain levels; and

hold loans for longer than established time periods.

These restrictions may interfere with our ability to obtain financing or to engage in other business activities, which may significantly harm our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations.

Our rights to cash flow from our mortgage-related securities and securitized loans subject to portfolio-based accounting are subordinate to senior interests and may fail to generate any revenues for us if the revenue stream only generates enough revenues to pay the senior interest holders.

As part of the credit enhancement for our securitizations and loan sales with retained interests, the net cash flow that we receive from the securitized loans and the mortgage-related securities generally represents the excess of amounts, if any, generated by the underlying mortgage loans over the amounts required to be paid to the senior security holders or loan purchasers. This is also after deduction of servicing fees and any other specified expenses related to the sale or securitization. These excess amounts are derived from, and are affected by, the interplay of several factors, including:

the extent to which the interest rates of the mortgage loans exceed the interest rates payable to the senior security holders or loan purchasers;

the level of losses and delinquencies experienced on the underlying loans; and

the extent to which the underlying loans are prepaid by borrowers in advance of scheduled maturities.

Any combination of the factors listed above may reduce the income we receive from and the value of our securitized loans and mortgage-related securities. If a gain has been recorded at the time of a sale or securitization based upon assumptions as to the levels of future income streams, and actual income streams are less than assumed or if we change our assumptions based upon our actual loss and delinquency experience, we may be required to record a charge against our earnings.

If we do not manage our growth effectively, our financial performance could be harmed.

Edgar Filing: ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS HOLDING CO - Form 424B3

In recent years, we have experienced rapid growth that has placed, and will continue to place, certain pressures on our management, administrative, operational and financial infrastructure. As of December 31, 1998, we had approximately 340 employees and by March 31, 2004, we had more than 2,080 employees. Many of these employees have very limited experience with us and a limited understanding of our systems and controls. The increase in the size of our operations may make it more difficult for us to ensure that we originate quality loans and that we service them effectively. We will need to attract and hire additional sales, servicing and management personnel in an intensely competitive hiring environment in order to preserve and increase our market share. At the same time, we will need to continue to upgrade and expand our financial, operational and managerial systems and controls. We also intend to continue to grow our business in the future, which could require capital, systems development and human resources beyond what we currently have. We cannot assure you that we will be able to:

meet our capital needs;

expand our systems effectively;

allocate our human resources optimally;

identify and hire qualified employees;

Table of Contents

satisfactorily perform our servicing obligations; or

incorporate effectively the components of any businesses that we may acquire in our effort to achieve growth.

The failure to manage growth effectively would significantly harm our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations.

The inability to attract and retain qualified employees could significantly harm our business.

We depend upon our wholesale account executives and retail loan officers to attract borrowers by, among other things, developing relationships with financial institutions, other mortgage companies and brokers, real estate agents, borrowers and others. We believe that these relationships lead to repeat and referral business. The market for skilled executive officers, account executives and loan officers is highly competitive and historically has experienced a high rate of turnover. Because of the difficulty in retaining qualified management personnel, we currently recruit college graduates to participate in our management trainee program. If we are unable to retain those trainees for a sufficient period following their training, we may be unable to recapture our costs of training and recruitment. In addition, if a manager leaves our company there is an increased likelihood that other members of his or her team will follow. Competition for qualified account executives and loan officers may lead to increased hiring and retention costs. If we are unable to attract or retain a sufficient number of skilled account executives at manageable costs, we will be unable to continue to originate quality mortgage loans that we are able to sell for a profit, which will reduce our revenues.

An interruption in or breach of our information systems may result in lost business.

We rely heavily upon communications and information systems to conduct our business. As we implement our growth strategy and increase our volume of loan production, that reliance will increase. Any failure or interruption or breach in security of our information systems or the third-party information systems on which we rely could cause underwriting or other delays and could result in fewer loan applications being received, slower processing of applications and reduced efficiency in loan servicing. We cannot assure you that such failures or interruptions will not occur or if they do occur that they will be adequately addressed by us or the third parties on which we rely. The occurrence of any failures or interruptions could significantly harm our business.

The success and growth of our business will depend upon our ability to adapt to and implement technological changes.

