

BUSINESS FOCUS



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF COMMERCE LEXINGTON INC. | JANUARY 2020 | VOLUME XXVIII, ISSUE I

BE BOLD

PRESENTING SPONSOR



FIFTH THIRD BANK

COMMERCE LEXINGTON INC'S ANNUAL DINNER • 1/30/20

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BUSINESS FOCUS

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FIFTH THIRD BANK

Fifth Third Bank Presents CLX
Annual Dinner on January 30th



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Personnel Updates

Submit your company's awards and milestones or personnel changes and additions to mturner@CommerceLexington.com. Personnel news might include promotions, additions, awards and milestones, recognitions and certifications and/or appointments. Information is published only as space permits.

Cover Design

Annual Dinner invitation graphic design by Monica King, L.E. Gregg Associates. Join us for the 2020 Annual Dinner on Thursday, Jan. 30, at Lexington Center. See more on page 7.

Message From The Chair: 2020 to Provide Great Opportunities to BE BOLD

Being a business owner or entrepreneur is a tough endeavor. It's a 24/7 job, and at times, every business owner feels like they're on an island all by themselves. I can tell you without a doubt that you are not alone. There are plenty of people and organizations like Commerce Lexington Inc. committed to providing businesses of all types and sizes with the resources and opportunities they need to grow.

I've been a business owner for some time now, and when I think about Commerce Lexington and what it has meant to me, there's a word I like to use, and that is 'ADVOCATE.' Among everything else we do as an organization, Commerce Lexington is an advocate for your business. Whether it's providing networking and marketing opportunities, cost-saving discounts, guidance for small businesses through the Business Owners Advisory Boards, financing and procurement options, leadership and professional development, and representation at all levels of government, Commerce Lexington is here to help.

This year, we've chosen to BE BOLD, and you'll see that theme throughout the year as our team implements several operational changes and enhancements to events and programs that we believe will better position Commerce Lexington and our region for future success.

I'm also excited to be able to build off the momentum from last year's Leadership Visit to Raleigh, where the delegation identified four issues most important to Lexington's future, including housing affordability; regionalism; gentrification; and diversity, equity and inclusion. I hope you'll consider joining us for this year's Leadership Visit to Austin, Texas, where we'll continue these conversations, while studying Austin's successes and challenges.

We must continue to strengthen our regional efforts, because we know that the communities across our nation doing the best economically are also doing a great job of being unified regionally. Today, it's a must to find ways to collaborate on issues that impact all of Central Kentucky, because that unified message helps us both in Frankfort and Washington, D.C.

We must figure out what our role should be in finding solutions to gentrification and housing affordability in our community. Those are two



RAY DANIELS
EQUITY SOLUTIONS
GROUP
2020 CLX BOARD
CHAIR

very difficult issues with many layers to them, and we intend to support the efforts of the city's Neighborhoods-in-Transition Task Force led by Councilmember James Brown.

We must also actively seek out different perspectives on key issues in order to find the solutions that will benefit everyone. Diversity, equity and inclusion should always be a focus area for our community.

Finally, we must continue to develop our workforce of the future, and we're doing that through the Academies of Lexington and other ways that the Business & Education Network partners with and supports the Fayette County Public Schools. We are not only preparing our kids for the jobs of today, but also for the jobs of the future that don't even exist yet.

These are just a few issues that I will be focused on in 2020. I can't stress enough what your involvement means to Commerce Lexington Inc. and how it helps our community's greater good. I encourage you to plug-in where you can.

I want to personally thank Jeff Koonce for his steady leadership as Board Chair in 2019. I'm sure I will call on him from time to time as I begin my tenure as your Board Chair. I am excited to serve in this role and look forward to working with many of you to continue our community's progress.



2019 Commerce Lexington Inc. Board Chair Jeff Koonce (WesBanco), left, passed the gavel to 2020 Board Chair Ray Daniels (Equity Solutions Group) during the Board & Trustees Luncheon on December 18th.

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COMPANY**

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EXPERTS**

Lexington Event Company is here to help you select the perfect venue for your next event. Whether it's one of our locations, or another in Central Kentucky, our team will work with you to find the perfect venue and exceed your event goals!

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A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT OF THE BLUEGRASS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP (BBDP)



SUBMITTED BY CLX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION: GINA GREATHOUSE, RYAN KAFFENBERGER, CHERYL KLEVER & KATIE VANDEGRIFT

CLX E.D. Team Attends KAED Business Retention & Expansion Training

In early November, the Commerce Lexington Inc. economic development team attended the Kentucky Economic Forum, a three-day annual training in Louisville hosted by the Kentucky Association for Economic Development. The team attended numerous sessions to learn about important topics relevant to business retention and expansion, site visit best practices, the growing hemp industry and more. Keynote speakers included a range of local and state professionals vested in the prosperity and economic growth of Kentucky.



Bluegrass Alliance Travels to Atlanta

The Bluegrass Alliance hosted a successful site selection consultant luncheon in Atlanta in late November. The regional group, consisting of Lexington, the surrounding counties, plus Frankfort and Mt. Sterling, met with eleven site selection consultants and shared new developments in the region. This is an annual trip for all partners to attend. Establishing and cultivating relationships with consultants is vital to our role as economic developers. Atlanta has one of the highest concentrations of site selection consultants.

STAT: Lexington's Educated Workforce Solidifies Title as "Athens of the West"

Lexington has long been known as a city that values education, and it shows in the community's arts, culture, demographics, industries, and history. In the 19th Century, Josiah Espy wrote, "But Lexington will ever be, The Loveliest and the Best; A Paradise thou'rt to me, Sweet Athens of the West." – (Athens of the West, Josiah Espy)

Lexington's reputation as a land of intellectuals and lawmakers began in the 19th Century with the founding of Transylvania University and, shortly after, the University of Kentucky. Since then, more institutions of higher education have appeared and grown throughout the Bluegrass Region.

Today, there are ten colleges and universities within 40 miles of Lexington that graduate more than 17,000 students annually. These institutions reinforce that Lexington's title as the "Athens of the West" certainly still holds true today.

In 2018, among those cities with a population of 300,000 or more, Lexington ranked as the 13th most highly-educated place in the nation with 44.8% of its working age population holding at least a bachelor's degree. Additionally, the city ranked 8th in professional and/or graduate degrees with 20.3% of those 25 years or older.





EMPLOYERS NEEDED

Academies of Lexington Career Exploration Event Slated for January 28th

We are currently looking for business partners to showcase regional high-demand careers to more than 1,200 ninth grade students on **January 28, 2020**, at Lexington Convention Center. Hands-on demonstrations, simulators, and engaging activities are great to help students learn about local careers, various work environments, necessary skill sets, earning potential and the training needed to become employed here in Central Kentucky.

For questions or to RSVP your business to attend, please contact Betsy Dexter, Executive Director of the Business & Education Network at (859) 226-1604 or bdexter@commercelexington.com.

Lexington Joining Together for Census 2020

Lexington's Census 2020 Complete Count Committee was appointed by Mayor Linda Gorton in spring 2019, with a charge to help ensure every resident in each household is counted in the upcoming Census. The U.S. Constitution requires a complete census count every 10 years. It allows the Census Bureau to provide data about Americans and the U.S. economy. Census Day is April 1, 2020.

"The census count has a big impact on the amount of federal grant funding Lexington is able to attract," said Mayor Gorton. "It's important that we count everyone." Census data affects funding for Head Start, public transportation, programs for senior citizens, and other programs.

Here's a few key points on how the census directly impacts local communities and the economy:

- The distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on census data.
- Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.
- After each decade's census, state officials redraw boundaries of the congressional and state legislative districts to account for population shifts. Also, Lexington Fayette Urban County Government will redraw its '12



WeCountLex
Census 2020

Council District boundaries based on census data.

- The Census Bureau has opened a local office in Lexington, is in currently hiring temporary seasonal workers to support the Census operations in central and eastern Kentucky.

In addition, the 2020 Census is modernizing and now offers three convenient resident response options: online, by phone, or the mail.

"The Complete Count Committee includes a diverse group of local government officials, business leaders, community organizations, educators and campus administrators, faith-based groups, and individuals from all across the Lexington community," said Lexington Social Services Commissioner Chris Ford, who is leading the committee. "We hope our work will raise awareness on the importance of an accurate census response, by broadening our engagement with traditionally undercounted populations."

If your company or organization would like more information on Census 2020, please visit wecountlex.org, or you may contact us at Census2020@lexingtonky.gov.



ROUNDTABLE NETWORKING LUNCHEONS

Leadership: Share the Vision



Register: www.womenleadingky.com

The Grand Reserve | 903 Manchester Street, Lexington | 12:00-1:30pm | \$35pp



January 16
Tanya Torp
Executive Director
Step by Step



February 6
Marsha Weinstein
Women's Advocate
Louisville Girls Leadership



February 26
Ashli Watts
President & CEO
Kentucky Chamber of Commerce



March 19
Kimra Cole
President & COO
Columbia Gas



April 9
SAVE THE DATE!



TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2020 | 3:30 - 5:00 P.M. | COMMERCE LEXINGTON INC. (330 E. MAIN ST. - FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM)

@330: Leveraging Your Google My Business Account to Increase SEO Presentation to Discuss Blogging PLUS Breaking Down the Digital Buzzwords

PRESENTED BY



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It's pretty typical nowadays that most people find websites through search engines. In fact, 67-percent of people who visit Commerce Lexington's website find it through a search engine. As a business owner, if you aren't managing and updating search pages like your Google My Business account, then it's likely that there is incorrect information on-line about your business.

