

## VBA BankPAC: FAQs Part 1

# VIRGINIA BANKERS ASSOCIATION

### **Q) How do you select contribution recipients?**

*A) The VBA Government Relations Committee adopts general contribution level guidelines to state legislators - mostly based on leadership roles (Speaker of the House, Majority/Minority Leaders, etc.) and key committee assignments (Commerce and Labor, Courts, etc.). We also consider seniority and past voting records when determining support and contribution levels. We generally back incumbents of both political parties (Republican and Democrat), but make contributions to challengers when the Government Relations Committee determines the benefit of supporting a challenger is better for the banking industry.*

*While VBA BankPAC does not contribute directly to political parties, some contributions are made to various caucuses (i.e., House and Senate Republican Caucuses, or the Joint Democratic Caucus) - which account for ~10% of BankPAC's annual giving, and assist party leaders in running coordinated campaigns across the Commonwealth. VBA staff work with elected leaders to ensure these funds go to candidates supportive of banking issues.*

### **Q) What is being accomplished at the Federal Level? Why should Virginia banks support?**

*A) Key banking issues, including regulatory relief efforts, have made progress over the last several years in Congress. It is imperative that the banking industry continues to educate legislators on policies that can assist the banks' ability to serve customers or those with negative consequences. Maintaining and strengthening federal legislator relationships is critical as they make decisions impacting the banking industry - whether advocating for necessary regulatory reforms or pushing back against overreach, having a voice and a seat at the table is more important than ever before.*

### **Q) Why does VBA contribute to State Senator X or Congressional Member Y?**

*A) VBA closely monitors each legislators' voting records and actions when deciding who to contribute to. VBA also looks at their position, the likelihood they will be re-elected and the cost-benefit of not supporting, and potentially alienating the relationship with the legislator. Since VBA represents the entire banking industry in Virginia, there are a number of issues that arise where it is important to have legislators who are willing to hear us out, even if they don't necessarily agree with us every time. While most of the candidates who receive VBA BankPAC support understand and support Virginia's banking industry, there are times when we make the decision to provide resources as a way to build relationships that will hopefully pay off in the future.*

### **Q) Are contributions tax deductible?**

*A) No.*

## VBA BankPAC: FAQs Part 2

# VIRGINIA BANKERS ASSOCIATION

### **Q) How can BankPAC accept corporate contributions?**

*A) VBA BankPAC is actually comprised of two separate PAC accounts – one state and one federal. Generally, individual contributions go to the Federal PAC account, and corporate contributions go into the State PAC account. VBA is allowed to transfer funds from the Federal to the State PAC, but federal campaign law prohibits the other way around. Corporate contributions can only be used for state purposes and are kept separate from the Federal PAC, which cannot accept corporate contributions. In addition, federal law prohibits national banks without a holding company or subsidiary to make corporate contributions to either PAC.*

### **Q) How do Federal contributions work with American Bankers Association (ABA)?**

*A) VBA BankPAC annually transfers ~25% of contributions to the ABA's Federal Political Action Committee (PAC). The VBA and ABA PACs are "linked" by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) - both subject to the campaign limits for any one PAC. VBA coordinates closely with ABA, and we can veto how ABA uses PAC money in Virginia. The vast majority of the PAC funds we transfer to ABA go to Virginia's own delegation - the net effect is that Virginia's Congressional Members and US Senators are quite clear where the ABA PAC money comes from, and in coordination with the VBA. The rest support Congressional Leadership PACs and other key members of Congress.*

### **Q) Why should Virginia banks give to BankPAC (or why should VBA give to ABA's Federal PAC) when we can contribute directly to candidates?**

*A) VBA always encourages our bankers and banks to be engaged in the political process and support whichever candidate they want. However, BankPAC (and/or the American Bankers Association's (ABA) PAC) has the impact of representing the entire industry. Support from an association PAC displays a unified voice, the same as with other aspects of our government relations efforts. By combining resources, Virginia banks can make a bigger impact at the state or federal levels.*

### **Q) How does VBA BankPAC compare to the Virginia Credit Union League PAC?**

*A) Traditionally at the state level, the VBA BankPAC has contributed ~4x as much to candidates compared to credit union - but in 2025, The League of Credit Unions and Affiliates transferred \$500,000 to the Virginia Chapter, outpacing VBA's fundraising efforts for the first time ever.*

*At the federal level, credit unions spend a great deal more - including paying members to lobby their representatives in Washington, D.C. Federal campaign laws cap contributions, making donations from banks and credit unions about even, but credit unions mobilize their "members" very well - which is why Virginia banks have to be aggressive in raising contributions each year.*

#### **Questions**

Contact Matt Bruning (MBruning@vabankers.org) &  
Tristan Macdonald (TMacdonald@vabankers.org)