

July 15, 2020

To WVBankers 2020 Convention Registrants:

It is with great regret and sadness that I have to announce the cancellation of the 2020 WVBA Annual Convention at The Greenbrier due to the issuance of an Executive Order (EO-51-20) by Governor Justice that became effective at midnight on July 14. The Executive Order limits the attendance at indoor or outdoor gatherings to 25 or less people in light of the recent renewed outbreaks of the COVID-19 virus that have occurred in West Virginia and around the country. The WVBankers Executive Committee and Board of Directors have carefully considered this matter and have come to the conclusion that it is neither feasible nor advisable to stage our Annual Convention this year.

As many of you may know, that same Executive Order from earlier this week also ended the conduct of fairs, festivals and outdoor concerts and ordered the closure of bars in the City of Morgantown for a 10-day period as well—all in an effort to stem the recent tide of growth in the spread of the virus in our state. For most of the past two weeks West Virginia has had either the highest or second highest rate of viral spread in the nation. As a result of these disturbing and frightening trends, Governor Justice felt compelled to take this action as a follow-up to his Executive Order of the previous week in which he mandated all individuals age 9 and older to wear a face cover in public circumstances where social distancing is not possible.

In that banks are considered as “essential businesses” to remain in operation during all phases of the COVID-19 crisis, WVBankers does not want to put any of our industry’s leaders or their families and colleagues in any potential health danger by conducting our convention as usual this year. Consequently, it was the decision of the Association’s leadership not to try and postpone the convention to a date later this fall because it is equally indeterminate at this point that large scale meetings will be permitted or will be feasible for our members to schedule or comfortably attend.

Consequently, the next WVBankers Annual Convention will be held in 2021 at The Greenbrier and be a joint meeting held with our friends from the Ohio Bankers League. The dates for the 2021 event are July 25-28, 2021. We will certainly plan to have a celebration in 2021!

Refunds

WVBankers will be refunding, in full, the registration fees that have been paid for attendance at the Annual Convention. Additionally, there were a number of members who canceled their registrations after the period when a full refund was possible, so the Association will be sending those registrants an additional pro rata refund to make them whole for their payment of the full registration fee.

WVBankers Annual Convention Exhibitors and Break-Out Session Sponsors who have already paid their fees to the Association will receive full refunds as well.

Room Deposits with The Greenbrier

Unfortunately, the timing of the Governor's Executive Order and the decision to cancel the event occurred after the period when a refund of room deposits from The Greenbrier was possible.

However, The Greenbrier has graciously agreed to honor the reservation of any WVBankers Annual Convention registrant for the convention period (nights of July 25 through check-out on July 29) at the room rate negotiated for convention attendees by WVBankers.

Everyone with a room reservation at The Greenbrier for the WVBankers Annual Convention is encouraged to call the hotel's reservation department at 1-855-453-4858, option 2 to either cancel or confirm your reservation for the period.

We recognize that this cancellation is sudden and disruptive but it was made with the best interests of our organization and our members at heart. These are unique times for us all nearly every day and we are all facing personal and business situations that none of us could have ever imagined. But our collective dedication and spirit will persevere in the end and we will gather again to live life and to conduct business normally next year, we all hope.

If you have any questions about this notice or about matters associated with the Annual Convention, please contact me or Debbie Polen at your convenience. Thank you very much for your support of WVBankers and for your understanding in these unprecedented times.

Sara M. Cline
President and CEO