



NEWS

For Immediate Release

Media Contacts:

Aleis Stokes

(aleis.stokes@icba.org)

202-821-4457

@AleisStokes

Nicole Swann

(nicole.swann@icba.org)

202-821-4458

@ICBA_nswann

ICBA and Oconee State Bank Encourage Americans to Save During America Saves Week

Community banks can help consumers create savings strategies, financial goals

Washington, D.C. (Feb. 22, 2016)—The Independent Community Bankers of America® (ICBA) and **Oconee State Bank** are proud to add the community banker voice to the list of organizations nationwide that are encouraging Americans to save as part of America Saves Week, Feb. 22-26. This nationwide campaign, which began in 2007, features a broad coalition of nonprofit, corporate and government organizations that are committed to raising awareness of the importance of creating savings funds, building emergency funds and assessing savings plans.

“By participating in America Saves Week, the nation’s more than 6,000 community banks continue to raise awareness of the importance of savings and offer consumers tips on how to reach savings goals,” said ICBA Chairman Jack Hartings, president and CEO of The Peoples Bank Co. in Coldwater, Ohio. “We encourage customers to speak with their community bank about how they can begin a savings strategy or build on what they are already doing to save for the future.”

America Saves Week is an annual opportunity to help promote positive savings behavior and for consumers to assemble their own savings plans. Learn more about why saving is so important and how to get started on building a nest egg at www.americasavesweek.org.

“Beginning to save can be intimidating, but with the help of your local community bank, creating and maintaining savings funds should be one less thing you need to worry about,” said **Amrey Harden, President and CEO**. “Here at **Oconee State Bank**, we are relationship bankers and always make ourselves available to help local residents plan their financial futures. It’s something we take great pride in.”

ICBA offers the following tips to help consumers get started on their personal savings:

1. **Start small and set goals:** Start small—even saving loose change is OK. Aim to create an emergency expense fund of up to \$3,000 so you are covered the next time your car breaks down or your hot water heater breaks. After you have an emergency expense fund, begin saving with the goal of putting away six to nine months of living expenses.
2. **Make a plan:** By creating a spending plan, list your expenses and compare them to your income. The plan will help you prioritize your wants versus your needs. When possible, pay your credit card balance off each month to avoid debt and minimize interest charges.

3. **Save automatically:** Many employers offer regular payroll deduction, which is one of the best ways to save money. Make it a routine to automatically put aside a certain amount of money each paycheck, or ask your community bank to make an automatic transfer from your checking to savings account monthly.

To connect with your locally owned and operated community bank, please visit www.oconeestatebank.com. To learn more about community banks as a whole, visit www.icba.org and follow [@ICBA](https://twitter.com/ICBA) on Twitter.

About ICBA

The Independent Community Bankers of America®, the nation's voice for more than 6,000 community banks of all sizes and charter types, is dedicated exclusively to representing the interests of the community banking industry and its membership through effective advocacy, best-in-class education and high-quality products and services. For more information, visit www.icba.org.

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