Our mortgage loan origination business is currently dependent upon our ability to effectively interface with our brokers, borrowers and other third parties and to efficiently process loan applications and closings. The origination process is becoming more dependent upon technological advancement, such as the ability to process applications over the Internet, accept electronic signatures, provide process status updates instantly and other customer-expected conveniences that are cost-efficient to our process. In addition, competition and increasing regulation may increase our reliance on technology as a means to improve efficiency. Implementing this new technology and becoming proficient with it may also require significant capital expenditures. As these requirements increase in the future, we will have to fully develop these technological capabilities to remain competitive or our business will be significantly harmed.

If we are unable to maintain and expand our network of independent brokers, our loan origination business will decrease.

Edgar Filing: ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS HOLDING CO - Form 424B3

A significant majority of our originations of mortgage loans comes from independent brokers. During the three months ended March 31, 2004, 90.2% of our loan originations were originated through our broker network. Our brokers are not contractually obligated to do business with us. Further, our competitors also have relationships with our brokers and actively compete with us in our efforts to expand our broker networks.

Table of Contents

Accordingly, we cannot assure you that we will be successful in maintaining our existing relationships or expanding our broker networks, the failure of which could significantly harm our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations.

We may not be able to continue to sell and securitize our mortgage loans on terms and conditions that are profitable to us.

A substantial portion of our revenues come from the gain on sale generated by sales of pools of our mortgage loans as whole loans. We make whole loan sales to a limited number of institutional purchasers, some of which may be frequent, repeat purchasers, and others of which may make only one or a few purchases from us. There can be no assurance that we will continue to have purchasers for our loans on terms and conditions that will be profitable to us. Also, even though our mortgage loans are generally marketable to multiple purchasers, certain loans may be marketable to only one or a few purchasers, thereby increasing the risk that we may be unable to sell such loans at a profit.

We also rely on our ability to securitize our mortgage loans to realize a greater percentage of the full economic value of the loans. We cannot assure you, however, that we will continue to be successful in securitizing mortgage loans. Our ability to complete securitizations of our loans will depend upon a number of factors, including conditions in the credit and securities markets generally, conditions in the asset-backed securities market specifically, the availability of credit enhancements such as financial guarantee insurance, a senior subordinated structure or other means, and the performance of our previously securitized loans.

Our financial results fluctuate as a result of seasonality and other timing factors, which makes it difficult to predict our future performance and may affect the price of our common stock.

Our business is generally subject to seasonal trends. These trends reflect the general pattern of housing sales, which typically peak during the spring and summer seasons. Our quarterly operating results have fluctuated in the past and are expected to fluctuate in the future, reflecting the seasonality of the industry. Further, if the closing of a sale of loans is postponed, the recognition of gain from the sale is also postponed. If such a delay causes us to recognize income in the next quarter, our results of operations for the previous quarter could be significantly depressed. If our results of operations do not meet the expectations of our stockholders and securities analysts, then the price of our common stock may decrease.

We are subject to losses due to fraudulent and negligent acts on the part of loan applicants, mortgage brokers, other vendors and our employees.

When we originate mortgage loans, we rely heavily upon information supplied by third parties including the information contained in the loan application, property appraisal, title information and employment and income documentation. If any of this information is intentionally or negligently misrepresented and such misrepresentation is not detected prior to loan funding, the value of the loan may be significantly lower than expected. Whether a misrepresentation is made by the loan applicant, the mortgage broker, another third party or one of our own employees, we generally bear the risk of loss associated with the misrepresentation. A loan subject to a material misrepresentation is typically unsaleable or subject to repurchase if it is sold prior to detection of the misrepresentation. Even though we may have rights against persons and entities who made or knew about the misrepresentation, such persons and entities are often difficult to locate and it is often difficult to collect any monetary losses that we have suffered as a result of their actions.

Edgar Filing: ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS HOLDING CO - Form 424B3

We have controls and processes designed to help us identify misrepresented information in our loan origination operations. We cannot assure you, however, that we have detected or will detect all misrepresented information in our loan originations.

We are subject to losses due to fraudulent and negligent acts in other parts of our operations. If we experience a significant number of such fraudulent or negligent acts, our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations would be significantly harmed.

Table of Contents

Defective loans may harm our business.

In connection with the sale and securitization of our loans, we are required to make a variety of customary representations and warranties regarding our company and the loans. We are subject to these representations and warranties for the life of the loan and they relate to, among other things:

compliance with laws;

regulations and underwriting standards;

the accuracy of information in the loan documents and loan file; and

the characteristics and enforceability of the loan.

