

May 2019

News for the Credit Union Champion

Gov. Northam Vetoes ADA Bill

The roller-coaster ride is over for the League's bill to provide financial institutions a 120-day cure period to address allegations brought in state courts of noncompliance with the American with Disabilities Act on their web sites.

On May 3, Gov. Northam informed League President Rick Pillow that he was vetoing the bill.

Pillow said he cannot remember a previous credit union bill on the state level that went through so many twists and turns, including a conference committee.

Although the legislation united banks and credit unions, the bill was still a difficult slog because it was seen by some as pitting financial institutions against the community of disabled people.

In a press release, the governor stated: "The legislation takes a positive step in ensuring accessibility by establishing web content accessibility guidelines. However, the legislation also creates arbitrary delays in the administration of justice for individuals with disabilities. It creates onerous preconditions for the initiation of a lawsuit and shifts the burden of identifying VDA (Virginia with Disabilities Act) violations from covered entities to people with disabilities."

[You can read the governor's news release here.](#)

"Obviously, this is not the outcome we wanted, and I expressed our disappointment to the governor," said Pillow. "The League and credit unions fought hard for this bill. The final legislation the governor vetoed was the product of long discussions between the League, the bills' patrons and a number of organizations representing the disabled community. While credit unions are committed to web accessibility for the disabled, the reality is that plaintiffs' attorneys are exploiting the ADA to attack community financial institutions. We compromised where we could, but our priority was the enactment of legal protections for financial institutions from frivolous web-related ADA lawsuits.

"We'll continue to advocate for a permanent solution to this issue with the Department of Justice and through the support of Congress," said Pillow, [who has visited with officials at the U.S. Department of Justice](#) on this matter. "ADA protections for the disabled are important, and we think it equally important specific rules and guidance be developed to address the ambiguities in the law as it relates to websites. Otherwise, financial institutions and the nation's businesses remain targets for these lawsuits and demand letters."

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“We’re also grateful to our two chief patrons – [Sen. George Barker](#) and [Del. Jay Leftwich](#) – for their support and guidance during what proved a long and winding road for our legislation,” said Pillow. “At times, they were called to go above and beyond in helping shepherd our legislation through the General Assembly.”

Pillow thanked credit unions for their hard work, which included in-person and written communications urging support for the bill. He tabbed the credit unions’ efforts as crucial in getting the legislation as far as it went.

Credit Union Advocates Meet with Congressman

Representatives from Beacon CU, DuPont Community CU and Park View FCU met with freshmen Congressman Ben Cline (R-6) in his Staunton office during the Easter recess.

Cline is well-known to credit unions, having served for eight terms as a state delegate from Rockbridge County. However, many of the issues facing credit unions play out on the federal, not state level, making the meeting a good educational opportunity.

For example, credit unions talked about regulatory burden and data breaches as well as updating the Congressman on how they earn their tax exemption with their assistance to his constituents on financial literacy and other services.

John Beiler, Park View CEO, also wanted to put the issue of shadow banking on the radar of Cline. Shadow banking is lending and other financial activities conducted by unregulated or under unregulated institutions.

Cline was also interested in discussion of the demand letters sent to credit unions alleging noncompliance with the American with Disabilities Act. Since Cline sits on the House Judiciary Committee, it was especially relevant to note that credit unions want the U.S. Department of Justice to issue regulations on how to comply with the ADA on web sites.

Also attending the meeting were Alan Christopher, director of internal audit at DuPont, and Wes Gordon, advisory board member for Beacon.

Credit Unions Meet & Greet at Speaker Cox Event

Credit union representatives put VACUPAC dollars to good work by attending a fundraiser for state House Speaker Kirk Cox.

League President Rick Pillow said that the event afforded credit unions the opportunity to speak one on one with Cox, who heads up the majority caucus in the House of Delegates. Pillow thanked the Speaker for being a keynoter at this year’s annual meeting. Cox said he was impressed with the two awardees highlighted before his presentation; long-time BayPort CEO George Dudley, recently retired, received the Kirsch Lifetime Achievement Award. Cherry Dale of Virginia Credit Union received the Farley Award for her prodigious financial literacy efforts. Both Dale and Cox are former teachers, a connection not lost on the Speaker.

Credit unions also had the opportunity to talk with the following state lawmakers:

Del. Lee Ware (R-65), a member of Commerce and Labor;

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Del. Buddy Fowler (R-55);
Del. Riley Ingram (R-62); and
Sen. Amanda Chase (R-11).

Pillow said he also talked with Carrie Coyner who is the Republican campaigning for Ingram’s 62nd District. Ingram is not running for re-election.

Representing credit unions at the Speaker’s event besides Pillow were:

Patsy Stuard, Fort Lee;
Rosemary O’Steen, Fort Lee;
Janice Diehl, Henrico;
Fred Overmann, Henrico; and
Shawn Vattelana, Peoples Advantage.

Said Pillow: “Thank you to all the committed credit union members who have donated to VACUPAC. Without your generous support we could not represent credit unions at these events. We leverage your contributions by not only helping credit union legislative allies stay in office but also by using these fundraisers to strengthen our personal relationships with our elected leaders.”

Way To Go Peoples Advantage!

Peoples Advantage FCU has 100% of its Board and staff members contributing to VACUPAC at the pin level. The credit union also has earned Platinum Medal Recognition for reaching 150% of its VACUPAC annual goal.

Thank you to everyone at Peoples Advantage for your strong support of the credit union movement.

PAC’IN Report April 30, 2019

As of April 30, 2019, credit unions have raised \$43,435.

Region 1:	\$17,932	
Region 2:	\$16,916	
Region 3:	\$5,263	
Region 4:	\$2,986	
Under \$50 million:	\$635	2 credit unions
\$50-\$99 million:	\$7,946	2 credit unions
\$100-\$499 million:	\$7,050	6 credit unions
\$500-\$999 million:	\$5,447	4 credit unions
Over \$1 billion:	\$19,864	5 credit unions

Pass the hat/golf: \$489
League staff \$1,666
Annual Meeting Raffle: \$305

Thank you to all the VACUPAC contributors who support the credit union movement.