During the next Commerce Lexington Inc. @330 Series event presented by Distillery Heights on January 14, from

3:30 - 5:00 p.m. at Commerce Lexington's first floor conference room, **Crystal Geis**, president and founder of AD-IOS Digital Media Co., will show people how to utilize some free things on-line to leverage their Google My Business account and boost their company website's SEO. Her presentation will also discuss blogging, plus help attendees cut through the digital terminology, in layman's terms.



CRYSTAL GEIS

ABOUT THE SPEAKER:

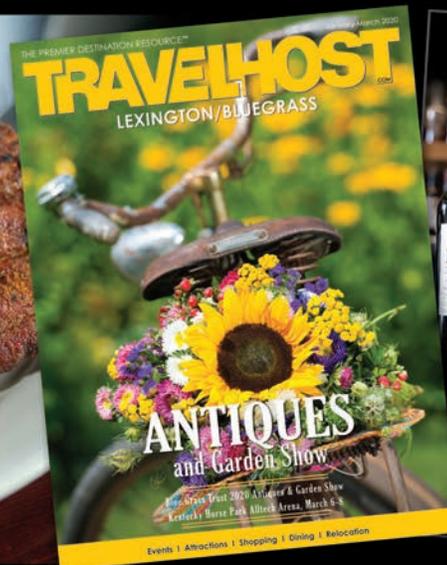
Crystal Geis, President and Founder of AD-IOS Digital Media Co., holds a B.S. in Marketing from WKU and has almost two decades of marketing and website experience. She founded AD-IOS Digital Media Co in December 2016. AD-IOS Digital Media (pronounced AD I-O-S) was designed with a mission to create engaging content and provide businesses with transparent digital analytics from website traffic. It is her personal mission to help business owners in all industries be the

best that they can be.

TO RSVP:

The @330 events are open to Commerce Lexington Inc. members at no charge. However, please register for the events by contacting Liz Bennett at (859) 226-1615 or lbennett@commercelexington.com.

Another proud Commerce Lexington member welcoming thousands of visitors to their business in the pages of TravelHost of the Bluegrass



Delicious Southern Fare & Upscale BBQ

3191 Beaumont Centre Circle
Lexington, KY 40513
859-533-9777

Follow us on

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2020 | 5:00 - 8:30 P.M. | LEXINGTON CENTER'S BLUEGRASS BALLROOM

Fifth Third Bank Presents 2020 Commerce Lexington Inc. Annual Dinner

Commerce Lexington Inc.'s 2020 Annual Dinner presented by Fifth Third Bank will be held on **Thursday, January 30**, at Lexington Center's Bluegrass Ballroom. The pre-dinner reception is scheduled from 5:00-6:00 p.m., while dinner and the program will begin at 6:00 p.m. Join us for great networking, good food, and a little business, as we take a look back at 2019 and highlight the organization's focus for 2020. We'll also present several awards, including the Ambassador of the Year, Volunteer of the

Year, Public Policy Advocate of the Year, our Distinguished Leader Awards from our Leadership Lexington youth and adult programs, and the W.T. Young Lifetime Achievement Award.

TO REGISTER:

The cost to attend the 2020 Commerce Lexington Inc. Annual Dinner is \$125 per person, or \$1,250 per table of ten. To register, visit on-line at www.CommerceLexington.com.

PRESENTED BY



FIFTH THIRD BANK

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2020 Commerce Lexington Inc. International Trip Features Imperial Russia

For the tenth consecutive year, Commerce Lexington Inc. will again be offering a unique group travel opportunity for its members and the general public. In 2020, Commerce Lexington is partnering with Collette, a highly-respected, family-owned travel provider celebrating 100 years in business, for a 9-day, 7 night adventure to **Imperial Russia** from **September 3 - 11**.

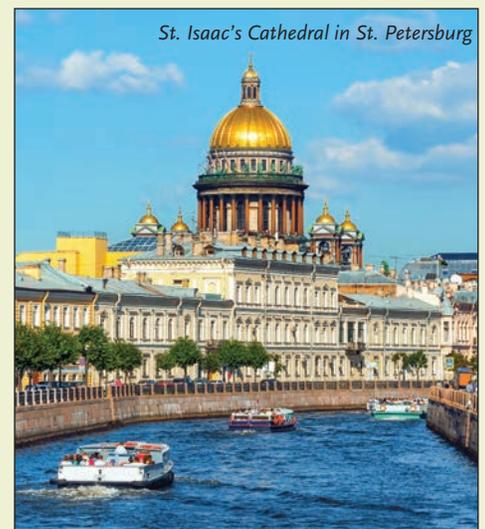
This trip will feature visits to Moscow and St. Petersburg with an itinerary that includes must-sees such as the Kremlin, Red Square, The Hermitage Museum, and Catherine Palace. We'll enjoy unique experiences such as navigating Moscow via its amazing Metro system, a walking food tour, a ride through the historic streets of St. Petersburg in vintage cars and high-speed train travel between Moscow and St. Petersburg to name just a few!

REGISTRATION:

Early bird pricing of \$4,299 per person double and \$4,949 per person single for the trip is available until March 4, 2020. The cost includes hotels, most meals, and airfare from New York's JFK Airport.

INFORMATIONAL MEETING SET FOR JANUARY 16TH:

To learn more about this travel opportunity, an Imperial Russia Informational Meeting will be held on **Thursday, Jan. 16**, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Commerce Lexington first floor conference room. To RSVP for this special travel presentation, contact Angela Carlos at (859) 226-1608 or acarlos@commercelexington.com.



St. Isaac's Cathedral in St. Petersburg



Kentucky Lawmakers Return to Frankfort for 60-Day Budget Session *Commerce Lexington Inc. Releases 2020 Policy Statements to Guide Organization*

Commerce Lexington Inc. is proud to work on behalf of its members and the Central Kentucky business community as an effective public policy voice at all levels of government to improve Kentucky's business climate. Throughout the year, Commerce Lexington's Public Policy Council researches, analyzes and discusses important policy issues from the perspective of how it may impact the Central Kentucky business community. Then, the group develops and recommends advocacy position statements, which guide the organization's advocacy efforts for the year.

Please take a few minutes to review the **2020 LEGISLATIVE FOCUS** inside this issue of BUSINESS FOCUS to learn about issues Commerce Lexington Inc. will be tracking on behalf of the business community this year at the local, state and federal levels of government.

In January, state lawmakers return to Frankfort for the 60-day Regular Session of the Kentucky General Assembly. The priority issue will be crafting the next two-year state budget and road fund plan for transportation infrastructure projects. Despite revenue growth and a strong economy, lawmakers anticipate state revenue projections to fall short of the required budget obligations (pension systems, Medicaid, corrections) over the biennium. This outlook makes the budgeting process difficult as lawmakers work to ensure a structurally balanced budget and determine funding priorities. Governor Andy Beshear must submit his budget proposal to lawmakers by late January.

Other issues expected to be priorities include funding for school safety,

proposals related to sports betting, modernizing the state's infrastructure funding model, continued tax reform to improve competitiveness and provide local governments with funding flexibility, criminal justice system reforms to improve workforce participation, career readiness initiatives, and increasing taxes and regulations on vaping products.

At this time, it is unclear if reforms to the Kentucky Teachers Retirement System (KTRS) will be on the table. With more than \$40 billion in unfunded liabilities, Kentucky has one of the worst pension systems in the nation. The actuarially required contributions to the systems total \$3.3 billion – nearly 30 percent of the total state budget. Local governments across the commonwealth are also facing massive required pension payments. These obligations are crippling the ability of local governments to meet essential service needs or make investments in other critical areas.

Commerce Lexington urges its members to stay connected throughout 2020 on policy issues. Regular email updates will be provided to members throughout the Legislative Session and the year to keep businesses updated on what's happening in City Hall, Frankfort and Washington, D.C. and the impact to Central Kentucky's economy. If you have questions, need assistance with a policy issue, or would like to get involved with advocacy efforts, contact **Andi Johnson**, Chief Policy Officer and Director of Regional Engagement, at ajohnson@commercelexington.com or (859) 226-1614.

**Wednesday,
February 12, 2020**
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Lexington Convention Center

**Gatton College of
Business and Economics**

For more information about the event,
call 859.257.8746 or 1.800.284.6407
or register online at
Gatton.uky.edu/economic-outlook



The 2020 Economic Outlook Conference

sponsored by **Central Bank**

Come learn about the future of Kentucky businesses with more than 250 experts who attend each year to address the outlook for the local, state, and national economies.

Hear from expert sources including:

- » Dr. Mark E. Schweitzer, *Senior Vice President, Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland*
- » Dr. Michael Clark, *Director/Associate Professor of the Center for Business and Economic Research and Department of Economics, Gatton College of Business and Economics*
- » Dr. Kathleen Montgomery, *Director/Associate Professor Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce, University of Kentucky*
- » Dr. Jessica D. Cunningham, *Executive Director, Kentucky Center for Statistics, Frankfort, KY*

<p>Presenting Sponsors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Commerce Lexington, Inc. » Center for Business & Economic Research 	<p>» The Lane Report</p> <p>» Don and Cathy Jacobs Executive Education Center</p>	<p>Partner Sponsor</p> <p>» Lexington-Bluegrass Association of REALTORS</p>
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2020

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

LOCAL

STATE

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COMMERCE LEXINGTON INC.