A loan that does not comply with these representations and warranties may take longer to sell, impact our ability to obtain third party financing, be unsaleable or saleable only at a discount. If such a loan is sold before we detect a non-compliance, we may be obligated to repurchase the loan and bear any associated loss directly, or we may be obligated to indemnify the purchaser against any such losses, either of which could reduce our cash available for operations and liquidity. We believe that we have qualified personnel at all levels and have established controls to ensure that all loans are originated to the market's requirements, but we cannot assure you that we will not make mistakes, or that certain employees will not deliberately violate our lending policies. We seek to minimize losses from defective loans by correcting flaws if possible and selling or re-selling such loans. We also create allowances to provide for defective loans in our financial statements. We cannot assure you, however, that losses associated with defective loans will not harm our results of operations or financial condition.

If the prepayment rates for our mortgage loans are higher than expected, our results of operations may be significantly harmed.

When a borrower pays off a mortgage loan prior to the loan's scheduled maturity, the impact on us depends upon when such payoff or prepayment occurs. Our prepayment losses generally occur after we sell or securitize our loans and the extent of our losses depends on when the prepayment occurs. If the prepayment occurs:

within 12 to 18 months following a whole loan sale, we may have to reimburse the purchaser for all or a portion of the premium paid by the purchaser for the loan, again resulting in a loss of our profit on the loan; or

after we have securitized the loan or sold the loan in a sale with a retained interest, we lose the future income from that loan, and if we recorded a gain at the time of such securitization or sale, we may be required to record a charge against our earnings if actual prepayment rates for the related pool of loans are higher than the prepayment rates assumed in recording the gain at the time of sale or securitization.

Prepayment rates on mortgage loans vary from time to time and tend to increase during periods of declining interest rates. Of the securitized loans we serviced during the three months ended March 31, 2004, 21.7% (annualized) were prepaid. We seek to minimize our prepayment risk through a variety of means, including originating a significant portion of loans with prepayment penalties with terms of two to five years. No

strategy, however, can completely insulate us from prepayment risks, whether arising from the effects of interest rate changes or otherwise. See Statutory and Regulatory Risks below for a discussion of statutes related to prepayment penalties.

We are exposed to environmental liabilities, with respect to properties that we take title to upon foreclosure, that could increase our costs of doing business and harm our results of operations.

In the course of our servicing activities, we may foreclose and take title to residential properties and become subject to environmental liabilities with respect to those properties. We may be held liable to a governmental

Table of Contents

entity or to third parties for property damage, personal injury, investigation and clean-up costs incurred by these parties in connection with environmental contamination, or may be required to investigate or clean up hazardous or toxic substances, or chemical releases at a property. The costs associated with investigation or remediation activities could be substantial. Moreover, as the owner or former owner of a contaminated site, we may be subject to common law claims by third parties based upon damages and costs resulting from environmental contamination emanating from the property. If we ever become subject to significant environmental liabilities, our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations would be significantly harmed.

Statutory and Regulatory Risks

The nationwide scope of our operations exposes us to risks of noncompliance with an increasing and inconsistent body of complex laws and regulations at the federal, state and local levels.

Because we originate mortgage loans in all 50 states and in the District of Columbia, we must comply with the laws and regulations, as well as judicial and administrative decisions, of all of these jurisdictions, as well as an extensive body of federal laws and regulations. The volume of new or modified laws and regulations has increased in recent years, and, in addition, individual cities and counties have begun to enact laws that restrict non-prime loan origination activities in those cities and counties. The laws and regulations of each of these jurisdictions are different, complex and, in some cases, in direct conflict with each other. As our operations continue to grow, it may be more difficult to comprehensively identify, to accurately interpret and to properly program our technology systems and effectively train our personnel with respect to all of these laws and regulations, thereby potentially increasing our exposure to the risks of noncompliance with these laws and regulations.

In addition, recently-enacted and changed laws, regulations and standards relating to corporate governance and public disclosure, including the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, new Securities and Exchange Commission regulations and NASDAQ rules, are creating uncertainties for companies like ours. These new or changed laws, regulations and standards are subject to varying interpretations due, in many cases, to their lack of specificity. As their applications evolve over time and new guidance is provided by regulatory and governing bodies, we may incur higher costs of compliance, resulting from ongoing revisions to our disclosure and governance practices.

