A History of Prize-Linked Savings (PLS)

Due to the collaborative efforts of the Ohio Credit Union League, Ohio credit unions, and elected officials, more than three million Ohio credit union members now have the ability to participate in a prize-linked savings program at their local credit union.

In 2015, the League created a state-charter modernization working group to explore ways to enhance the state-charter through an updated rule framework, new powers, and expanded authorities. The working group was also tasked with identifying potential state-law changes that would benefit all Ohio credit unions, regardless of charter type. After many brainstorming sessions and multiple meetings, the League identified 14 potential changes to the state-charter, including the ability to offer prize-linked savings, which were included in the original bill draft of Senate Bill 292, introduced in 2018.

Subsequently, the League’s Advocacy Team met with leaders of the state legislature, the governor’s office, and the state regulator to advocate for the passage of our state-charter modernization legislation. During the fall session of 2018, Senate Bill 292 was combined with House Bill 489, which was a financial services bill intended to reduce the regulatory burden. Due to the League’s advocacy efforts and testimony on behalf of House Bill 489, the majority of our 14 changes passed in legislation in December 2018, including prize-linked savings, found in 1733.24(k) in the Ohio Revised Code. Governor Kasich signed House Bill 489 into law, which became effective on March 20, 2019.

Recognizing the success of collaboration and working groups, the League formed another working group to focus on a prize-linked savings product. From March to September of 2019, the League explored and built our prize-linked savings product, Bucks for Buckeyes. Our focus group, compromised of state and federally chartered credit unions, poured over the product profile, the technical details, the name, and the logo so that Ohio’s credit union members could have access to the only state-specific prize-linked savings program in Ohio. After months of planning, Bucks for Buckeyes was launched in September 2019.

We would like to recognize that this advocacy success, changing the law to add new a new authority and building an advocacy led financial product, would not be successful without a strong Government Affairs team, an even stronger Government Affairs Committee, compromised of credit union leaders, and an ever-growing political action committee. If you would like to become involved in Advocacy at the League, please contact VP of Advocacy Emily Leite at (800) 486-2917, ext. 270 or eleite@ohiocul.org.