



# 2026 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

We strive to work together as a true partnership to create a cooperative environment for business and industry to thrive, improving the quality of life in South Central Kentucky. Growth management is the overall goal with a focus on making smart investments and crediting great places that make the community appealing to prospective and existing businesses talent.

## INDUSTRIAL PARKS

- Support legislation that allows us to maintain the business model for expansion of the Kentucky Transpark and to develop new industrial/business parks.
  - Fund further master planning and engineering for industrial park/business park development
  - Fund additional site, road, and utility construction for industrial park/business park development
  - Fund independent certification of shovel-ready and pad-ready industrial sites

## TECHNOLOGY

- Support new and existing technology businesses in the state.
  - Ensure appropriate regulatory and tax environment
  - Cultivate a strong workforce to meet current and future demands through the integration of technology skills and training in P-12

## MANUFACTURING SALES TAX EXEMPTIONS

- Support the modernization of Kentucky's manufacturing-related sales tax exemptions to compete with competitor states. This will help avoid tax pyramiding by clarifying their application to modern manufacturing processes as well as by eliminating the limitations on manufacturing machinery and the carve-out for repair, replacement, and spare parts.





## INCENTIVES & PROGRAMS

- Support the creation of incentives and programs that will spur the growth of the high-performance motorsports sector by encouraging the formation of accelerator programs and the development of relationships that lead to existing industry growth, new start-up ventures, and new company locations.

## NCM MOTORSPORTS PARK & BEECH BEND PARK & RACEWAY

- Support the creation of incentives.
  - Support policy changes that would positively impact the National Corvette Museum Motorsports Park for spectator activities
  - Support improvements to facilitate events at Beech Bend and NCM Motorsports Park throughout the year

## IMPROVE KENTUCKY'S TAX TREATMENT OF BUSINESS INVESTMENTS

- Support enhancement of Kentucky's tax code to make the state a magnet for investment by allowing businesses to fully expense investments in qualified property in the year in which the cost was incurred or, at minimum, allow businesses to expense greater shares of investments up-front than currently permitted by state law.



**TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

- » Support transportation projects identified as a priority by the local MPO as well as fund infrastructure projects approved by the Barren River Area Development District (BRADD) Water Management Council (state).
  - Support these organizations in identifying new projects that support economic development for the region
  - Assist in advancing established priorities to secure funding at state, local, and federal levels
  - Support agencies as they work through hurdles to complete projects
  - Encourage KYTC, legislators, and local officials to move forward with funded projects
  - Advocate for the development of a comprehensive, long-range transportation plan for the region
- » Support legislation at the state and federal levels to increase transportation funding to meet the demands of the State's infrastructure and will provide consistent long-term funding for maintenance and improvement of transportation infrastructure. Also encourage Design-Build and alternative letting options as tools to improve delivery and cost control. We also encourage the administration to take advantage of the state's Public Private Partnership (P3) legislation to encourage private investment in the construction and maintenance of our infrastructure.

- » Support revision of allocation of infrastructure funding within the state to reflect the needs of sustained growth areas.
  - Continue to highlight the importance of transportation to the growth of this region
- » Support increased road safety for projects, particularly in work zones.
- » Support the Water and wastewater operators advocacy of exempting PFAS from CERCLA liability to avoid significant operational costs and risks, oppose shifting fluoride addition decisions to local providers, and seek modifications to USEPA LCRI rules for low-risk systems with minimal lead in drinking water.





Located at the center of a 34-state distribution area in the eastern United States, South Central Kentucky's prime location accelerates the distribution time of goods and materials to a massive industrial and consumer market. In fact, Bowling Green and Warren County are within a day's drive of 60 percent of the nation's population, personal income, and manufacturing business establishments.

The city, county, and Chamber must coordinate efforts to balance greenfield/infill possibilities for a range of commercial and residential uses. The return on investment of infrastructure expansion and maintenance for denser development is exceedingly more beneficial to a community in terms of financial, social, and economic impacts.