REPRESENTING YOUR BUSINESS IN GOVERNMENT

Business leaders are often too busy attracting investments and creating jobs to focus large amounts of time on monitoring legislation and regulations, analyzing their effect and advocating for their passage, defeat or modification. That's why Commerce Lexington Inc. and its Public Policy Council gather the top experts in a variety of industries, harness that knowledge, and advocate for the interests of business in the halls of our State Capitol or the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government to create a more business-friendly environment. Each year, we work with you – our members – to identify issues affecting the business community and spotlight the best public policy solutions. Our strong working relationships with local, state and federal officials mean that you will be well-represented and your voice will be magnified by the more than 1,800 members on whose behalf we speak.

CONTACT:

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Chief Policy Officer and
Director of Regional Engagement
Phone: (859) 226-1614
ajohnson@commercelexington.com

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Keeneland Association, Inc.

Darryl Thompson
Fayette County Public Schools

George Wallace
WesBanco Bank

Tyler White
Kentucky Coal Association

A nighttime photograph of a cityscape in Lexington, Kentucky. The sky is dark blue. In the background, several skyscrapers are illuminated. One prominent building has a large blue "C" logo on its top. To the left, a building has "HYATT" written on it. In the foreground, there are modern, multi-story residential or commercial buildings with lit windows. The overall scene is a vibrant urban night scene.

FUELING LEXINGTON

Kentucky Coal Association is dedicated to informing and educating Kentucky citizens about the coal industry and its vital role in the state's future. We provide a united voice for an industry that has been and remains a critical economic contributor to Kentucky.

GET INVOLVED

WWW.KENTUCKYCOAL.COM



Commerce Lexington Inc. hosts four events annually in its Policy Luncheon Series to connect members to elected officials.

WHAT CLX DOES FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Commerce Lexington Inc.'s Public Policy Division:

- Actively monitors legislative and regulatory activity from Urban County Government, Kentucky General Assembly and the U.S. House and Senate related to priority issues.
- Advocates for priority issues on behalf of the Lexington business community at the local, state and federal level.
- Helps chamber members navigate government agencies and address issues impacting their business
- Manages the Public Policy Council, a committee of 50 volunteer members representing a cross section of chamber membership. The Council develops the Policy Statements each year and guides the chamber's position on key issues that impact economic growth.
- Participates in Legislative and legal coalitions, submitting letters, filing briefs, and testifying on behalf of business at committee meetings.
- Provides communications to during the Legislative Session and throughout the year about policy issues including bills or ordinances with impacts on business and the local economy.
- Creates numerous educational and networking opportunities throughout the year from members to interact with local, state and federal officials or policy leaders.

Public Policy Luncheon Series

This event series is a unique opportunity for members and guests to network over lunch and hear from leading State and National officials about current events and critical issues confronting our region, state, and country. Over 900 people attended the Public Policy Luncheon series in 2019, featuring U.S. Congressman Andy Barr (pictured below), Kentucky gubernatorial candidates Matt Bevin and Andy Beshear, and Lexington Mayor Linda Gorton.



Kentucky Regional Tour

Commerce Lexington Inc. recognizes the vital role that other Kentucky regions play in Central Kentucky's economy. Since 2009, Bluegrass leaders have toured other regions of the Commonwealth to get a better understanding of challenges in those areas, and learn about successful projects and initiatives. State lawmakers consistently vote on projects that impact the Bluegrass, so this is our way of recognizing their efforts and support. In November 2019, a group of about 50 people visited and studied the Northern Kentucky/Cincinnati area.



WHAT CLX DOES FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Washington, D.C. Fly-In

The Bluegrass Region's Annual DC Fly-In is comprised of Central Kentucky's leaders from the business community, non-profit sector, post-secondary institutions and local elected officials who travel to Washington, D.C. to meet with Kentucky's federal Congressional delegation to advocate on behalf of the region's federal legislative agenda. In addition to meeting with Kentucky's federal delegation, the DC Fly-In affords participants the opportunity to hear from various leaders and policy experts on Capitol Hill over a two-day period. More than 50 regional leaders participated in the D.C. trip in July 2019.

Central Kentucky Day at the Capitol

The focus of this event (pictured at right) is to provide an opportunity for advocacy, relationship building and issue education in Frankfort during the 2020 General Assembly. During the day-long event, business and community leaders from Central Kentucky, local and state elected officials, local chambers and economic development groups will come together in Frankfort to discuss state policy issues of importance to the region. During the visit, meetings enable attendees to interact with state legislators and top-level executive branch officials and other issue experts. Other invitees to the special legislative lunch include the Governor's Office and staff, Executive Branch officials and all state legislators.

Regional Policy Summit [New in 2020]

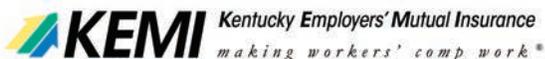
Commerce Lexington Inc. has a long history of promoting regionalism through leadership programs (Leadership Central Kentucky), economic development efforts (Bluegrass Alliance) and public policy (Central KY Policy Group). The Regional Policy Summit serves as a convening point to further leverage these resources. It also provides the opportunity for public and private sector leaders to build relationships and improve regional collaboration that advances the regional economy. Many issues such as the drug epidemic, infrastructure, workforce development, and energy costs, impact Central Kentucky's competitiveness for jobs without regard to county lines. Through this event, businesses and community leaders can come together to work toward positive change for the region.



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We're (safely) cutting rates for several industries and making it easier to work with clients who have operations outside of Kentucky through our Other States Program.

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Fayette County Public Schools

Commerce Lexington Inc. is committed to partnering with FCPS in efforts aimed at supporting the District's 2017-2021 Expect Excellence Strategic Plan, Portrait of a Graduate, and the Comprehensive 10-Point Safety Investment Plan. This includes support for ensuring equitable access, opportunity, and participation for all students, continuing the phased implementation of the school safety plan, and providing learning experiences – both in the classroom and within the community – that will help every child graduate academically prepared, college and career ready, civically engaged, culturally responsive and equipped for the future. We applaud the transparency, transformation, and accountability provided by the district in reporting its progress through status trackers, school and district report cards and an annual State of the Schools convening and Annual Report publication, as well as, the alignment of district priorities to annual budget planning.

- **Quality Education Investments:** Commerce Lexington Inc. supports increasing investments in K-12 education in the 2020 state budget, including but not limited to funding for public safety and career-based learning opportunities. We recognize numerous studies have determined that Kentucky's education funding is inadequate and support full funding of public education to the levels required by the Kentucky Education Reform Act. Commerce Lexington is opposed to any cuts to the base SEEK funding and flexible focus funds (i.e. Extended School Services, Preschool, Professional Development, Textbooks and Safe Schools).

Commerce Lexington Inc. fully supports all investments in early childhood education including universal preschool and an equitable, full-day kindergarten program statewide to achieve school readiness. Commerce Lexington supports the General Assembly increasing the number of school days closer to the national average of 180 days, and the international average of 193 days. Commerce Lexington opposes the state mandating a local school district's calendar and advocates for keeping local decision-making reflective of the needs of each community.

- **School Safety and Resiliency:** Commerce Lexington recognizes the critical importance of ensuring the safety of our children at school, at home, and in the community. We applaud the General Assembly's adoption of SB1 during the 2019 session and call for the full funding of the requirements of the act.
- **Rigorous & Relevant Standards:** Commerce Lexington Inc. supports standards that are designed to be rigorous and relevant to the real world, reflecting the experiences, assets, knowledge, and skills that our young people need for success in life, college and career. In order for Central Kentucky to be positioned to provide the workforce needed to compete for business recruitment and retention, our education standards must ensure the acquisition of rigorous academic content while also fostering critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity and other essential 21st Century skills needed to thrive in this complex, rapidly changing world.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- **Career Readiness:** Commerce Lexington Inc. supports efforts to improve Central Kentucky's ability to be a hub for talent acquisition and recruitment in support of satisfying workforce supply chain needs. Workplace apprenticeships and internships, other career-based learning experiences, have proven to be effective channels in developing career readiness. Commerce Lexington supports additional emphasis and an urgency to increase funding for apprenticeships or other work-based learning to prepare today's students for tomorrow's careers. Commerce Lexington supports the General Assembly, Governor's Office, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, state and local Chambers of Commerce, post-secondary institutions, pre-K through 12 school districts, and business partners working in collaboration through regionally based approaches to build workforce pipelines that span the Commonwealth and meet employer needs.
- **Family & Community Engagement:** Family and community engagement through shared accountability and advocacy is critical to ensuring that Lexington has a world-class system of great schools. As our community has grown and changed, students carry heavier burdens with them to school, such as the effects of food scarcity, housing insecurity, poverty, and community-based trauma, all of which can be barriers to academic achievement. Recognizing that every child deserves a champion, Commerce Lexington supports innovative approaches to sup-

port the engagement of families, business leaders, and other caring adults as partners through a community based collective impact model. Commerce Lexington is committed to supporting other efforts that help transform schools from the outside in by strengthening families, neighborhoods and communities.

- **STEAM Critical to Compete:** Commerce Lexington Inc. supports legislative and local district efforts to increase graduates in the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) disciplines to meet the ever-growing needs of employers.
- **Financial Literacy:** Commerce Lexington Inc. supports the inclusion of "Financial Literacy" education in school classrooms. This training can be achieved through traditional curriculum development or through private-public partnerships, such as Junior Achievement of the Bluegrass with the Fayette County Public Schools.

