
Section 1: 8-K (FORM 8-K)

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

FORM 8-K
CURRENT REPORT

PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(D) OF
THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported): May 14, 2018

BERKSHIRE HILLS BANCORP, INC.
(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

Delaware
(State or Other Jurisdiction
of Incorporation)

001-15781
(Commission File No.)

04-3510455
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

60 State Street, Boston, Massachusetts
(Address of Principal Executive Offices)

01209
(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (800) 773-5601, ext. 133773

Not Applicable
(Former Name or Former Address, if Changed Since Last Report)

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions (see General Instruction A.2. below):

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is an emerging growth company as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act of 1933 (17 CFR §230.405) or Rule 12b-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (17 CFR §240.12b-2).

Emerging growth company

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act.

Item 8.01 **Other Events.**

On May 14, 2018, Berkshire Hills Bancorp, Inc. (the “Company”) issued a news release announcing that Kroll Bond Rating Agency, Inc., a full-service rating agency, has initiated coverage on the Company and its subsidiary, Berkshire Bank. The news release is attached to this Current Report on Form 8-K as Exhibit 99.1 and is incorporated herein by reference.

Item 9.01 **Financial Statements and Exhibits.**

- (a) Financial Statements of Businesses Acquired. Not applicable.
- (b) Pro Forma Financial Information. Not applicable.
- (c) Shell Company Transactions. Not applicable.
- (d) Exhibits.

<u>Exhibit No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
<u>99.1</u>	<u>News Release dated May 14, 2018</u>

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, hereunto duly authorized.

Berkshire Hills Bancorp, Inc.

DATE: May 14, 2018

By: /s/ Wm. Gordon Prescott
Wm. Gordon Prescott
Senior Vice President and General Counsel

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Section 2: EX-99.1 (EXHIBIT 99.1)

Exhibit 99.1



Berkshire Hills Receives Investment Grade Ratings from Kroll Bond Rating Agency; Berkshire Bank Deposits Rated A-

BOSTON, May 14, 2018. Berkshire Hills Bancorp, Inc. (NYSE: BHLB) today announced that Kroll Bond Rating Agency (KBRA), a full-service rating agency, has initiated coverage on the Company and its Berkshire Bank subsidiary with investment grade ratings.

A rating of A- was assigned to Berkshire Bank for its deposits and senior unsecured debt. Michael Daly, the Company's CEO, stated, "We're pleased with this strong initial rating of the Bank and its recognition of our financial strength. This should be especially helpful to larger commercial, government, and institutional customers as we expand our checking accounts and other deposit services into our newer markets and across our regions."

Other ratings assigned to the Bank included a BBB+ subordinated debt rating and a K2 rating assigned to its short-term deposits and short-term debt. Berkshire Hills Bancorp received a BBB+ rating on its senior unsecured debt, a BBB rating on its subordinated debt, and a K2 rating for its short-term debt. Richard Marotta, the Bank's President, commented, "These KBRA ratings are supported by our diverse revenue sources, strong asset quality, and sound capital management. They reflect our strong financial condition as we expand our services as the third largest New England based regional bank."

KBRA's report notes Berkshire's recent deposit growth and the strengthening of its profitability and other key performance measures. A copy of the report is available at its website at www.kbra.com. KBRA is registered as a Nationally Recognized Statistical Rating Organization (NRSRO) by the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC). KBRA has issued more than 9,000 ratings totaling \$775 billion. It provides the investment community with credit ratings and research reports covering many sectors and securities instruments in the U.S. and Europe.

BACKGROUND

Berkshire Hills Bancorp is the parent of Berkshire Bank - America's Most Exciting Bank®. The Company has approximately \$11.5 billion in assets and 114 full service branches in Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, Vermont, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania providing personal and business banking, insurance, and wealth management services. The Company also offers mortgages and specialized commercial lending services in targeted national markets.

FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS

This document contains forward-looking statements as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. There are several factors

that could cause actual results to differ significantly from expectations described in the forward-looking statements. For a discussion of such factors, please see Berkshire's most recent reports on Forms 10-K and 10-Q filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission and available on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov. Berkshire does not undertake any obligation to update forward-looking statements.

CONTACT: Allison O'Rourke, Executive Vice President, Investor Relations Officer; 413-236-3149

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