



## 2017 Legislative Agenda



The Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce is the area's largest business advocacy organization representing more than 1,000 businesses and approximately 30,000 employees. John Cooper with Capital Link Consultants serves as the Chamber's legislative agent and strategist and actively promotes our legislative priorities during the state and federal sessions.

### Public Policy Positions

#### PRIORITIES

- **Nuclear Power Facility:** *Strongly supports* the lifting of the moratorium on nuclear power plants to allow exploration of nuclear energy; currently, Kentucky law bans the construction of these nuclear facilities until there is a federal site for the spent fuel.
- **Comprehensive Tax Reform:** *Strongly encourages* the General Assembly to adopt tax reforms that will have a positive impact on business growth and investment in the Commonwealth--that will support competitiveness, reduce the cost of capital and simplify the tax code.
- **Pension Crisis:** *Strongly encourages* the 2017 General Assembly to identify a solution to Kentucky's unfunded pension liabilities which will improve transparency and will ensure that the financial future of Kentucky's economy is not at risk.

#### EDUCATION

- **Soft Skills:** *Supports* integrating soft skills into existing curriculum to improve students' development of characteristics that will improve their prospects of success in both postsecondary education and the workplace.
- **Higher Educational Standards:** *Supports* continuing high academic standards in the Commonwealth's educational institutions to ensure that students are college and career ready upon graduation from high school.

#### TAX

- **Local Option Sales Tax:** *Supports* an amendment to the Constitution of Kentucky that would allow cities and counties the choice, with voter approval, to enact a local sales tax with a sunset provision dedicated to the funding of transformational local projects.
- **Inventory Tax:** *Supports* the repeal or phasing out of property tax on business inventory because of its negative impact on business growth in the Commonwealth.

## HUMAN RESOURCES AND LABOR

- **Workforce Training Efficiencies:** *Supports* increased efforts by the State and the General Assembly to create a more efficient and effective workforce-training environment in the Commonwealth. Utilizing partners in the training of our workforce, such as West Kentucky Community and Technical College, is one of the most effective ways to ensure a well-trained and capable workforce for the Purchase Region.
- **Employee Choice (PASSED):** *Supports* the passage of legislation to prohibit mandatory membership or financial support of a labor organization as a condition of employment.
- **Prevailing Wage (PASSED):** *Supports* the repeal of Kentucky's mandatory prevailing wage law to make Kentucky's economic and infrastructure development more competitive or at the minimum the elimination of the prevailing wage requirements for the construction of schools and other educational facilities.
- **Medical Liability Reform:** *Supports* the establishment of a medical review panel system for use in civil litigation relating to health care providers to reduce the filing of frivolous lawsuits.
- **Statewide Smoking Ban:** *Supports* enacting a comprehensive statewide smoking law that prohibits smoking in indoor work places and public places in order to reduce its negative impact on the health of the citizens of Kentucky and on the Commonwealth's economy.
- **Increase the Number of Healthcare Professionals:** *Supports* an innovative approach to increase the number of healthcare professionals in Kentucky, particularly in underserved regions.
- **Wellness Program:** *Supports* legislation that would encourage employers to implement wellness-based programs that would provide Kentucky with a healthier and more productive workforce and would enable their employees to live longer, healthier lives.

## COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **DOE Paducah Site Cleanup:** *Requests* the State to support continued levelized annual cleanup funding, DOE's transferring assets to the Paducah Area Community Reuse Organization (PACRO), continuity of contracts, and reindustrialization of the former Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant site.
- **Clean Power Plan:** *Strongly opposes* the Environmental Protection Agency's final rule the "Clean Power Plan" and *supports* the Commonwealth's efforts to halt the implementation of this rule. The Clean Power Plan would negatively impact Kentucky's economy and its citizens by making it more difficult to produce affordable and reliable electricity, driving up manufacturing costs, and forcing jobs outside the United States while stifling new job opportunities here at home.
- **Coal Industry:** *Supports* initiatives that will aid Kentucky's coal mining and coal-related industries to recover from the loss of approximately 12,300 coal mining jobs since 2011. For every one direct coal mining job lost, three indirect jobs are also lost. As a result, approximately 37,000 employees and their families have been hurt by federal policies and changing energy demands.
- **Tourism:** *Supports* the investment in critical tourism infrastructure and the adoption of policies and programs that allow this industry, which has a major impact on Kentucky's economy, to flourish.
- **Transportation Investment:** *Supports* legislation to ensure adequate and consistent long-term funding for transportation infrastructure at both the state and federal levels to aid in attracting new businesses and retaining existing businesses in the Commonwealth, to connect Kentucky businesses to national and international markets, and to allow our citizens to have safe, reliable access to education and employment.

- **Broadband Expansion:** *Supports* legislative efforts that will remove barriers to widespread wireless broadband investments in order to continue the progress that has been made in terms of and accessibility and adoption of broadband internet and to ensure that growth endures and private providers continue to invest.
- **Economic Development Incentive:** *Supports* initiatives to expand the Kentucky Reinvestment Act to include technology and headquarters reinvestment projects.
- **TVA In-Lieu-of-Tax Payments:** *Supports* amending KRS 96.895 to provide that a portion of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in-lieu-of-tax payments made to the Commonwealth and deposited into the General Fund be transferred to the Regional Development Agency Assistance Fund to be distributed among the fiscal court designated local economic / industrial development authorities in those counties that contain TVA assets for economic development and job creation activities.
- **Patent Trolls:** *Supports* the passage of patent litigation reform at both the state and federal levels to protect businesses from patent troll abuse and frivolous lawsuits while balancing the need to protect patents.

## Transportation Infrastructure Projects

### FUNDING SOURCE: STATE

1. **Inner Loop:** Improvements to KY 1286 (Friendship Road) from US 45 (Lone Oak Road) to KY 998 (Olivet Church Road) to US 60 (Hinkleville Road) to improve safety for travelers to the regional mall and retail, dining and hotel center as well as the new McCracken County High School (Six Year Plan Project 1-153.00).
2. **Continuation of improving access to the Ohio River Triple Rail Megasite**, which features Ohio River frontage, service by three railroad companies and barge dock capability (Six Year Plan Project 1-8702.00).
3. **US Highway 60 Improvements:** *Supports* the efforts of **Ballard County** for additional four-laning of US Hwy. 60 (from Stafford Road to Bethel Church Road to KY Hwy. 1154), providing easier accessibility between Ballard County and McCracken County from the west. These improvements will enable easier and safer traffic flow between the two counties and assist with economic development efforts (Six Year Plan Projects 1-115.00 and 1-115.10).

### FUNDING SOURCE: FEDERAL

1. **Improvements to the interchange at US 60 (Hinkleville Road) and I-24** to improve the geometry of the interchange and the flow of traffic along the US 60 corridor for this high traffic area for shopping, dining and hotels (Six Year Plan Project 1-154.00).
2. **Widening of US 62** (Blandville Road) from KY 998 (Olivet Church Road) to the Commerce Park, a major industrial site, to aid in securing job opportunities for Paducah and the region. (Six Year Plan Project 1-152.00). *The Paducah Chamber respectfully requests the KY Department of Transportation to evaluate this project for potential federal funding.*

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