Kentucky Education Television (KET)

Commerce Lexington Inc. fully supports the lifelong educational programming and services KET delivers to schools and the public. KET provides access, equity, and quality educational resources focused on student achievement, teacher preparedness and workforce development.



Empower the Future™

During the 2018-2019 school year, Kentucky's JA offices served **124,407 students** in **4,988 classrooms** across the Commonwealth providing **968,717 instructional hours**.

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



University of Kentucky (UK)

Commerce Lexington Inc. recognizes and supports the critical role the University of Kentucky plays in workforce development, health care, and economic development for Lexington and all of Kentucky. States with nationally recognized public research universities have healthier, more prosperous citizens. Commerce Lexington Inc. urges the Governor and General Assembly to continue to support UK by supporting the Performance Funding model agreement reached by the working group consisting of members of the Executive branch, the Legislative branch, and the universities.

- In the last seven years, UK initiated or approved some \$2.4 billion in capital investments to improve student success, instruction, research and discovery, and health care. Approximately 91 percent of that investment is the result of public-private partnerships, philanthropy, strategic use of university resources, and support from UK Athletics.
- UK welcomed successive record-setting, first-year classes that have joined the UK family and moved total enrollment to nearly 30,500. These students are succeeding at higher levels, translating to record degree attainment, including nearly 7,100 degrees conferred over the last academic year.
- Faculty and staff researchers added to a growing portfolio of transformative research, discovery, and creative scholarship. In fiscal year 2018, UK received \$333.8 million in research awards—signifying that UK is a major player among research institutions in the country, and UK is ranked among the top 10 percent of public institutions for research expenditures. In addition, UK owns 601 worldwide patent assets, illustrating the commercial opportunities of research and directly impacting the economy of central Kentucky.
- UK HealthCare - Kentucky's top hospital for the last three four years—continues to meet the needs of patients and families who require complex, quality health care through its network of providers and state-of-the-art academic medical center. Its Markey Cancer Center is ranked 33rd, its highest national ranking ever. Annual patient discharges exceed more than 40,900 annually and have grown by more than 114 percent since 2003. Over 6,900 jobs have been created - all with no additive state appropriations to UK HealthCare.

- In total, the \$4.2 billion flagship and land grant research university yields a 12-fold return on the Commonwealth's investment. UK employs more than 20,000 people paying more than \$106 million in state and local taxes. UK has spent nearly \$5.5 billion with Kentucky companies since 2011, and UK Extension Services reached \$1.16 million Kentuckians through nutrition education programs, healthy living initiatives, 4-H, and modern farming practices last year.
- UK recently launched "Kentucky Can: The 21st Century Campaign" – a \$2.1 billion comprehensive campaign focused on six major areas of the university: student success, health care, research, endowment, alumni, and athletics. The campaign is designed to engage donors and increase private support for student scholarships and financial aid, research and discovery that addresses Kentucky questions, and to further endow programs critical to the long-term success of the university.
- *Forbes* has named UK among the best employers for diversity and INSIGHT into Diversity recognized UK as a Diversity Champion three years running.

BCTC: Enhance Technical Skills Training

The Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) is the largest provider of higher education, online education and workforce training in the Commonwealth. Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC), a member college of the system, serves Central Kentucky. The central mission is to provide a well-trained workforce and pathways to a bachelor's degrees in central Kentucky and the Commonwealth. To achieve this goal, KCTCS is aligning its strategic plan with other education and workforce agencies and organizations, BCTC is working with local employers to ensure the curriculum meets local needs, and KCTCS/BCTC is maintaining the lowest tuition of postsecondary institutions in Kentucky. Many Central Kentuckians - including incumbent workers, job seekers who need updated skills, or high school students planning for careers – need access to high quality skills training. Commerce Lexington supports KCTCS and BCTC in their efforts to support regional business development, enhance technical skills training, provide "work ready" employees and create a seamless pathway to a bachelor's degree. To that end, Commerce Lexington supports increasing funding for the post-secondary performance funding model, dual scholarships and work ready scholarships.





Commerce Lexington Inc. supports substantial and sustained investment in Kentucky’s economic development infrastructure – including highways, bridges, waterways, public transit, railways, aviation, broadband and utilities.

Roads/Bridges

Having a dependable transportation network is critical to Central Kentucky’s economic vitality. Thriving communities must be able to move workers, provide services and transport products to market quickly and safely. Commerce Lexington Inc. fully supports a regional transportation approach, and investments in the infrastructure required to improve interconnectivity in the region and along the state’s vital corridors. Maintaining adequate funding for transportation infrastructure remains an issue of concern at both the state and federal levels of government. Commerce Lexington urges lawmakers to find long-term solutions to ensure sufficient, sustainable and reliable funding for all modes of transportation for projects critical to economic development.

At the federal level, Commerce Lexington supports reauthorization bills that continue long-term funding solutions for all transportation systems. We urge support of critical regional infrastructure to improve connectivity such as the U.S. Department of Transportation’s BUILD grants for local communities. We also urge Administration officials and Congress to support policies that ensure timelines are maintained for the completion of environmental impact studies. We also support funding for necessitated utility infrastructure costs required by public improvement projects. Without funding, local utility customers disproportionately bear costs associated with public improvement projects.

At the state level, we support modernizing the transportation funding distribution model to make it more equitable for areas with higher levels of transportation activity and needs. Commerce Lexington further supports modernizing the method for funding infrastructure to better reflect the current state of transportation as well as anticipate future needs on our transportation systems.

Air

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports federal and state funding to ensure on-going and stable funding for Blue Grass Airport and the three general aviation airports vital to the regional economy.

Transit

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports state and federal transportation funding for transit agencies in both the rural and urban areas to support workforce and economic development initiatives and the ever-changing travel needs in our communities. Funding should support capital projects and operations, including new service delivery methods especially for low-income workers, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Railroad

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports short line rehabilitation tax credits to incentivize railroads increase investments, rehabilitate their track and expand capacity, which ultimately allows short lines to safely and efficiently serve customers.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Wireless & Wired Broadband

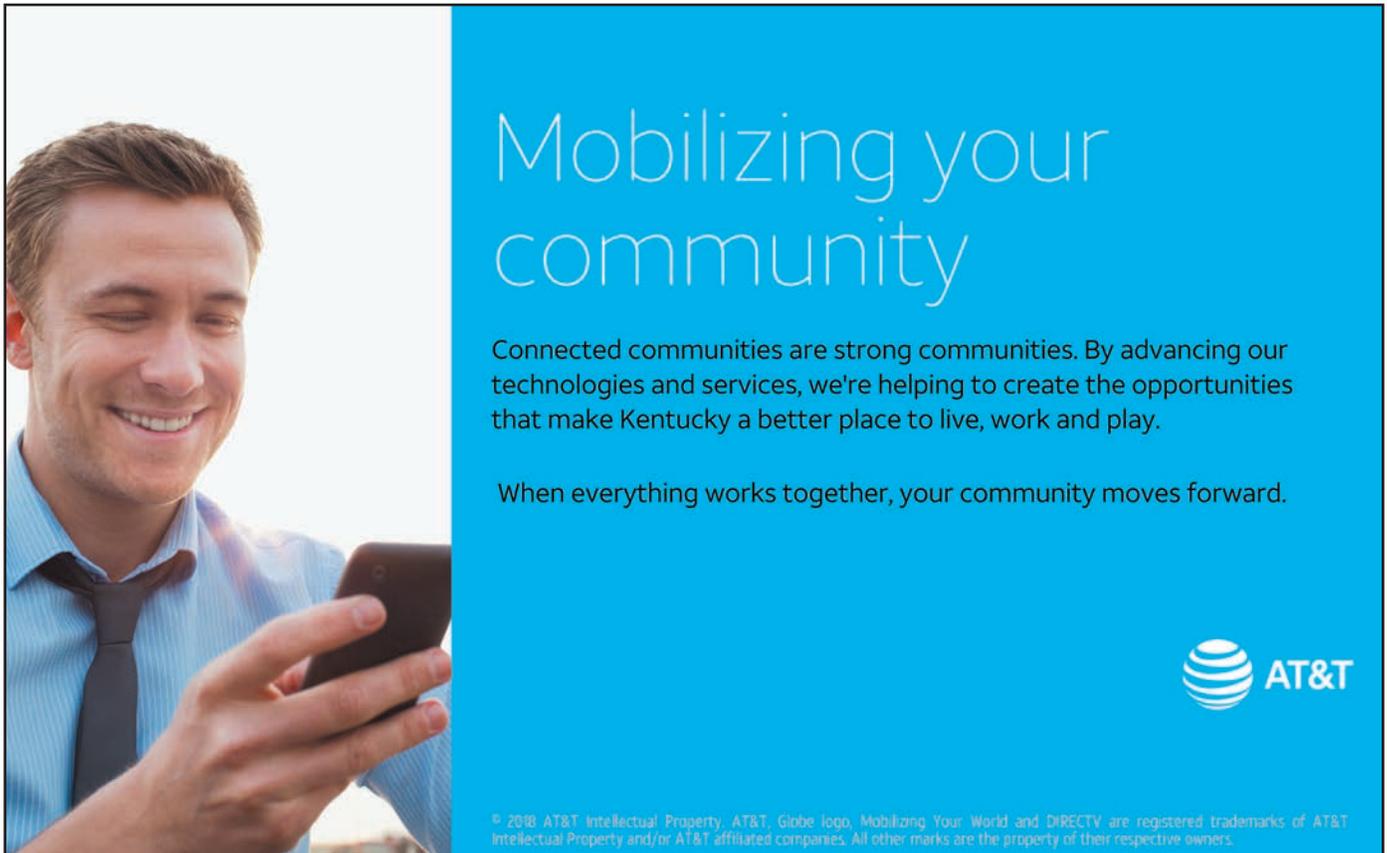
In a 21st century global economy, our telecommunications infrastructure is crucial. The progress we have seen in Kentucky in recent years, in terms of accessibility to and adoption of broadband internet, has been remarkable. In fact, from 2013 to 2015, more than 800,000 Kentuckians gained access to broadband. Seventy percent of those new connections were in rural Kentucky. Based on the Federal Communications Commission 2018 Broadband Deployment Report, Kentucky has moved from 47th in the nation to 37th, a significant jump that is due to the substantial investment of private risk capital by Kentucky's communications providers. Many of Kentucky's surrounding states offer tax exemptions to incentivize expanding and upgrading networks and/or broadband buildout grants to aid the private sector in deploying last mile service to unserved areas, or both. Commerce Lexington supports improving Kentucky's wireless and wired broadband infrastructure. We support efforts at the local, state and federal level to increase the deployment of wired and wireless networks across the Commonwealth, while also opposing policies that would impede or hamper investment in digital infrastructure and economic development.