Our failure to comply with these laws can lead to:

civil and criminal liability;

loss of approved status;

demands for indemnification or loan repurchases from purchasers of our loans;

class action lawsuits; and

administrative enforcement actions.

Stockholder refusal to comply with regulatory requirements may interfere with our ability to do business in certain states.

Some states in which we operate may impose regulatory requirements on our officers and directors and persons holding certain amounts, usually 10% or more, of our common stock. If any person holding such an amount of our stock fails to meet or refuses to comply with a state's applicable regulatory requirements for mortgage lending, we could lose our authority to conduct business in that state.

We may be subject to fines or other penalties based upon the conduct of our independent brokers.

The mortgage brokers from which we obtain loans have parallel and separate legal obligations to which they are subject. While these laws may not explicitly hold the originating lenders responsible for the legal violations

Table of Contents

of mortgage brokers, increasingly federal and state agencies have sought to impose such assignee liability. Recently, for example, the United States Federal Trade Commission (FTC) entered into a settlement agreement with a mortgage lender where the FTC characterized a broker that had placed all of its loan production with a single lender as the agent of the lender. The FTC imposed a fine on the lender in part because, as principal, the lender was legally responsible for the mortgage broker's unfair and deceptive acts and practices. The United States Justice Department in the past has sought to hold a non-prime mortgage lender responsible for the pricing practices of its mortgage brokers, alleging that the mortgage lender was directly responsible for the total fees and charges paid by the borrower under the Fair Housing Act even if the lender neither dictated what the mortgage broker could charge nor kept the money for its own account. Accordingly, we may be subject to fines or other penalties based upon the conduct of our independent mortgage brokers.

We are no longer able to rely on the Alternative Mortgage Transactions Parity Act to preempt certain state law restrictions on prepayment penalties, and we may be unable to compete effectively with financial institutions that are exempt from such restrictions.

The value of a mortgage loan depends, in part, upon the expected period of time that the mortgage loan will be outstanding. If a borrower pays off a mortgage loan in advance of this expected period, the holder of the mortgage loan does not realize the full value expected to be received from the loan. A prepayment penalty payable by a borrower who repays a loan earlier than expected helps offset the reduction in value resulting from the early payoff. Consequently, the value of a mortgage loan is enhanced to the extent the loan includes a prepayment penalty, and a mortgage lender can offer a lower interest rate and/or lower loan fees on a loan which has a prepayment penalty. Prepayment penalties are an important feature to obtain value on the loans we originate.

Certain state laws restrict or prohibit prepayment penalties on mortgage loans, and we have relied on the federal Alternative Mortgage Transactions Parity Act (the Parity Act) and related rules issued in the past by the Office of Thrift Supervision (the OTS) to preempt state limitations on prepayment penalties. The Parity Act was enacted to extend to financial institutions, other than federally chartered depository institutions, the federal preemption which federally chartered depository institutions enjoy. However, on September 25, 2002, the OTS released a new rule that reduced the scope of the Parity Act preemption as of July 1, 2003, preventing us from relying on the Parity Act to preempt state restrictions on prepayment penalties. The elimination of this federal preemption requires us to comply with state restrictions on prepayment penalties. This may place us at a competitive disadvantage relative to financial institutions that will continue to enjoy federal preemption of such state restrictions because such institutions will be able to charge prepayment penalties without regard to state restrictions and thereby may be able to offer loans with interest rate and loan fee structures that are more attractive than we are able to offer.

In addition, on April 24, 2003, a New Jersey state appellate court relied on the new OTS rule to find that the Parity Act does not preempt New Jersey state law restrictions on prepayment penalties. This ruling is contrary to previous published court opinions which have upheld such preemption under the Parity Act, including a May 8, 2000 decision by the United States District Court in New Jersey which upheld such preemption with respect to New Jersey state law. Nonetheless, if the New Jersey state court's decision were followed by other courts, it might call into question the validity of prepayment penalty provisions under which we have previously collected prepayment penalties and which we continued to include in our loan documentation prior to July 1, 2003 on the basis of the Parity Act exemption.

The increasing number of federal, state and local anti-predatory lending laws may restrict our ability to originate or increase our risk of liability with respect to certain mortgage loans and could increase our cost of doing business.

