



DCUC
DEFENSE CREDIT UNION COUNCIL

1627 Eye St, NW
Suite 935
Washington, DC 20006

202.734.5007
www.d cuc.org

Jason Stverak
Chief Advocacy Officer

June 9, 2025

The Honorable Brian Jack
Chairman
Subcommittee on Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Workforce Development
House Committee on Small Business
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hillary Scholten
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Workforce Development
House Committee on Small Business
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Jack and Ranking Member Scholten:

On behalf of the Defense Credit Union Council (DCUC) and our member credit unions serving military installations across the United States and abroad, I write to commend the Subcommittee for holding this important hearing on "Minor League Baseball's Impact on Small Businesses and Local Communities."

Credit unions play a vital role in supporting the health of local communities, not just through affordable financial services, but also through strategic partnerships with community institutions like minor league baseball teams, local nonprofits, and schools. These partnerships are not acts of vanity or self-promotion, as some critics from the banking industry would have the public believe. Rather, they are investments in the civic, cultural, and economic well-being of the very communities we are chartered to serve.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the flourishing partnerships between credit unions and local sports teams. One compelling example is Members 1st Federal Credit Union in Pennsylvania, which has long supported youth athletic programs, sponsored community events, and, most notably, maintained a valued partnership with local minor league teams including the Harrisburg Senators. This relationship promotes not only the credit union's brand but also sustains the viability of the local sports economy, which in turn supports hundreds of small businesses, from vendors and concessionaires to local hotels and restaurants.

VyStar Credit Union in Florida is another outstanding example, serving as a partner with the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp. Their partnership includes not just visibility, but also robust financial literacy programming and community engagement events that benefit residents throughout Jacksonville.

Railway Credit Union in North Dakota proudly sponsors the Bismarck Larks, a popular team in the Northwoods League. Through their ongoing "Railway Credit Union Rally Time" promotion and community support initiatives, they provide financial education, sponsor events, and create a

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welcoming space for families and small businesses to gather and thrive. Their sponsorship is a key part of the Larks' community engagement, demonstrating how local financial institutions can drive civic participation and local economic growth.

7 17 Credit Union in Ohio exemplifies the community-focused spirit of credit unions through its partnerships with both the Akron RubberDucks and the Mahoning Valley Scrappers. As the official credit union of the Akron RubberDucks, 7 17 engages fans with prize giveaways and community events, including sponsoring the "Let Three-Dom Ring" Independence Day celebration at Canal Park. Their partnership with the Mahoning Valley Scrappers includes hosting the annual Financial Wellness Night at Eastwood Field, providing free entertainment and financial education to the community. Additionally, 7 17 has introduced a charitable giving credit card program, donating 7.17 cents to the Scrappers for every purchase made with the card, supporting youth outreach and ballpark improvements.

MSU Federal Credit Union (MSUFCU) in Michigan has been named the field sponsor for the new John Smoltz Strikeout Baseball Stadium in downtown Lansing's Ferris Park. This innovative facility offers a miniature baseball environment designed to be inclusive and accessible, allowing children of all ages and skill levels to engage in the sport. MSUFCU's sponsorship underscores their commitment to community development and youth engagement, providing a welcoming space that fosters teamwork, leadership, and resilience among young players.

These examples represent just a small slice of the broader impact credit unions have through sports partnerships.

As banks attempt to criticize credit unions for sponsoring stadiums or partnering with athletic organizations, we must underscore a simple truth: credit unions are member-owned, not-for-profit cooperatives whose every dollar spent is meant to provide tangible value to members and their communities. Sponsorships are not about glitz or glamor—they are about showing up for Little League games, supporting first responder charities, or ensuring that families in small towns have the opportunity to enjoy a safe, fun evening at a local ballpark.

In defense communities across America, defense credit unions are often among the largest supporters of base-affiliated youth leagues, veteran charities, and community outreach events. In many military towns, where minor league teams provide a critical boost to local morale and economic resilience, credit union sponsorships are the connective tissue that make these institutions viable. These relationships are about promoting financial wellness, providing community enrichment, and reinforcing the local economic fabric—especially in underserved or rural regions.

Rather than condemning these investments, Congress should celebrate them. They demonstrate the cooperative spirit at the heart of the credit union mission: people helping people. And they prove that financial institutions can be community-focused without chasing profit at all costs.

We thank you for the opportunity to highlight the real-world impact of minor league baseball and the role community-based institutions like credit unions play in keeping it strong. DCUC stands

ready to work with this Committee to continue fostering the kinds of partnerships that uplift local economies, enhance community well-being, and ensure our national pastime continues to thrive for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jason Stverak", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jason Stverak
Chief Advocacy Officer
DCUC

CC: Members of the House Small Business Committee