### **TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICTS**

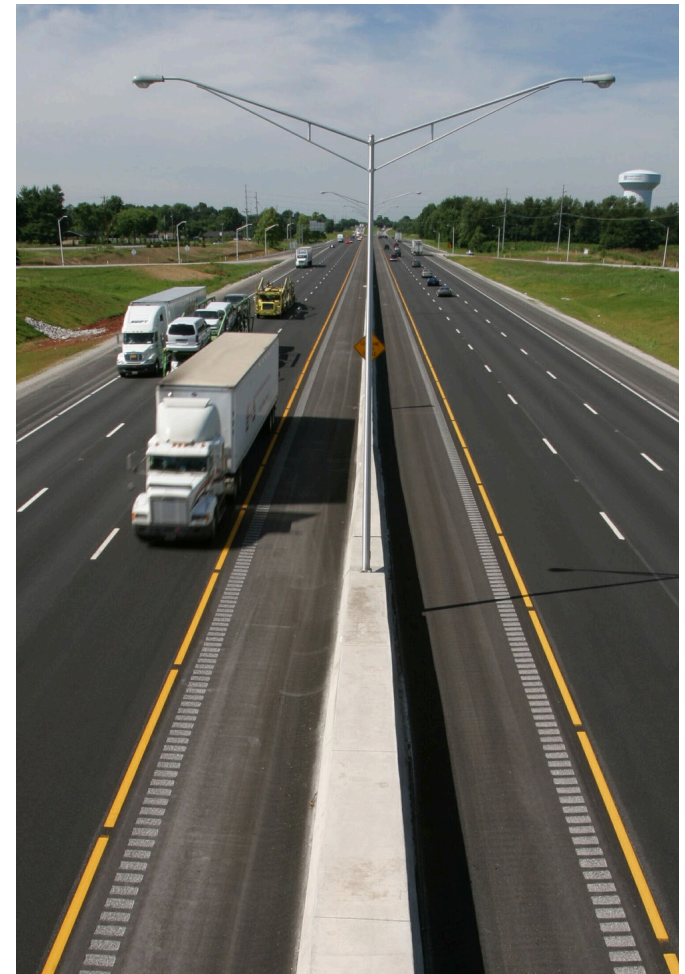
- » Support the amendment of TIF legislation to permanently ensure reimbursements of TIF revenues for the life of the bond issuance.

### **AIRPORT**

- » Ensure protection of existing funding to the Bowling Green-Warren County Regional Airport and support new funding opportunities for an ARFF Index B Fire Truck to support large chargers, apron project bid additives, and infrastructure allocations.
- » Support infrastructure funding for business development on airport property.

### **BROADBAND & FIBER INFRASTRUCTURE**

- » Increase public funding for broadband and fiber infrastructure including mapping and documentation.
- » Advocate funding to support Bowling Green and Warren County to meet the needs of businesses, school systems, and residences.



**HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY**

- » Support the General Assembly pursuing policies to increase Kentucky's housing stock and encourage the development of housing of all types across the Commonwealth.
  - State policy makers should collaborate with local governments to modernize land-use and zoning laws that inadvertently create barriers to more housing options and raise the cost of home building
  - Examine the impact of government regulations on housing, reform overly burdensome regulations, and exercise caution with new regulations or updates
  - Leverage tax incentives and taxpayer funded support to close financing gaps for low-income and middle-income housing
  - Incentivize and cultivate regional approaches to solving housing challenges
  - Continue to invest in infrastructure and support local communities, developers, and home builders with infrastructure costs
  - Support and grow the home-building workforce
- » Support Congress utilizing the Defense Production Act to boost output at existing facilities to address the growing supply chain crisis of electrical distribution transformers and oppose efforts by the Department of Energy to increase the energy conservation standards for the production of distribution transformers.

**GRID RESILIENCE**

- » Support the General Assembly pursuing policies to enhance federal funding for grid resilience, reliability, and upgraded capacity to support the future needs of commercial and industrial operations.
- » Support the General Assembly collaborating with electric sector owners and operators to deploy projects that use innovative approaches to transmission, storage, and distribution infrastructure to enhance grid resilience, reliability, and system capacity to support critical commercial and industrial operations and future growth.





This region has a strong reputation for meeting and exceeding industry needs by providing companies with a skilled and available workforce to meet the demands of a global economy. Local educational partners train workers in industry-specific skill sets, but it's the ability to provide the flexibility and customization that companies require that sets this region apart.

Our goal is to collaborate with public and private organizations to foster a world-class workforce system that develops a trained and skilled workforce that meets the current and future needs of local targeted businesses and partners. The Chamber provides business needs to the South-Central Workforce Development Board and affiliated public workforce system entities as they work with job seekers to place into employment.

## TARGETED BUSINESSES

- » Support legislation that creates an incentive for targeted businesses willing to locate in Kentucky that will recruit, screen, and train employees in exchange for the creation of new jobs in Kentucky's targeted sectors.