In recent years, several federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations have been adopted, or are under consideration, that are intended to eliminate so-called predatory lending practices. These laws, rules and

Table of Contents

regulations impose certain restrictions on loans on which certain points and fees or the annual percentage rate (APR) exceeds specified thresholds, commonly referred to as high cost loans. Some of these restrictions expose a lender to risks of litigation and regulatory sanction no matter how carefully a loan is underwritten. In addition, an increasing number of these laws, rules and regulations seek to impose liability for violations on purchasers of loans, regardless of whether a purchaser knew of or participated in the violation.

We have generally avoided and will continue to avoid originating high cost loans because the rating agencies generally will not rate securities backed by such loans and the companies that buy our loans and/or provide financing for our loan origination operations generally do not want to buy or finance such loans. The continued enactment of these laws, rules and regulations may prevent us from making certain loans that we would otherwise make, may cause us to cease operations in certain jurisdictions altogether and may cause us to reduce the APR or the points and fees on loans that we do make. In addition, the difficulty of managing the risks presented by these laws, rules and regulations may decrease the availability of warehouse financing and the overall demand for non-prime loans, making it difficult to fund, sell or securitize any of our loans. If we decide to relax our restrictions on loans subject to these laws, rules and regulations, we will be subject to greater risks for actual or perceived non-compliance with such laws, rules and regulations, including demands for indemnification or loan repurchases from our lenders and loan purchasers, class action lawsuits, increased defenses to foreclosure of individual loans in default, individual claims for significant monetary damages, and administrative enforcement actions. If nothing else, the growing number of these laws, rules and regulations will increase our cost of doing business as we are required to develop systems and procedures to ensure that we do not violate any aspect of these new requirements. Any of the foregoing could significantly harm our business, financial condition, liquidity and results of operations.

Risks Related to Our Capital Structure

The market price of our common stock could be volatile.

The market price for our common stock may fluctuate substantially due to a number of factors, including:

the issuance of new equity securities pursuant to a future offering;

changes in interest rates;

competitive developments, including announcements by us or our competitors of new products or services or significant contracts, acquisitions, strategic partnerships, joint ventures or capital commitments;

variations in quarterly operating results;

changes in financial estimates and forecasts published by securities analysts;

the depth and liquidity of the market for our common stock;

investor perceptions of our company and the mortgage industry generally (including the non-prime and nonconforming mortgage industry); and

general economic and other national conditions.

Some provisions of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws may deter takeover attempts, which may limit the opportunity of our stockholders to sell their shares at a favorable price.

Some of the provisions of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws could make it more difficult for a third party to acquire us, even if doing so might be beneficial to our stockholders by providing them with the opportunity to sell their shares possibly at a premium over the then market price.

For example, our board of directors is divided into three classes. The term of the first class expires at the 2004 annual meeting of stockholders, the term of the second class expires in 2005, and the term of the third class

Table of Contents

expires in 2006. At each annual meeting of stockholders, the terms of approximately one-third of the directors will expire, and new directors will be elected to serve for three years. It will take at least two annual meetings to effect a change in control of our board of directors because a majority of the directors cannot be elected at a single meeting, which may discourage hostile takeover bids.

In addition, our certificate of incorporation authorizes the board of directors to issue up to 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock. The preferred stock may be issued in one or more series, the terms of which may be determined at the time of issuance by our board of directors without further action by the stockholders. These terms may include voting rights including the right to vote as a series on particular matters, preferences as to dividends and liquidation, conversion rights, redemption rights and sinking fund provisions. No shares of preferred stock are presently outstanding. The issuance of any preferred stock in the future could diminish the rights of holders of our common stock, and therefore could reduce the value of our common stock. In addition, specific rights granted to future holders of preferred stock could be used to restrict our ability to merge with, or sell assets to, a third party. The ability of our board of directors to issue preferred stock could delay, discourage, prevent or make it more difficult or costly to acquire or effect a change in control, thereby preserving the current stockholders' control.

Our bylaws contain provisions that require stockholders to act only at a duly-called meeting and make it difficult for any person other than management to introduce business at a duly-called meeting by requiring such other person to follow certain notice procedures.

