



# FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TODAY

News and topics of interest to financial institutions regulated by the Department of Banking and Finance

April 2015

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## Governor Deal signs House Bill 184

Governor Deal signed House Bill 184 into law on May 5, 2015. The bill was introduced by Representative Bruce Williamson at the request of the Department of Banking and Finance (“Department”) and it will go into effect on July 1, 2015. The bill revises statutory provisions governing the majority of the entities regulated by the Department – banks, credit unions, bank holding companies, money service businesses, mortgage companies, loan originators, and merchant acquirer limited purpose banks – as well as certain provisions addressing the Department’s general powers.



**Pictured Left to Right:** Deputy Commissioner for Legal Affairs Oscar B. Fears, Commissioner Kevin B. Hagler, Governor Nathan Deal, Representative Bruce Williamson, Senior Advocacy Officer Brandee Bickle (Georgia Credit Union Affiliates)

Among a host of other changes, the bill expands the Department’s parity authority for financial institutions as well as creates a conservatorship process for credit unions. Under current law, the Department can exercise its parity authority and put state chartered financial institutions on equal footing with federally chartered financial institutions in five specifically enumerated situations. O.C.G.A. § 7-1-61. House Bill 184 eliminates this restriction and, thus, provides that the Department can grant parity to state chartered banks and credit unions if a federally chartered bank or credit union can legally engage in an activity that may otherwise be precluded by the Financial Institutions Code of Georgia. This revision will help ensure that state chartered financial institutions are not at a competitive disadvantage to their federal counterparts.

In addition to the parity authority, the bill provides that the Department may appoint itself or a third party as conservator over a credit union. This is a potential alternative to liquidating a credit union in a receivership. Instead, if a conservator is appointed, the primary aim would be to attempt to rehabilitate the credit union and return it to the membership as a going concern.

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## Governor Deal signs House Bill 184

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The Department strongly encourages every regulated entity to review the bill to ensure a thorough understanding of all of the applicable revisions. House Bill 184 can be viewed at: <http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/20152016/151894.pdf>

The Department will issue proposed rules and regulations in the near future to implement some of the statutory changes contained in House Bill 184.

## Supervisory Manager Changes

The Department has made some internal, strategic changes regarding distribution of workloads for Supervisory Managers with oversight of state-chartered institutions. Effective April 13, 2015, assignments for Supervisory Managers are as follows:

Pam Keane, Director for Supervision:  
Central Point of Contact for Credit Unions  
[pkeane@dbf.state.ga.us](mailto:pkeane@dbf.state.ga.us)  
770-986-1636

Lori Binford, Supervisory Manager:  
Holding Companies, Banks and Credit Unions - District 2; SunTrust Bank; United Community Bank  
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770-986-1627

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770-986-1643

Murali Ramachandran, Supervisory Manager (Applications):  
Holding Companies, Banks and Credit Unions - District 4  
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770-986-1645

Brittany Bohannon, Supervisory Manager (Trust Specialist):  
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770-986-5049



### **HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE—OFFICE CLOSING**

This is a reminder that the Department will be closed on **Monday, May 25th** for the Memorial Day holiday.

## 3rd Annual Community Bank Research Conference and 2015 Survey

The Conference of State Bank Supervisors (“CSBS”) and the Federal Reserve System are partnering to plan the third annual Community Banking in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century research and policy conference. The goal of the conference is to provide a venue and encourage research on community banking. This research is a critical component to improving public policy as it relates to community banks and local communities.

Last year’s conference included a nationwide survey of community banks, with over 1,000 banks participating. The results of the survey and the town hall meetings are highlighted in a publication released during the conference. The report can be downloaded from the following URL: <https://www.stlouisfed.org/bank-supervision/2014-community-banking-conference/town-hall-publication>

The survey and the supplemental information from meetings is a critical opportunity for the state system to highlight critical issues and demonstrate the value and importance of a community banking system. On May 8, 2015, the Department e-mailed information, including the 2015 survey link, to Georgia state-chartered banks.

The purpose of the survey is to give researchers and policy makers an opportunity to hear directly from community banks on a range of important topics. Results from the survey will be compiled and presented during the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual *Community Banking in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* research and policy conference, which is being held September 30 – October 1, in St. Louis, Missouri. The survey has also been designed to generate important data that can be used by researchers in their ongoing studies of community banking.

