



**For Immediate Release**

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**League of Southeastern Credit Unions & Affiliates Announces Session  
Priority Supported by Key Legislative Leaders**

*Proposed Legislation Would Allow Credit Unions to Accept Public Deposits*

**Tallahassee, Fla.** – The League of Southeastern Credit Unions & Affiliates (LSCU) today announced its No. 1 priority for the 2013 Legislative Session, convening on March 5, 2013, with an impressive lineup of legislative sponsors and supporters.

Senate Bill 918 by Senator Rene Garcia (R-Hialeah) and House Bill 251 by Representative Bill Hager (R-Boca Raton) will seek to make a long overdue change to state law, reversing the mandate that public entities, such as fire and sheriff departments, schools and libraries, can only use banks and not their local, not-for-profit credit unions for their banking needs.

“On behalf of LSCU and its members, we want to thank Senator Garcia and Representative Hager for filing this critical piece of legislation to allow credit unions to better serve local municipalities and elected officials,” said Patrick La Pine, president of the LSCU. “Public entities should be given the choice to seek better returns for their tax dollars and lower fees for their business. As not-for-profit financial entities that are held to the same standards as banks, credit unions deserve the opportunity to compete in this market and provide for greater consumer choice, accountability and a more stabilized market.”

Credit unions are required to meet the same public depository requirements as for-profit banks, and they are held to the same accountability standards and offer the same protections to their customers. However, credit unions across Florida are forced to turn down deposit requests from local government entities because state law renders them ineligible to receive these funds. If successful, the proposed legislation would give local elected officials depository choice and would allow credit unions to bring competition to public deposits that will drive better returns and optimal economic benefits to Florida’s taxpayers.

“One of the founding principles of credit unions is the commitment to give back to their communities and their members,” said Senator Garcia. “By allowing credit unions to accept municipal and public deposits, we would allow for yet another opportunity for credit unions to give back by passing on bigger savings to local governments, who in turn would put the money right back into the communities to meet service, infrastructure or public needs. I see this bill as

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another means of providing greater consumer choice, fairness in the market and maximizing yields of public funds.”

“I am pleased that Senator Garcia and Representative Hager are addressing this longstanding issue this year,” said Senator John Thrasher (R-St. Augustine). “Credit unions are, by definition, not-for-profit financial institutions that seek to benefit their local communities and are uniquely positioned to pass along their savings to their members, and offer more competitive rates and returns on investments. I look forward to having a healthy discussion on this issue during the upcoming session.”

“The intent of this legislation is to give municipalities choices in where to deposit their funds,” said Representative Hager. “While the intent may sound simple, the impact will be tremendous. Putting public funds into local credit unions gives municipalities and local entities the opportunity to keep their funds within their communities, and see their dollars be continuously and locally reinvested via personal or small business loans. This legislation does not give any entity preferential treatment, but rather levels the playing field for credit unions to be able to compete for funds that they should already be entitled to receive.”

“Expanding public deposit authority to credit unions would greatly spur competition and lead to greater savings and higher earnings for public entities on their deposits,” said Amber Hughes, legislative advocate for the Florida League of Cities. “Municipalities and local offices are already running on stringent budgets, and any dollar saved and earned means another dollar that goes back to the community to serve a crucial purpose. The League of Cities fully supports this legislation and the opportunity for our offices of public service to reap the benefits of better returns and greater competition.”

For more information on the League of Southeastern Credit Unions & Affiliates, please visit [www.lscu.coop](http://www.lscu.coop).

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