Finally, we are also subject to Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law which, subject to certain exceptions, prohibits a Delaware corporation from engaging in any business combination with any interested stockholder for a period of three years following the date that the stockholder became an interested stockholder. The preceding provisions of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws, as well as Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, could discourage potential acquisition proposals, delay or prevent a change of control and prevent changes in our management, even if such things would be in the best interests of our stockholders.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In June 2004, we were served with a class action complaint, *Aslam v. Accredited Home Lenders, Inc., et al.*, brought in Cook County, Illinois. The complaint alleges that the purchase money, first priority mortgage loan we made to the plaintiff violated Illinois law because the loan, which had an interest rate in excess of 8%, included a prepayment charge and because we charged certain fees for the loan, which fees allegedly exceeded 3% of the original loan amount. The plaintiff seeks to recover, on behalf of himself and all other individuals to which we made loans with the same alleged violations, the damages allowed by statute, interest, costs and attorneys' fees. The damages allowed by statute include actual economic damage and an amount equal to twice the total of all interest, discount and charges determined by the loan contract or paid by the obligor, whichever is greater. To the extent the plaintiff's loan included any provisions or fees which might otherwise violate Illinois law, we included those provisions or fees in plaintiff's loan on the basis that federal law preempted Illinois law with respect to plaintiff's loan. Our position in this regard was consistent with prior case law and previously announced positions of the Illinois Attorney General and the Illinois Office of Banks and Real Estate. However, contrary to this established authority, in *U.S. Bank, National Association, et al., v. Clark, et al.*, consolidated cases that involve alleged violations of Illinois law similar to those alleged against us, an Illinois appellate court recently held that federal preemption was not available for the non-purchase money, first priority mortgage loans involved in those cases. The rationale by which the *Clark* court reached its decision undermines our ability to rely on federal preemption with respect to the loan we made to the plaintiff and any other Illinois resident. The *Clark* decision is on appeal, legislation has been proposed that would override the decision, and we intend to vigorously defend this matter. If, however, the plaintiff recovers all or substantially all of the relief he seeks, the potential liability could materially and adversely affect us. At the present time, the ultimate outcome of the matter and the amount of liability, if any, that may result is not determinable, and we have not accrued any amounts in our financial statements with respect to this matter.

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

The proceeds from the sale of the common stock offered by this prospectus are solely for the account of the selling stockholders. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of these shares.

SELLING STOCKHOLDERS

We are registering for resale of up to 510,697 shares of our common stock held by the stockholder identified below. The following table sets forth:

the name of the selling stockholder;

the number and percent of our common stock that the selling stockholder owned prior to the offering for resale of the shares of our common stock being registered by the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part;

the number of shares of our common stock that may be offered for resale for the account of the selling stockholder pursuant to this prospectus; and

the number and percent of shares of our common stock to be held by the selling stockholder after the offering of the resale shares (assuming all of the resale shares are sold by the selling stockholder).

This information is based on information provided by the selling stockholder, schedules 13G and/or other public documents filed with the SEC, and assumes the sale of all of the shares by the selling stockholder. The term *selling stockholder* includes the stockholder listed below and their transferees, pledgees, donees or other successors. The applicable percentage of ownership is based on an aggregate of 20,799,250 shares of common stock issued and outstanding as of April 30, 2004. The number of shares beneficially owned by the selling stockholder is determined under rules promulgated by the SEC, and the information is not necessarily indicative of beneficial ownership for any other purpose.

<u>Selling Stockholder</u>	<u>Shares Beneficially Owned Prior to Offering</u>		<u>Number of Shares Being Offered</u>	<u>Shares Beneficially Owned After Offering</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>		<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Friedman, Billings, Ramsey Group, Inc.	510,697	2.0	510,697	0	*

* less than 1%

We completed our initial public offering (IPO) in February 2003. The principle underwriter for that transaction was Friedman, Billings, Ramsey & Co. Inc. In a private placement, an affiliate of Friedman, Billings, Ramsey & Co., Inc., FBR Asset Investment Corporation, purchased 510,697 shares of our common stock at a price equal to the public offering price in the IPO less the underwriting discount. However, on November 15, 2002, FBR Asset Investment Corporation announced that it had signed a definitive agreement to merge with Friedman, Billings,

Edgar Filing: ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS HOLDING CO - Form 424B3

