February 2019

News for the Credit Union Champion

**VACUPAC Cracks $131,000 for 2018! See story at end of publication**

**League ADA Bill Passes House of Delegates**

Credit unions’ HB2296 joined the parade of bills passed by the House on the last afternoon before Crossover Day.

The vote was 62-36. There was no debate. After today, the House and Senate only can consider legislation that originated in the other chamber. The bill now goes to the Senate Courts of Justice Committee.

HB2296 would allow financial institutions a period up to 120 days to “cure” alleged issues complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act on its web site.

The bill aims to protect credit unions in Virginia from trolling attorneys sending complaint letters alleging non-compliance with the ADA on company web sites. The letters have been sent to Virginia credit unions as well as those around the country. The complaints have been tossed when they proceed to court.

The Virginia Bankers Association testified in favor of the legislation. However, organizations representing people with disabilities voiced concern that the legislation would gut compliance.

Del. Jay Leftwich (R-Chesapeake) patroned the bill.

The Senate version of the bill did not make it to a vote in the full chamber. Senators on the Courts of Justice subcommittee nixed it, citing the concerns from the disabilities groups as well as questioning the applicability of a state law on a federal issue. The League had argued that credit unions were not trying to duck ADA responsibilities, and that federal judges can look to state law for guidance. The League has been speaking with Senators who voted no in an effort to change minds.

Sen. George Barker (D-Clifton) served as patron of the Senate bill.

The third League bill, introduced by Del. Lamont Bagby (D-Richmond), died on a tie vote in committee. HB2706 would have allowed state-chartered credit unions to compensate members who currently serve as volunteers on their Boards of Directors and Supervisory Committees. ValleyStar Vice President Andrew
Reynolds testified that the legislation would benefit credit unions finding it difficult to attract board members with the skills needed to oversee increasingly complex financial institutions and regulatory environment.

The Virginia Bankers Association opposed the bill, claiming it would cause competition for board members between the for-profit and not-for-profit financial institutions.

League President Rick Pillow characterized the credit union bills as “heavily contested,” noting that the League “is trying to be pro-active” on behalf of credit unions.

He thanked the nearly 180 credit union advocates who participated in CU Day on Jan. 16 at the General Assembly, recognizing that they raised awareness of the issues behind the League legislation as well as how credit unions were serving lawmakers’ constituents.

You can review legislation of interest to credit unions, and the voting record on the League bills, here: [www.vacul.org/Advocacy/Governmental-Affairs/State-Legislative-Issues](http://www.vacul.org/Advocacy/Governmental-Affairs/State-Legislative-Issues).

Thank You To Everyone Who Contributed To CU Day!

Credit unions flooded the legislative office building on Jan. 16 with their distinctive red scarves, raising the credit union profile. Many credit unions came armed with a one-page handout noting the good things their institutions have done, from small low-interest loans to financial literacy.

Especially important this go-round were the credit unions educating legislative offices on what they were doing to help federal employees left without pay due to the government shutdown. Zero percent loans and skipped payments without penalty were some of the ways credit unions stepped up to the plate.

Richard Gose, the chief political officer for the Credit Union National Association, told attendees, “Your presence makes a difference.” He said that the credit union tax exemption and the credit union difference is under attack in all 50 states. “By explaining what you do to assist our members, we show legislators that we focus on our members and not the bottom line,” Gose said.

League President Rick Pillow also thanked the credit union advocates, repeating how crucial their voices are with their lawmakers even if League staff talk with legislators daily.


You’ll need a password to access the link on the League web site. If you don’t have one, register for free at [www.vacul.org](http://www.vacul.org).

**Virginian Congressmen Appointed To Key CU Committees**

Virginia has gone from no representation on House Financial Services Committee to two Congressmen: freshmen Denver Riggleman (R-5) and Jennifer Wexton (D-10).
This committee oversees many of the bills relevant to credit unions. The appointments were made after the new session of Congress convened Jan. 3.

Virginia lost a seat on the House Appropriations Committee but gained one on Ways and Means. Returning Congressman Rep. Don Beyer (D-8) will serve on the committee that oversees tax issues, including the credit union tax exemption.

Virginia also will have two Congressmen serving on the Energy and Commerce Committee, which shares jurisdiction on data breach issues. Rep. Don McEachin (D-4) joins Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-9) on that panel.

Freshman Rep. Ben Cline got a seat on the Judiciary Committee, which also can consider data breach issues.

**New State Legislator & Veteran Tapped for CU Committees**

Freshman Del. Ronnie Campbell (R-Rockbridge) was assigned a seat on the Courts of Justice, a committee that sometimes oversees credit union legislation. Campbell won a special election to fill the vacancy created when the former officeholder, Ben Cline, ran successfully for the 6th Congressional seat. The committee is the one that handled the League’s bill on website compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Del. Chris Head (R-Botetourt), who is in his fourth term, was assigned to the Commerce and Labor Committee. He was one of four Republicans to vote against the League’s compensation bill for state-chartered credit unions.

**League Greets Lawmakers on First Day of 116th session of Congress**

The League’s Senior Vice President David Miles met with freshmen Congressmen and their aides on Jan. 3, the first day of the new session of Congress.


Director of Governmental Affairs Karin Sherbin met with banking aides of the returning Congressmen. CUNA has identified the issue of merchant data breaches as a major credit union issue most likely to gain traction in this session, and aides agreed. Numerous committees in the House and Senate have held hearings on various aspects of cybersecurity in the 115th session.

**Hike the Hill Set for March 13**

This year the League is conducting a Hike the Hill during the Governmental Affairs Conference hosted by CUNA instead of the Congressional Luncheon.

There are four new Congressmen representing Virginia, and individual meetings with them should allow for more engagement.
The League will make the appointments for the entire Virginia delegation. The GAC sessions end the morning of March 13, allowing attendees from around the nation to converge on Capitol Hill at the same time.

If you are not attending the GAC but are interested in Hike the Hill, please contact Karin Sherbin at ksherbin@vacul.org.

The League is also hosting an evening reception on March 11 at CU House in Washington, D.C., for Virginians attending the GAC.

**VACUPAC Supporters Crush It in 2018**

Now that we have all VACUPAC installments submitted for last year, we are delighted to announce that credit union champions raised $131,843 in 2018 for the one political action committee (PAC) that supports Virginia’s credit unions at the state level.

The total bested the 2017 contributions by $9,946 and came close to the highest-ever total of $133,000.

Well done credit union champions!

And for those credit unions who have signed a permission agreement, eligible portions of VACUPAC contributions are forwarded to the federal PAC operated by CUNA. This allows our credit unions to support credit union friendly lawmakers in Congress.

**PAC'IN Report**

As of Jan. 31, 2019, individual credit unions have raised $1,673.

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