Energy & Utility Infrastructure

Economic development often requires extensive capital investment for the extension of energy infrastructure to serve new and growing businesses. Commerce Lexington supports legislation and regulatory action to allow Kentucky's utilities to develop financial mechanisms and capital incentives to extend their facilities to new and expanded businesses, industrial and business parks, residential development and other locations which will result in the creation of new economic growth not currently without adequate utility services.

Central Kentucky Water Supply and Infrastructure

Commerce Lexington supports an efficient, equitable and sufficient water supply for the entire region. Commerce Lexington supports investments in maintenance and upgrades on the lock and dam systems of the Kentucky River to enhance and conserve our region's primary water supply, as well as appropriate, ongoing investments in other water system infrastructure to maintain quality, reliable water service for communities. Commerce Lexington also supports interconnectivity agreements among municipalities throughout Central Kentucky.



Mobilizing your community

Connected communities are strong communities. By advancing our technologies and services, we're helping to create the opportunities that make Kentucky a better place to live, work and play.

When everything works together, your community moves forward.



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Public Employee Pension Systems

Commerce Lexington remains concerned about the financial viability of Kentucky's public employee pension systems, the downgrading of state's bond rating and the negative impact on businesses. Commerce Lexington strongly urges the General Assembly to continue progress toward the goal of establishing equitable retirement and health insurance benefits for new hires that more closely resemble those available in the private sector. Commerce Lexington supports a comprehensive review of all public employee pension systems (including the Kentucky Teachers Retirement System) and related benefits and encourages state legislators to consider other serious structural changes to all systems to assure funding pensions does not cripple state government's ability to provide essential services. Commerce Lexington will continue to monitor reform implementation with emphasis on assuring no benefit increases without full funding and the inclusion of actuarial required contributions in the state budget. Commerce Lexington discourages lawmakers from using bonding to address shortfalls in state pension funds, which could jeopardize the state's financial stability for future generations.

Economic Development Incentives & Partnerships

Established in 2007, Commerce Lexington Inc. continues to strengthen its partnership between the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, the University of Kentucky and the Kentucky Small Business Development Center to encourage economic development, investment and job growth in Central Kentucky.

Commerce Lexington supports the development of new incentives and investment strategies to help Kentucky's businesses grow and prosper in today's global economy. Although not a substitute for comprehensive tax reform, Commerce Lexington supports incentive programs designed to encourage the growth of high wage jobs, long-term investment in strategically defined industry sectors, small business promotion, or other significant economic development projects that demonstrate a clear return on investment and would not otherwise occur without the incentive.

Commerce Lexington urges lawmakers to continue to support, and in some cases, consider enhancements to the state incentive programs promoting business growth and job creation, such as the Kentucky Business Investment program (KBI), Kentucky Enterprise Initiative Act (KEIA), Kentucky Reinvestment Act (KRA), Kentucky Investment Fund Act (KIFA), SBIR/STTR matching program, and the Kentucky Skills Network workforce training programs.

Commerce Lexington supports a modification of the Kentucky Reinvestment Act (KRA) to include service and technology firms in addition to manufacturing firms within the KRA program to retain service and technology jobs in the Commonwealth. Commerce Lexington supports linking the tax credits directly to job retention and would support implementing minimum requirements for companies to meet before the tax incentives become available.

R&D Investment Incentives

American corporations focus their research and development activities on the development of new products, processes, and services while relying on research universities to do basic scientific research. In order to supplement basic research investment by federal agencies, Commerce Lexington supports the establishment of federal and state tax incentives to encourage corporations to make cash investments or endowment gifts to research departments or proof of concept centers of public research universities. Incentives should also be in place to encourage corporations to make investments in high-tech, high-risk start-up technology companies.

Tourism Development

The tourism industry is an important component of an overall economic development strategy. Commerce Lexington Inc. supports initiatives and incentives designed to enhance the state's tourism and agri-tourism industry's positive impact through the promotion of events and the promotion of central Kentucky as a tourism and agri-tourism destination. Commerce Lexington also supports efforts to attract the media and film industry to the Bluegrass, while working to ensure that efforts that might undermine tourism's economic impact are minimized by protecting the state marketing funds that produce a 15 to 1 ROI.

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COMMUNICATIONS

COMPETITIVENESS

International Trade

Kentucky has established itself as a major exporter in a broad range of industries - from manufacturing to agriculture, as well as an attractive location for foreign investments. Kentucky set a new record in 2017 with \$30 billion in exports. These exports directly support 140,000 jobs in Kentucky, with tens of thousands more indirectly supported by exports. Commerce Lexington Inc. urges elected officials to support fair and equitable trade agreements that open new markets and create new opportunities for businesses and workers in our region. We remain concerned about the negative economic impact of tariffs proposed or imposed, as well as the continued uncertainty over the future of trade agreements, on Kentucky's signature industries. Commerce Lexington will continue to monitor these issues, seek feedback from local employers and communicate economic impacts to federal officials.

Land Use Planning

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports local control and decision-making in the areas of land use planning. Commerce Lexington believes it is imperative for regional communities to collaborate and coordinate regional planning efforts related to natural resources, housing, utilities, economic development, transportation and the possibility of revenue sharing. Through the Bluegrass Alliance and Central KY Policy Group, Commerce Lexington works closely with local governments, economic developers and community leaders throughout central Kentucky to develop a common vision for the prosperity of our region.

- Commerce Lexington encourages communities to develop comprehensive plans that balance the need for housing and economic development while protecting agriculture industries and natural resources.
- Affordability of housing is not just an issue for low income central Kentuckians. Availability and affordability of housing is an issue of concern for expanding and relocating companies and the talent they need to attract and retain. We must plan for continued growth and development, we must evaluate the impact each decision has on our ability to develop and maintain housing options within the reach of all our citizens.
- Commerce Lexington supports policies and initiatives to provide a sufficient supply of land that is readily available for economic development opportunities and job creation through a public and/or public-private business park aimed at recruiting high wage jobs. This includes the land exchange agreement between the LFUCG and the University of Kentucky to make 200+ acres available for jobs at UK's Coldstream Research Park in 2021-2022.
- Commerce Lexington will continue to advocate for jobs land to include the following components such as but not limited to: shovel-ready, properly zoned, infrastructure and transportation access, large block tracks, and competitive pricing.

High-Tech Ecosystem

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports initiatives that encourage the continued development of the knowledge-based economy in central Kentucky. We support policies that facilitate the development and retention of high-tech manufacturing and biotechnology investments in our region and specifically encourage additional research and development and technology transfer activity. Commerce Lexington will be an advocate for public-private partnerships that move ideas to theory, theory to applied research, and applied research to profitable commercial application. To help provide additional financial support enabling such business activity to occur, Commerce Lexington supports the development of seed capital funds that focus on central Kentucky investments and the promotion of innovative companies to existing venture capital firms.

- Commerce Lexington encourages the federal government to continue the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)/ Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) and for Kentucky to continue funding the state's match program for these start-up companies.
- We urge state government to support policy changes to the state's SBIR/STTR grant matching program that target investments in the most viable companies for commercialization, provide those businesses with more entrepreneurial support to aid growth and allow for the state to have a greater return on investment (ROI) for those incentives.
- Commerce Lexington also supports continued funding of the Kentucky Innovation and the Angel Investors Networks.

Public Employee Collective Bargaining

Commerce Lexington strongly opposes public employee collective bargaining. Public employees are afforded significant benefits, job protections, and established rank and pay scales. The adjustment or alteration of these benefits are decisions that can and should be made as a matter of public policy.

Immigration

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports a comprehensive immigration reform package which includes modernizations to the guest worker program which addresses the needs of all Kentucky's work places.