Ramsey Group, Inc. (Old FBR Group), the parent corporation of Friedman, Billings, Ramsey & Co., Inc. The merger was consummated in the first quarter of 2003. As a result of this merger, the surviving corporation assumed the name Friedman, Billings, Ramsey Group, Inc. (New FBR Group), and became the successor-in-interest to Old FBR Group and FBR Asset Investment Corporation and became the owner of the shares being sold pursuant to this prospectus. New FBR Group also became the parent corporation of Friedman, Billings, Ramsey & Co., Inc.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

The selling stockholder and any of its donees, transferees, pledgees, assignees and successors-in-interest may sell, from time to time, any or all of their shares of common stock on any stock exchange, market or trading facility on which the shares are traded or in private transactions. These sales may be at fixed or negotiated prices. The selling stockholder may use any one or more of the following methods when selling shares:

ordinary brokerage transactions and transactions in which the broker-dealer solicits purchasers;

block trades in which the broker-dealer so engaged will attempt to sell the shares as agent but may position and resell a portion of the block as principal to facilitate the transaction;

purchases by a broker-dealer as principal and resale by the broker-dealer for its account;

over-the-counter distribution in accordance with the rules of the Nasdaq National Market;

privately negotiated transactions;

short sales;

broker-dealers may agree with the selling stockholder to sell a specified number of such shares at a stipulated price per share;

a combination of any such methods of sale; and

any other method permitted pursuant to applicable law.

Under applicable rules and regulations under the Securities Exchange Act, any person engaged in a distribution of the shares of common stock covered by this prospectus may be limited in its ability to engage in market activities with respect to such shares. A selling stockholder, for example, will be subject to applicable provisions of the Securities Exchange Act and the rules and regulations under it, including, without limitation, Regulation M, which provisions may restrict certain activities of the selling stockholder and limit the timing of purchases and sales of any shares of common stock by the selling stockholder. Furthermore, under Regulation M, persons engaged in a distribution of securities are prohibited from simultaneously engaging in market making and certain other activities with respect to such securities for a specified period of time prior to the commencement of such distributions, subject to specified exceptions or exemptions. The foregoing may affect the marketability of the shares offered by this prospectus.

To the extent required, this prospectus may be amended or supplemented from time to time to describe a specific plan of distribution. In connection with distributions of the shares or otherwise, the selling stockholder may enter into hedging transactions with broker-dealers or other financial institutions. In connection with such transactions, broker-dealers or other financial institutions may engage in short sales of our common stock in the course of hedging the positions they assume with selling stockholder. The selling stockholder may also sell our securities short and redeliver the shares to close out such short positions. The selling stockholder may also enter into option or other transactions with broker-dealers or other financial institutions that require the delivery to such broker-dealer or other financial institution of shares offered by this prospectus, which shares the broker-dealer or other financial institution may resell pursuant to this prospectus, as supplemented or amended to

reflect such transaction.

The selling stockholder may also engage in short sales against the box, puts and calls and other transactions in our securities or derivatives of our securities and may sell or deliver shares in connection with these trades. The selling stockholder may pledge its shares to their brokers under the margin provisions of customer agreements. If a selling stockholder defaults on a margin loan, the broker may offer and sell, from time to time, the pledged shares.

The selling stockholder may sell shares directly to market makers acting as principals and/or broker-dealers acting as agents for itself or its customers. Broker-dealers engaged by the selling stockholder may arrange for other brokers-dealers to participate in sales. Broker-dealers may receive commission, concessions or discounts

Table of Contents

from the selling stockholder (or, if any broker-dealer acts as agent for the purchaser of shares, from the purchaser) in amounts to be negotiated. The selling stockholder does not expect these commissions and discounts to exceed what is customary in the types of transactions involved. Market makers and block purchasers that purchase the shares will do so for their own account and at their own risk. It is possible that a selling stockholder will attempt to sell shares in block transactions to market makers or other purchasers at a price per share that may be below the then-current market price. We cannot make assurances that all or any of the shares of common stock will be issued to, or sold by, the selling stockholder.

In addition, any shares that qualify for sale pursuant to Rule 144 promulgated under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, may be sold under Rule 144 rather than pursuant to this prospectus.

The selling stockholder is considered an underwriter for purposes of liability under the Securities Act. Any broker-dealers or agents that are involved in selling the shares may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act in connection with such sales. In such event, any commissions received by such broker-dealers or agents and any profit on the resale of the shares purchased by them may be deemed to be underwriting commissions or discounts under the Securities Act.

