

# EQUIFIN CAPITAL

## **EQUIFIN CAPITAL LEADS \$81 MILLION INVESTMENT IN FLAGSHIP CREDIT CORPORATION, NEW AUTOMOBILE FINANCE COMPANY**

*Private equity firm partners with veteran management team to establish non-prime consumer auto finance platform*

New York, NY – February 14, 2006 – Equifin Capital Partners, a New York-based private equity firm focused on the financial services industry, today announced that it has partnered with auto finance industry veteran Michael C. Ritter to form Flagship Credit Corporation, a national indirect automobile finance company catering to the non-prime market. Equifin Capital is the lead investor in an \$81 million capital commitment to fund the company's growth.

Flagship, based in Chadds Ford, PA, is run by Ritter and three other highly-seasoned senior executives, who collectively have over 60 years of industry experience.

“Equifin Capital's investment strategy is to partner with proven management teams and build strong platform companies in attractive segments of the financial services industry,” said Mani Sadeghi, a Managing Partner at Equifin Capital. “We believe the \$70 billion non-prime auto finance market presents especially attractive return opportunities and, given recent consolidation in the sector, a proven path to realizing franchise value.”

According to Ritter, Flagship's Chief Executive Officer, “Flagship will target markets in which our executive management team has longstanding relationships with franchised dealers. We anticipate growing to nearly \$1 billion in assets over the next five years, an achievable goal given that our management team has done this before while targeting the same market segment and utilizing a similar product.”

“We have known Mike for over a decade and are confident that together we can capitalize on the opportunities in the sector,” said Joseph Tomei, a Managing Partner at Equifin Capital. “We will be able to leverage Flagship's broad network of existing dealer relationships, proven credit management capabilities and the capital resources now committed to the company.”

Ritter is an experienced financial services executive, with a 24-year history of forming, acquiring, operating, and selling specialty finance companies. He was formerly the President and Chief Executive Officer of a legacy entity also named Flagship Credit Corporation which grew under his leadership to \$500 million in annual originations in less than two years and was successfully sold to a national bank. During his career he has also served as the Chief Financial Officer of Itochu International and as a senior executive of Copelco Financial Services Group.

The company's senior management team, consisting of Kevin O'Connell, Chief Credit Officer, Thomas R. Stillman, Chief Operating Officer and Kenneth Sicinski, Chief Financial Officer, has worked together for nearly two decades.

**About Flagship:**

Flagship Credit Corporation is a national indirect automobile finance company which purchases retail installment contracts from dealers financing to non-prime consumers for purchases of new and late model used vehicles. The Company is headquartered in Chadds Ford, PA. For more information about Flagship, visit [www.flagshipcreditcorp.com](http://www.flagshipcreditcorp.com) or call (610) 717-1900.

**About Equifin Capital:**

Equifin Capital Partners is a New York-based private equity firm focused on investments in consumer and commercial finance, asset servicing, capital asset management and other related sectors of the financial services industry. Equifin Capital's principals have been responsible for over \$1.3 billion in equity investments in start-ups, turn-arounds, buyouts and growth equity transactions. Equifin Capital combines private equity investment capabilities with the operating backgrounds of its principals at leading global financial services firms and extensive capital markets relationships. For more information about Equifin Capital, visit [www.equifincapital.com](http://www.equifincapital.com).

###

**Media Contact:**

The Abernathy MacGregor Group, Inc.  
Steven Bruce/Sam Hollander/Gwenn Daniels  
(212) 371-5999