Safer Workplaces

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports allowing employers to share factual and documented information about past employees, without subjecting themselves to undue liability, when providing references to inquiring employers during the hiring process. We also support legislation to allow employers to help fight illegal drug use in the workplace. Commerce Lexington opposes any expansion in the current concealed/carry laws that would allow employees to bring deadly weapons into the workplace.

Unemployment Insurance

Commerce Lexington Inc. believes that the integrity of the unemployment insurance trust fund should be maintained and opposes efforts to utilize the fund in ways that are contrary to its original purpose of providing unemployment insurance to temporarily displaced workers. Commerce Lexington will continue to monitor the implementation of the reforms to the state's unemployment insurance system, and support efforts to reform the benefit structure to keep costs and benefits competitive with other states and increase workforce participation. Further, Commerce Lexington supports efforts to provide those out-of-work with access to training and career counseling.

Workers' Compensation

Commerce Lexington Inc. applauds the General Assembly for enacting reforms in 2018 to the state's workers compensation system to provide clarity to statutes, improve return to work outcomes and lower costs for employers. We will continue to monitor the implementation of these reforms and support workers' compensation regulations that offer clear and objective definitions of injury and disability, use objective medical findings of impairment for awards, reduce litigation, encourage retraining and education, and return to work while abating growing costs for central Kentucky employers. Commerce Lexington supports legislative or regulatory measures that will help control Kentucky's rising medical and prescription drug costs in workers' compensation cases without disrupting needed services to injured workers.

Criminal Justice System Reforms

Kentucky made important progress to protect public safety with the enactment of corrections reform legislation in 2011 and juvenile justice code reforms in 2014, while establishing a system to control spiraling corrections costs. Commerce Lexington also applauds the Governor and General Assembly for the passage of limited felony expungement legislation in 2016 to help workers limited by a past mistake re-enter and advance in the workforce. Commerce Lexington will continue to monitor, and support when appropriate, support efforts focused on reducing recidivism, making communities safer, increasing our workforce and saving taxpayer dollars.

Revision of Statute of Limitations Law

Commerce Lexington Inc. believes that Kentucky's five-year statute of limitations on employee wrongful termination or discrimination lawsuits places an undue requirement on employers. Commerce Lexington supports changes to Kentucky's statute that would make all employment discharge and discrimination type actions more uniform with federal guidelines while still protecting employees and employers.

Public-Private Partnerships

Commerce Lexington Inc. encourages the use of public/private partnerships (P3) by local and state government agencies for the delivery of services and/or the construction and/or management of a variety of infrastructure related projects. To ensure accountability in contracting with private entities, it is essential that proper safeguards be in place to ensure transparency and that quality services are delivered at a lower cost to taxpayers.

Government Efficiency

Commerce Lexington supports the need for government modernization and increased efficiency. Commerce Lexington will continue to urge the General Assembly to focus on spending reforms across government, including the areas of public employee health benefits, the public employee pension system, corrections and Medicaid.

Condemnation

Commerce Lexington Inc. is opposed to government acquisition of privately-owned businesses through condemnation for the purpose of operating the business.

Wage Mandates

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports government efforts to find balanced, long-term solutions to the problems confronted by our community. We do not support private sector wage mandates that exceed state or federal guidelines.

Employer & Labor Union

Maintaining the balance between labor unions and employers is critical to continued job creation. Commerce Lexington Inc. urges federal officials and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to support policies and rulemaking that promote economic growth. We strongly encourage the appointment of a full and balanced NLRB and urge federal and state officials to fight changes to our labor law system that undermine employer-employee relations.

- Maintain a balance of representation on the NLRB, with members properly vetted and ratified through Congress.
- Protect secret ballot elections to form unions.
- Maintain functional grouping of business units that do not pit "sub" or "micro" units against each other in organizing efforts (micro unions).
- Maintain a company's ability to educate employees on the consequences of unionization, do not include binding arbitration provisions, and do not impose one-sided penalties.
- Consider the use of email and social media to misrepresent picketed areas, an Unfair Labor Practice.

SIGNATURE INDUSTRIES

Equine

Thousands of acres of horse farms, world class venues such as Keeneland and the Kentucky Horse Park, and many horse related national headquarters, including the United States Equestrian Federation, earn Kentucky the title of Horse Capital of the World. The American Horse Council's 2017 Economic Impact Study of the Horse Industry calculated that the industry had a \$3.9 billion economic impact on Kentucky and generated 56,603 jobs. Because of the substantial economic impact, Commerce Lexington fully supports programs and initiatives to protect and enhance the future growth of the equine industry. At the state level, these include wagering on historical horse racing, innovative tax approaches, purse increases, increased funding for breeder incentive programs, appropriate funding to maintain the quality of the Kentucky Horse Park, and other assistance to allow our equine industry to remain competitive. Kentucky's sales tax on equine products puts our region and the Commonwealth at a disadvantage with competitor states. Commerce Lexington supports efforts to eliminate this competitive disadvantage in tax reform.

Federally, Commerce Lexington supports the Market Access Program enabling the U.S. agricultural trade associations, cooperatives, state regional trade groups and small businesses to share the costs of overseas marketing and promotional activities that help build commercial export markets for U.S. agricultural products and commodities; trade policies that open markets for direct export of horses; and immigration reform to meet workforce needs in agriculture industries. We also support the equine industry's efforts to address the health, welfare and safety of the thoroughbred racing industry as well as other equestrian sports.

Sports Betting

Commerce Lexington supports allowing sports wagering in Kentucky, as allowed by the 2018 U.S. Supreme Court decision. Any legislation to approve sports wagering in the Commonwealth must protect existing signature industries and racing facilities.

Industrial Hemp

Thanks in large part to state leaders and members of Kentucky's Congressional delegation, hemp is now permanently a legal agricultural commodity, no longer considered a controlled substance. After more than a century of prohibition, Kentucky is poised to re-emerge as the global leader in hemp production. However, roadblocks remain to the full realization of hemp's potential for farmers and businesses. Commerce Lexington supports efforts that clarify the legality of financial transactions in hemp commerce, and that promote fair and expeditious regulations of hemp products like cannabidiol (CBD) by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. We also support the Mayor's efforts to promote ag-tech businesses and the growing hemp industry in Lexington.

Malt Beverage & Craft Brewing

Commerce Lexington is proud of our locally owned craft breweries and our locally owned distribution network. We support the maintenance of a strong and independent 3-tier system for the sale, distribution and regulation of malt beverages. This system promotes family-owned and operated businesses, preservation of jobs, strong community reinvestment, and the ability of large, regional, and small/local brewers to deliver their products to the market and ultimately the consumer.

Distilling Industry

Kentucky's legendary distilling industry has a significant impact on the state's economy, producing 95% of the world's bourbon. Bourbon is an \$8.6 billion signature industry in Kentucky, generating 20,100 jobs with an annual payroll of \$1 billion. Spirits production and consumption generates more than \$825 million in federal, state and local tax revenues every year. Commerce Lexington strongly supports initiatives to protect and grow the iconic industry.

Kentucky is the only place in the world that levies an ad valorem property tax every year on aging barrels in warehouses. Commerce Lexington strongly supports making the state's Barrel Tax Credit fully refundable. Commerce Lexington also supports parity for our distilleries with other alcohol producers.

For Kentucky to maintain its dominance in the distilling industry and attract new distilleries, the General Assembly must continue to update statutes written before the Kentucky Bourbon Trail® and the Kentucky Bourbon Trail Craft Tour® were created to take advantage of the booming Bourbon tourism industry. Commerce Lexington recognizes that with this unique product comes responsibility, therefore we support continuing responsibility efforts geared towards preventing underage drinking and DUI offenders.



AgTech Scientific held a grand opening of its new hemp products development and manufacturing center in Bourbon County.

Commerce Lexington Inc. recognizes that in an increasingly competitive global marketplace, promoting long-term economic development and job growth must be a top priority when revenue options are being considered. Tax and regulatory policy at all levels of government must be guided by a well-researched, balanced approach that provides for necessary public investments and expenditures, while avoiding policies that could serve as disincentives to economic growth and private sector employment and investment. State and local tax code changes should recognize and encourage long-term future growth and provide sufficient revenue options, so that local governments are able to tailor their tax policy to local conditions. Commerce Lexington encourages lawmakers to monitor the impact of Kentucky's tax code on the private sector and to take action when necessary to ensure Kentucky remains competitive with its surrounding states.

Comprehensive Tax Reform

As the Kentucky General Assembly contemplates comprehensive tax reform, Commerce Lexington strongly urges lawmakers to evaluate existing tax policies and proposed changes by using the following criteria:

- **Effective:** Tax policies should be reviewed to determine the intended or unintended consequences. Tax laws proving contrary to their intention or more burdensome than intended should be repealed or scaled back.
- **Competitive:** Tax policy should promote a positive climate that encourages increased investment and job growth.
- **Revenue Sensitive:** Tax policy should provide sufficient revenues overall to fund critical priorities.
- **Predictable:** Sources of tax revenue should be relatively predictable and stable over time.
- **Equitable:** Tax policy should be fair but must not discourage economic activity, employment, or wage growth.
- **Efficient:** Any tax policy must be designed to facilitate cost efficient compliance and administration.

Local Option Sales Tax

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports an amendment to the Kentucky Constitution, and enabling legislation, that would permit cities and counties, including urban county governments, to enact a local option sales tax, not to exceed one percent with a sunset provision. The tax would be for funding dedicated to specific local projects, as proposed by the local government and approved by voter referendum.