In certain states, the applicable state securities laws will require a holder of shares desiring to sell its shares to sell its shares only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, in certain states the shares may not be sold unless they have been registered or qualified for sale in the applicable state or an exemption from the registration or qualification requirement is available and is complied with.

In addition, we will make copies of this prospectus available to the selling stockholder for the purpose of satisfying the prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act.

At the time a particular offer of shares is made, if required, a prospectus supplement will be distributed that will set forth the number of shares being offered and the terms of the offering, including the name of any underwriter, dealer or agent, the purchase price paid by any underwriter, any discount, commission and other item constituting compensation, any discount, commission or concession allowed or reallocated or paid to any dealer, and the proposed selling price to the public.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the shares of common stock being sold in this offering and other legal matters relating to the offering will be passed upon for us by Gray Cary Ware & Freidenrich LLP, San Diego, California.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements incorporated in this prospectus by reference from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their report, which is incorporated herein by reference, and have been so incorporated in reliance upon the report of such firm given upon their authority as

experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

This prospectus is part of a registration statement on Form S-3 that we filed with the SEC. Certain information in the registration statement has been omitted from this prospectus in accordance with the rules of the SEC. We file proxy statements and annual, quarterly and special reports and other information with the SEC. You can inspect and copy the registration statement as well as the reports, proxy statements and other information we have filed with the SEC at the public reference room maintained by the SEC at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. You can call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information about the public reference rooms. We are also required to file electronic versions of these documents with the SEC, which may be accessed from the SEC's Internet site at <http://www.sec.gov>.

The SEC requires us to incorporate by reference certain of our publicly-filed documents into this prospectus, which means that information included in those documents is considered part of this prospectus. Information that we file with the SEC after the effective date of this prospectus will automatically update and supersede this information, as well as the other information contained in this prospectus. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings made with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or until we terminate the effectiveness of this registration statement.

The following documents filed with the SEC are incorporated by reference in this prospectus:

1. Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003 (including information specifically incorporated by reference into our Form 10-K from our Proxy Statement for the meeting of our stockholders on May 20, 2004).
2. Our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the period ended March 31, 2004.
3. The description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on February 6, 2003.
4. All of the filings pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act that we may make after the date hereof and prior to the termination of the offering contemplated by this prospectus.

We will furnish without charge to you, on written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference. You should direct any requests for documents to David Hertzler, 15090 Avenue of the Science, San Diego, CA 92128, telephone: (858) 676-2100.

Table of Contents

DISCLOSURE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, including the documents that we incorporate by reference, contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act. Any statements about our expectations, beliefs, plans, objectives, assumptions or future events or performance are not historical facts and may be forward-looking. These statements are often, but are not always, made through the use of words or phrases such as anticipates, estimates, plans, projects, continuing, ongoing, expects, management believes, we intend and similar words or phrases. Accordingly, these statements involve estimates, assumptions and uncertainties which could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed in them. Any forward-looking statements are qualified in their entirety by reference to the factors discussed throughout this prospectus, and in particular those factors listed under the section entitled Risk Factors. Among the key factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from the forward-looking statements include:

changes in demand for, or value of, mortgage loans due to the attributes of the loans we originate; the characteristics of our borrowers; and fluctuations in the real estate market, interest rates or the market in which we sell or securitize our loans;

a general deterioration in economic or political conditions;

our ability to protect and hedge our mortgage loan portfolio against adverse interest rate movements;

changes in government regulations that affect our ability to originate and service mortgage loans;

changes in the credit markets, which affect our ability to borrow money to originate mortgage loans;

the degree and nature of our competition; and

our ability to employ and retain qualified employees.

Because the factors referred to above could cause actual results or outcomes to differ materially from those expressed in any forward-looking statements we make, you should not place undue reliance on any such forward-looking statements. Further, any forward-looking statement speaks only as of the date on which it is made, and we undertake no obligation to update any forward-looking statement or statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date on which such statement is made or to reflect the occurrence of unanticipated events. New factors emerge from time to time, and it is not possible for us to predict which factors will arise. In addition, we cannot assess the impact of each factor on our business or the extent to which any factor, or combination of factors, may cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in any forward-looking statements.

Table of Contents

510,697 SHARES OF

COMMON STOCK

ACCREDITED HOME LENDERS HOLDING CO.

PROSPECTUS

JULY 14, 2004