**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**October 3, 2023**

**Community Banking Initiatives (CBI, LLC) – East Lansing, MI, October 3, 2023 –** [CBI, LLC](https://www.communitybankinginitiatives.com/) is pleased to announce that our network of state associations is expanding with the addition of the Community Bankers Association of Georgia joining CBI, LLC network. The expansion will enable our CBI preferred partners, offering best in class products and services, the ability to increase their geographical footprint to Georgia community banks.

*“CBI LLC continues to respond to the needs of our shared community banking industry by engaging state association partners for the strength and stability of our industry. State trade associations have long served as catalysts for community banks to seek value and find strength in numbers. The addition of the Community Bankers Association of Georgia to our shared network further strengthens the depth of resources for all community bankers looking for solutions to an accelerating and ever-changing financial landscape”* stated Aza Bittinger Jr., President and CEO of the Community Bankers Association of Ohio (CBAO), Kate Angles, COO of Community Bankers of Michigan (CBM), and members of CBI LLC.

John McNair, President and CEO, Community Bankers Association of Georgia added, “*On behalf of the CBA of Georgia Member Services Committee and Board of Directors, I am pleased to announce that CBA of Georgia has officially partnered with the Community Banking Initiatives program offered by the Community Bankers Association of Ohio and the Community Bankers of Michigan. Through the power of aggregation, community bankers in Georgia will now have access to several new product, services, and educational offerings.  In light of the changing industry dynamics, it is important for state banking associations to come together and partner in joint and programs and functions such as Community Banking Initiatives.”*

**About Community Banking Initiatives, LLC**

Community Banking Initiatives was created in 2007 as a joint venture between the Community Bankers of Michigan and the Community Bankers Association of Ohio. CBI, LLC is comprised of 15+ community bankers and association executives. The mission is to enable and equip independent community banking associations, and thereby community banks with access to industry-leading programs and partners. This is accomplished by developing relationships and partnerships with like-minded industry stakeholders who are committed to serving and advocating for the independence of community banks.

* Achieve financial strength through community pricing
* Reduced operating expenses and increase non-interest income for community banks through aggregated services

**About the Community Bankers Association of Georgia (CBA)**

As the state’s only advocate working solely for the interests of community banks and your customers, the Community Bankers Association of Georgia is a member-driven organization, governed by a Board of Directors of independent community bankers. The association was created in 1969 as a way to pool community bank resources for political representation. Today, the CBA represents approximately 130 community banks and 150 associate members. Our passion is collectively creating value for Georgia’s community banks through lobbying efforts, professional development, profit enhancement, expense savings, networking opportunities, industry updates, and a full range of free member benefits.

**About Community Bankers Association of Ohio (CBAO)**

Community Bankers Association of Ohio (CBAO) is organized to establish and maintain an informed network of independent community banks in the state of Ohio that will have the influence and commitment to effectively serve, protect, and promote the interests of its members through:

* Its representation of the principles of independent community banking in the state of Ohio to state and national governmental officials, the press, and the public; and
* Its promotion, presentation, and advancement of education to officers, directors, and other personnel of independent community banks in pursuit of high ethical standards and superior business practices in banking operations; and
* Its research and development of opportunities whereby its membership as a whole can benefit from the pooling of financial and human resources to gain economic and competitive advantages

**About Community Bankers of Michigan (CBM)**

At the Community Bankers of Michigan (CBM), community banking is our mission. It is our identity, and now more than ever…our cause. Community bankers across the nation have played a crucial role in educating lawmakers, regulators, and individual communities that we are different than other financial services providers. Community bankers are the heart and soul of every community and the single focus of our association.

Working together under one mission, we ensure community banks have an equal voice and an equal place in the financial industry. We have accomplished much in reshaping how policymakers at the state and national levels view and understand our differences. Collectively we have become the unique and distinctive voice of our local communities.