We strongly encourage participation in the survey so that concerns and issues facing Georgia banks are properly represented.

### Action on Applications for the Month:

The following is a summary of official action taken on applications by State Financial Institutions under Title 7, Chapter 1 of the O.C.G.A. and petitions for Certificate of Incorporation of Financial Institutions and other matters of interest during the month of April 2015.

#### **APPLICATIONS TO ESTABLISH A BRANCH OFFICE**

<b><u>FINANCIAL INSTITUTION</u></b>	<b><u>BRANCH OFFICE</u></b>	<b><u>APPROVAL</u></b>	<b><u>BEGIN BUSINESS</u></b>
Synovus Bank Columbus	Demonbreun Street Branch Office 1033 Demonbreun Street Nashville, TN 37203 Davidson County	04-09-2015	
The Brand Banking Company Lawrenceville	Dacula Branch Office 485 Dacula Road Dacula, GA 30019 Gwinnett County	Pending	
The Brand Banking Company Lawrenceville	Suwanee Branch Office 480 Industrial Boulevard Suwanee, GA 30024 Gwinnett County	Pending	

**FINANCIAL INSTITUTION MERGERS****FINANCIAL INSTITUTION****(SURVIVOR)**Community & Southern Bank  
Atlanta, GA**MERGED INSTITUTION**Community Business Bank  
Cumming, GA**APPROVAL**

Pending

**EFFECTIVE**United Community Bank  
Blairsville, GAFirst National Bank  
Lenoir City, TN

Pending

Georgia United Credit Union  
Duluth, GAEtowah Valley Federal Credit Union  
Cartersville, GA

Pending

The Southern Credit Union  
Fayetteville, GAGDC Federal Credit Union  
Newnan, GA

04-06-2015

State Bank and Trust Company  
Macon, GAFirst Bank of Georgia  
Augusta, GA

Pending

Ameris Bank  
Moultrie, GAMerchants and Southern Bank  
Gainesville, FL

Pending

Renasant Bank  
Tupelo, MSHeritageBank of the South  
Albany, GA

Pending

**APPLICATIONS TO BECOME A BANK HOLDING COMPANY  
AND/OR TO ACQUIRE VOTING STOCK OF A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION****BANK HOLDING COMPANY****TO ACQUIRE****APPROVAL****FORMATIONS**NOA Bancorp, Inc.  
Duluth, GANOA Bank  
Duluth, GA

Pending

Landmark Bancshares, Inc.  
Marietta, GAFirst Landmark Bank  
Marietta, GA

Pending

**ACQUISITIONS**United Community Banks, Inc.  
Blairsville, GAMoneyTree Corporation  
Lenoir City, TN

04-02-2015

Ameris Bancorp  
Moultrie, GAMerchants & Southern Banks of Florida, Incorporated  
Gainesville, FL

Pending

**APPLICATIONS FOR RESERVATION OF A NAME****PROPOSED NAME**

Calumet Bank

**COUNTY**

Troup County

**APPLICANT**Ms. Jeannie Osborne  
Bryan Cave LLP  
One Atlantic Center, Fourteenth Floor  
1201 W. Peachtree Street, NW  
Atlanta, GA 30309-3488

# DBF Outreach

## AND UPCOMING SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Director for Supervision Pam Keane participated at the Georgia Bankers Association school in Athens on May 5th through May 7th, assuming the role of "Bank Examiner" for third year students as they participated in a bank simulation.

**DEPARTMENT OF  
BANKING AND FINANCE**

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The Department is the state agency that regulates and examines Georgia state-chartered banks, state-chartered credit unions, and state-chartered trust companies. The Department also has responsibility for the supervision, regulation, and examination of Merchant Acquirer Limited Purpose Banks (MALPBs) chartered in Georgia.

In addition, the Department has regulatory and/or licensing authority over mortgage brokers, lenders and processors, mortgage loan originators, check cashers, sellers-issuers of payment instruments, money transmitters, international banking organizations, and bank holding companies conducting business in Georgia.

Our **Mission** is to promote safe, sound, competitive financial services in Georgia through innovative, responsive regulation and supervision.

Our **Vision** is to be the best financial services industry regulator in the country – Progressive. Proactive. Service-Oriented.

**We're on the Web!**

**Visit our website at:  
[dbf.georgia.gov](http://dbf.georgia.gov)**

*Our Motto is: "Safeguarding Georgia's Financial Services"*

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