Alcohol Taxes

As part of comprehensive tax reform, Commerce Lexington believes Kentucky must examine how other states tax distilled spirits, beer and wine. Kentucky has one of the Top 5 tax rates on alcohol sales in the US, higher than all contiguous states except Tennessee. The Kentucky General Assembly should consider rolling back the wholesale tax on alcohol sales to make the Commonwealth's distilled spirit and alcoholic beverage industry more competitive with surrounding states.

Revise the Limited Liability Entity Tax

Commerce Lexington Inc. supported the 2006 Tax Modernization by the General Assembly. However, the creation of the Limited Liability Entity Tax (LLET) and the lack of ability to offset pass-through credits against tax on income from other businesses and other years have become problematic. Commerce Lexington supports efforts to adjust the tax code to encourage entrepreneurial investment in the Commonwealth.

Regulatory Reform

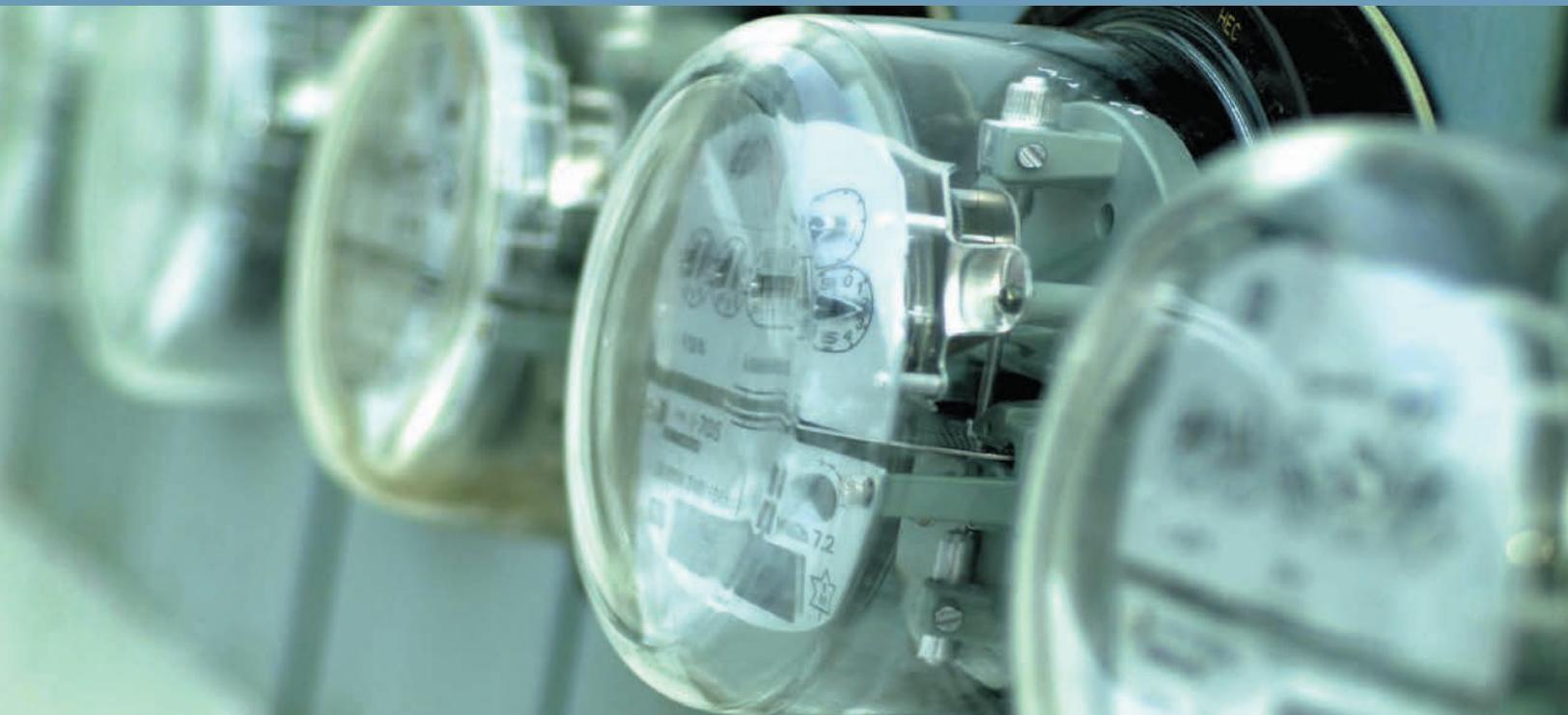
Commerce Lexington urges federal, state and local governments to consider a comprehensive review of the regulations, taxes and fees impacting businesses to determine areas where these policies could be modified, reduced, streamlined or eliminated to improve government efficiency and create a more business friendly environment for Lexington and Kentucky. We encourage sensitivity at the local and state level to regulations that are more stringent than federal regulations that hurt Kentucky's economic competitiveness.

Commerce Lexington supports efforts to review local, state and federal regulations and when appropriate, modify, eliminate or streamline regulations to make Central Kentucky more business friendly. Commerce Lexington also strongly urges state and federal officials to support commonsense regulatory reform that restores accountability, transparency and public participation in the rule or regulation making process.

Commerce Lexington opposes unfunded mandates trickling down from federal and state agencies that impact local governments without regard to the affordability of the mandates, and the ability of a local community, its businesses and taxpayers to absorb the costs. Commerce Lexington will advocate for regulatory reform efforts at all levels of government.

These efforts should include, but not be limited to the following:

- Review of any agency fee increase or regulatory change carefully and examine the fee increases based on need, rate of inflation and economic impact on business. No fee or regulations with significant fiscal impact on business should be increased without the clear approval from the appropriate federal, state or local legislative body with oversight authority.
- Agencies should be asked to demonstrate the economic impact to businesses and local communities of implementing new regulations.
- Consent Decrees or other legal or administrative requirements should take into account and publicly demonstrate the ability of local governments, quasi-governmental agencies, schools and businesses ability to afford the alternatives demanded by the state and/or EPA. These financial analyses should be conducted by people with experience in developing financial impacts before the solution is finalized.
- If it is determined that the entity cannot reasonably afford the solution required by the state or federal agency, then the state should be required to assist the entity in developing an alternate financial plan.



Protect Kentucky's Low Cost & Reliable Energy Rates

Commerce Lexington Inc. urges local, state and federal officials to support efforts to maintain affordable, reliable energy for business and residents. Kentucky offers some of the lowest electricity rates in the nation due in large part to the abundance of coal resources for electricity generation. This competitive advantage has allowed Kentucky to attract thousands of manufacturing jobs and energy-intensive industries like automotive, steel and aluminum. Kentucky businesses and economic developers remain concerned about proposed regulations on electricity generating facilities that use coal, and new regulations on Kentucky's mining industry. Kentucky businesses are opposed to any punitive and costly carbon emissions regulations or taxation of any form.

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports the U.S. EPA's Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) Rule, which will help protect Kentucky's low energy rates. Commerce Lexington encourages the Commonwealth of Kentucky to be one of the first states to adopt and submit for approval a state plan implementing the ACE rule. We also urge state and federal officials to monitor, clarify definitions and ensure compliance flexibility as it relates to other proposed rule changes, including Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR), New Source Review (NSR) and Waters of the United States (WOTUS), Clean Water Act, such as Effluent Limitation Guidelines (ELG) and natural gas pipeline safety.

- **Coal:** Supports coal remaining an integral part of our nation's energy portfolio, and ensuring a level playing field for all low-cost fuel sources to provide low cost electricity. Coal provides

more than 70 percent of Kentucky's electricity helping to make our electricity some of the most affordable, reliable, and resilient in the U.S.

- **Natural Gas:** Encourages the investment in production and use of other reliable energy fuels like natural gas and supports flexibility in compliance and safety regulations. Kentucky's oil and gas industry has a total value production of more than \$1 billion and employs 9,000+ Kentuckians. Commerce Lexington supports financial and infrastructure incentives to help stimulate adoption of natural gas transportation fuels to ensure that natural gas is readily available for economic development. Central Kentucky could benefit from increased use of compressed natural gas (CNG) or liquefied natural gas (LNG) motor transportation fuels such as those used for in-state and inter-state trucking fleets, waste haulers, delivery and repair vehicles, and personal cars and trucks.
- **Support Fair Regulations:** Support review, elimination, or updates to outdated or duplicative regulations to ensure a level playing field for all low-cost fuel sources.
- **Research & Technology Investments:** Supports research, development and utilization of new technologies for a cleaner energy strategy for continued reductions in carbon emissions while limiting unreasonable adverse impacts on coal and gas industries.
- **Energy Efficiency Measures:** Support investments in energy efficiency measures, alternative fuels and renewable energy to spur economic growth and energy innovation including grant opportunities for the University of Kentucky's Center for Applied Energy Research.
- **Carbon Tax Credits:** Supports providing tax credits or equivalents for carbon capture and disposal by companies.

Promote a Sensible Regulatory Approach

Commerce Lexington Inc. strongly supports commonsense regulatory reform that restores accountability, transparency, the use of scientific data and public participation in the rule making process across all local, state and federal agencies. We oppose regulations at the local and state level that are more stringent than federal regulations, and those that result in significant adverse economic on citizens, farmers, cities and industries. We urge all levels of government to engage in a thorough review of existing regulations, current MOU's, MOA's and other guidance documents to identify statutes or regulations that need to be clarified, eliminated or modified to increase economic competitiveness for businesses. Commerce Lexington appreciates the U.S. EPA's efforts to provide states with more flexibility in managing their environmental programs and encourages continued efforts to identify more creative ways for states and the U.S. EPA to collaborate on regulatory and enforcement issues.