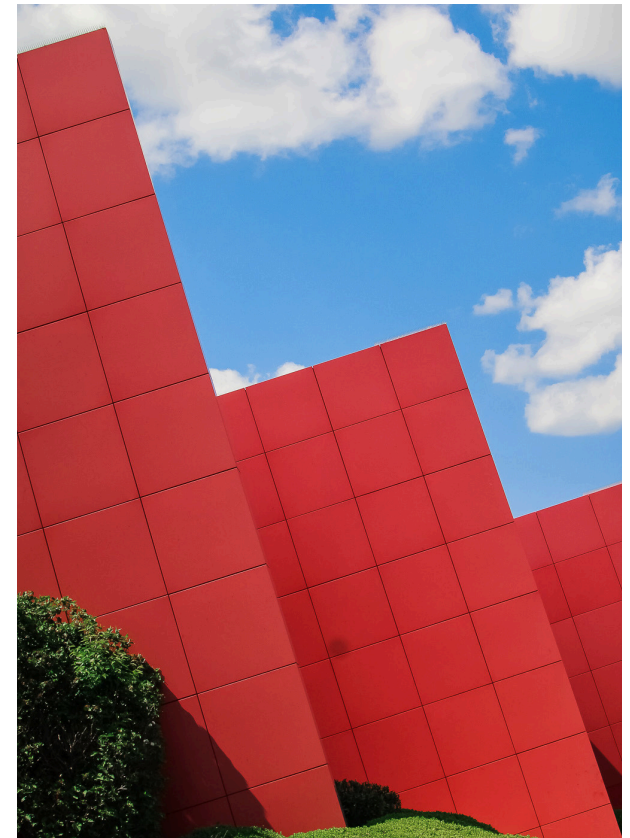
## WKU & SKYCTC

- » We strongly support funding for Western Kentucky University (WKU) and Southcentral Kentucky Community and Technical College (SKYCTC). WKU and SKYCTC are vital to workforce development, offering affordable, high-quality education that equips students for in-demand careers, driving prosperity in South Central Kentucky.

The postsecondary education performance funding model has been in place for nine years. We support a comprehensive review of the model taking into account efficiencies universities have made to better ensure success of their students.

Fund SKYCTC's facilities funding request to expand SKYCTC's Transpark Campus in order to grow programming supporting current and future manufacturing/economic growth.

Advocate for flexibility to offer increased compensation to fill hard to fill positions (due to market rates increasing) – especially in career related fields (example: nursing, engineering, machine tool, science, math).



**PUBLIC WORKFORCE SYSTEM**

» Support efforts to create alignment and centralization of workforce programming throughout the state. These efforts should serve to improve workforce development outcomes in the state and focus on the following goals:

- Ensuring collaboration and cohesion across state and local agencies and nonprofit and private sector partners
- Eliminating redundancy and duplicative efforts
- Streamlining data-gathering and information sharing
- Allowing workforce development leaders to more effectively track workforce development spending, evaluate programs, diagnose structural problems, and ensure a strong return on workforce investments
- Improving the customer-service experiences of employers and job seekers
- Improve transparency and accountability in the workforce investment system to support the development of a well-trained talent pipeline for the business community
- Seek General Assembly support to eliminate taxation of military benefits, increasing the ability for Kentucky counties to retain separating service members in the workforce

» The Chamber supports the General Assembly investing in talent marketing to Kentucky to attract and retain skilled and talented workers, including a grant program to support workforce development initiatives to support key employers and regional communities in their efforts to market unique quality of life strengths, and job opportunities to targeted audiences. At the same time, lawmakers should pursue initiatives to ensure a high-quality of life across Kentucky, including low taxes, a strong housing market, and world-class recreational opportunities and cultural attractions.

» The Chamber discourages legislation that makes it difficult to do business in or with the Commonwealth. As the General Assembly continues to focus on workforce challenges and talent attraction, the Chamber urges policy makers to adopt the best policies to support a wide range of business growth and attract the numerous people of various backgrounds and viewpoints looking to move to growing states that are more affordable and provide a strong quality of life. The Chamber's mission is to foster a positive environment that enables business and population growth in Kentucky, and we will advocate for policy positions that support this mission.





## Kentucky Labor Laws

- » Improve alignment between federal and state labor laws and regulations. Kentucky's wage and hour and occupational safety and health rules should align with federal standards so that employers are not faced with two different sets of rules. Laws regarding employment discrimination should be clarified and simplified.

## Reciprocal Trade License Agreements

- » Support the acceptance of skilled and professional trades licenses across state lines, removing the barrier of retesting and schooling to recruit talent



## K-12

- » Support continual investment in technical education pathways, both K-12 and post-secondary education. Resources supporting scholarships, program development, faculty, and equipment needed to continue helping the business.
- » Continue to support the alignment of K-12 accountability and assessment standards with career pathways and the addition of career-focused models.
- » Advocate that KDE establish continuity in K-12 accountability model to improve student outcomes.
- » Advocate for increased federal funding for refugee resettlement programs for both Bowling Green and Warren County school systems.
- » Advocate for additional SEEK formula funding for growth districts.
- » Support capital funding for growth districts to ensure adequate facilities for current and pending growth.
- » Fully fund K-12 transportation and incorporate the needs of growth districts into the transportation funding plan.
- » Support Warren County Public Schools request for \$10M in funding for the IMPACT Center for Leadership and Innovation.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

» Early childhood education is both a current and future workforce priority. Access to quality childcare allows more parents to participate in the workforce and helps build a strong educational foundation for the state's future workforce. Lawmakers should support employers seeking to assist employees with childcare challenges and carefully examine ways to optimally leverage available resources to increase childcare capacity through a mixed- delivery model that includes in-home, in-business, licensed childcare facilities, and other methods that offer families options. Key policy solutions should include:

- Ensuring the success of the Employee Childcare Assistance Partnership by implementing improvements to the program based on feedback from employers, workers, and providers as well as providing all necessary funding
- Supporting local governments to study and evaluate how local zoning rules might impact the availability of childcare services within their jurisdictions
- Stabilizing and expanding the Childcare Assistance Program to ensure all families that need subsidized care can get it, smooth out the program's benefits cliff, and increase provider reimbursement rates
- Incentivizing more employers to offer on-site childcare or childcare benefits through a state-level Employer-Provided Childcare Tax Credit and by expanding the Childcare Business Partnership Grants program.
- Continually funding and expanding the Early Childhood Development Scholarship to support the early childhood professionals talent pipeline

**Investing in Local STEM**

» Support the funding allocation of \$30M to establish the Kentucky Science Center and Library for Bowling Green, expanding STEM education for our area.

**EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE SYSTEM**

» Lawmakers should continue to explore ways to improve the competitiveness of Kentucky's unemployment insurance tax system, implement data-driven strategies to connect laid-off workers to reskilling and re-employment opportunities, and aggressively ensure the integrity of the state's UI system by safeguarding it from fraud and criminal activity.

» Support thoughtful reforms to the unemployment insurance benefit structure to ensure the system optimally and efficiently supports rapid re-employment and drives workforce participation. This should include an evaluation of wage replacement rates and benefit duration to ensure the UI system provides laid-off workers with the support they need but does not disincentivize benefit recipients from finding a new job. Further, support efforts to refine work search requirements and provide those out of work with increased access to effective training, career counseling, and job-finding support.

**CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

» Education officials, legislators, and businesses must work to address the shortage of teachers who can impart the skills and education required to meet the job demands of economic development.



Working together with local elected officials, regional South Central Kentucky Communities, Paducah, Owensboro, and Hopkinsville, along with state associations like the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Kentucky Association for Automotive Industry, Kentucky Association for Manufacturers and the Kentucky Association for Economic Development, the Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce will work to promote a pro-growth and pro-jobs agenda. The Chamber's goal is to represent the diverse business community and ensure they have a voice in the legislative process.

## HEALTHCARE

- Support legislation and policies that ensure employers in Kentucky can provide affordable, accessible healthcare to their employees and not be burdened by overreaching regulations and penalties under state and federal law.

## ENERGY & ENERGY SERVICES

- Ensure that federal and/or state policies and regulations protect the reliability and affordability of energy and energy services in South Central Kentucky and support the growth of capacity needed to support our region's continued growth.
- Support the repeal of grants provided to state and local governments to adopt updated energy codes that are more costly and restrictive. Forcing the adoption of more stringent energy codes to qualify for these grants will worsen the current housing affordability crisis and limit energy choices for consumers.
- Support the repeal of the 2024 EPA Power Plant Rule. The final rule jeopardizes affordable and reliable electricity by forcing the premature closure of always available power plants while also making it harder to permit, site and build critical new power plants. The final rule will reduce key generating resources, magnifying today's reliability challenges with grave consequences for an already stressed electric grid.

## TRADE AGREEMENTS

- Adopt trade agreements with other nations that add jobs for the region.

## CONSUMPTION BASED TAX

- Support a revenue-neutral conversion to a consumption-based tax revenue model, thus removing the personal and corporate income tax.



**GREENWAYS & BIKE TRAILS**

- Support enhanced community assets and amenities such as greenways and bike trails and beautification projects which will aid with talent attraction and retention.

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT**

- Support improvements and activities that promote the downtown area to assist in recruiting a talented workforce.

**TOURISM**

- Support tourism's ability to effectively promote Bowling Green and Warren County in a highly competitive region by preserving the dedicated local and state-wide transient room tax, thus protecting the collaborative effort of attracting new visitors, workforce, and economic development.
- Oppose centralized collection for transient room tax collections.

**PROPERTY VALUE APPRAISER & CLERK OF THE COURT**

- Support the modernization of Kentucky's PVA and Clerk of the Court records to be accessible online, in all 120 counties.

**IMMIGRATION**

- Support the state taking an active role in recruiting work-ready citizens to the Commonwealth of Kentucky to match demand for our growing economy.