Storm Water/Sanitary Sewer & Consent Decree Implementation

Commerce Lexington Inc. will continue to monitor implementation processes to ensure the LFUCG's plan to meet EPA requirements is completed in a timely and cost-effective manner. We support periodic, independent performance reviews/audits to ensure taxpayer dollars are being used efficiently by local government throughout project implementation.

Track New Sanitary Sewer and Storm Water Permits and Fees

Commerce Lexington Inc. will continue to engage local and state officials to ensure that requirements of new sewer and storm water permits, fees, applications and guidance documents are not too restrictive and do not exceed state or federal regulations and that the plan and the implementation schedule is feasible and cost effective. We also will continue to educate members about the impact of the new permits.

Support Energy Efficiency Measures

Across the nation, companies— including those in Central Kentucky — are taking positive measures to make their operations more energy efficient which has led to a reduction in carbon emissions. Commerce Lexington Inc. supports voluntary energy management programs because they are good for the environment and financially good for business. Commerce Lexington supports incentives for companies that go above and beyond their regulatory requirements and recognizing companies who have already implemented positive best management practices to reduce their energy consumption.




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Water Quality Regulations

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports a process that enhances oversight of the review and approval of changes to new General Permits and other administrative actions that are proposed by state agencies. Commerce Lexington supports the President's Executive Order to rescind and clarify a commonsense approach to developing a Waters of the U.S. rule. It is important to more clearly define how a water will be regulated by the U.S. EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under the Clean Water Act. These designation methods should avoid adverse impact on economic development due to unreasonable regulations and permitting.

Air Quality Rules & Regulations

Commerce Lexington Inc. will engage local and state officials regarding the development of the air quality standards to ensure these regulations are not too restrictive, have the least cost impact on business, and protect Kentucky's low-cost energy rates.

Brownfield Redevelopment

Commerce Lexington Inc. strongly supports the use of Brownfield Redevelopment in communities through available state programs such as Kentucky's Bonafide Purchaser Program which reduces liability for future property owners. These programs should be expanded to allow tax incentives, low interest loans or grants or other federal and state matching funds for those committed to redeveloping the state's Brownfield sites.

Solid Waste

The management of solid waste is a local responsibility and existing law allows local governments the necessary flexibility to develop a solid waste disposal strategy unique to the needs and expectations of their individual communities. Commerce Lexington urges enhanced enforcement and education to address illegal dumping and littering. We support programs such as Eastern Ken-

tucky PRIDE and Bluegrass Greensource that encourage and assist citizens, local governments and schools to clean up illegal trash dumps and other solid waste problems as well as promoting environmental awareness and education. Education remains a critical component in changing the habits and attitudes of individuals across Kentucky. We also support programs that educate Kentuckians on the benefits of recycling, programs that make recycling more convenient, and strategies that develop and enhance market demand for recycled materials. Commerce Lexington believes that this type of multi-faceted strategy will have a more significant, long-term impact in addressing the need for Kentucky to embrace recycling. Some of Kentucky's solid waste statutes are currently more than their federal counterparts. Commerce Lexington supports reasonable, thoughtful reviews and updates to current solid waste rules that will provide consistency and clear direction to the regulated community.

Streamline Environmental Permitting

Implementation of infrastructure projects is critical for community and economic development. Often the public projects are subject to requirements for review of environmental impacts in accordance with the federal National Environmental Policy Act. Although such impacts can and should be considered, the process for evaluation of, and challenges to, infrastructure projects on that basis must be streamlined to assure that important public infrastructure projects are not victims of procedural maneuvering and unnecessary delay.

Commerce Lexington Inc. supports legislative efforts that:

- Encourage concurrent review and approval of permits, where feasible.
- For critical infrastructure or environmental permits, have a lead agency designated to ensure that good communication is established between the applicant and affected agencies. This person would be responsible to ensure that all permits necessary are identified, permit review timeframes are established and met, or the timeframes for permit review are reduced.
- Allow interested applicants to reimburse the department for overtime costs incurred by employees that work overtime to expedite a permit, modification, license, registration or variance.
- Afford Departments within State Government the ability to hire contractors to expedite issuance of a permit modification, license, registration or variance.
- Have each Agency provide on-line specific information regarding how best to achieve timely permitting decisions; provide clear expectations for applicants to improve the quality of applications; establish performance measures for review staff and develop, improve and encourage electronic permitting tools.
- Ensure that the permitting process will be balanced and will take into consideration economic impact of the project, public need and the requirements of existing environmental laws and regulations.

Support Policies That Lower Premiums & Promote Greater Competition

Commerce Lexington Inc. believes that both business owners and employers should have the opportunity to provide and have access to quality, affordable health insurance for themselves and their employees. Federal and state policies have created a great deal of uncertainty for employers and business owners. Commerce Lexington remains concerned that business owners and employers that have previously provided voluntary health insurance coverage for their employees now face mandated levels of health insurance coverage as well as increased taxes, premiums, penalties and a lack of choice in obtaining necessary coverage. Therefore, Commerce Lexington encourages changes to federal and state policies that promote lower premiums and greater competition in insurance markets. Commerce Lexington will continue to provide input to our federal and state policymakers to ensure that employers can provide quality, affordable health insurance coverage to their employees and themselves without being continually overburdened with federal regulations and penalties or be subject to adverse selection by limited choices.

Effectively Combat Substance Abuse

Commerce Lexington Inc. acknowledges the need to address Kentucky's substance abuse problem and will continue to support public policy efforts to curb this epidemic through a comprehensive approach aimed at prevention, treatment and criminal justice reforms. Substance abuse issues are having a negative impact on our workforce, particularly in terms of increased health care costs, loss of workforce productivity and fiscal impact of incarceration. According to the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy, lost productivity, health care costs and drug-related crimes associated with illegal drug abuse cost the Commonwealth between \$2.5 to \$3.6 billion annually. The severity of prescription drug abuse, as well as heroin and other illegal street drugs, continues to be a high priority issue for Commerce Lexington.

We applaud the efforts of the University of Kentucky and other government agencies for their efforts to reduce substance abuse and increase treatment options. In the largest grant ever awarded to the University of Kentucky, researchers from UK's Center on Drug and Alcohol Research (CDAR) in partnership with the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet (JPSC) are leading the HEAL grant, a more than \$87 million study aimed at reducing opioid overdose deaths by 40 percent in 16 counties over a four-year period.

Commerce Lexington Inc. will continue to partner with local, state and federal officials to address the illness of addiction. We urge officials to direct funding for these efforts in an effective and efficient manner using evidence-based approaches. We also support increased accountability over how these funds are being spent and urge increased transparency in outcome reporting.



Increase the Number of Health Care Professionals in Kentucky

Many areas of Kentucky are underserved by health care professionals, which contribute to poor access and higher medical costs for our citizens. Commerce Lexington Inc. encourages lawmakers to initiate programs and funding or support policies that encourage medical professionals to serve all areas of Kentucky and all Kentuckians.

Reduce Tobacco Usage

Kentucky continuously leads the nation in use of tobacco and tobacco related products in adults, among pregnant women and among high school and middle school students. The tobacco related loss of economic productivity is over \$2 billion dollars annually in Kentucky alone. Commerce Lexington fully supports raising Kentucky's cigarette tax on all tobacco and tobacco related products to be more in-line with the national average. CLX supports tax parity on e-cigarettes equal to the tobacco tax rate on traditional cigarettes. Initiatives should be implemented to reduce smoking by Kentucky residents.

Health & Wellness Programs

Commerce Lexington supports legislation that provides tax credits and incentives to employers for creating health and wellness programs for their employees. Kentucky's population consistently ranks near the top of the list among the states for overall poor health indicators. Poor health among Kentuckians is a drain on the state's resources, leading to increased health care costs for employers and employees, as well as leading to increased utilization of health care services. Health and wellness programs offer employers the opportunity to promote preventive health care and educate and encourage healthy lifestyles among their employees. Health and wellness programs may serve as an effective health care cost containment measure and serve to promote personal responsibility among employees for their own health outcomes. Commerce Lexington will continue to support programs and policies that incentivize companies to educate and promote health and wellness for their employees.

Reasonable Liability Reform

Commerce Lexington Inc. will support effective measures to address the escalating costs of health care and medical malpractice insurance for health providers, to lower health care costs, health insurance premiums, and improve access to care. Commerce Lexington supports further reforms such as a constitutional amendment that would permit the Legislature to consider comprehensive tort reform. Current law in Kentucky also allows unlimited damages for noneconomic losses. These damages are awarded based on pain and suffering, emotional distress, and other intangible injuries that occur because of medical malpractice or personal injuries. In addition, there is no cap on amounts a jury can award in punitive damages. Kentucky is the only state in our region that does not have any form of caps on damages. These damages involve no direct economic loss and have no precise value. It is very difficult for juries to assign a dollar value to these losses, given the minimal guidance they customarily receive from the court. As a result, these awards tend to be unpredictable. The specter of a “jackpot” verdict always in the background discourages many providers from locating in Kentucky and represents a barrier to economic development in the region. Kentucky needs this constitutional change in order to modernize our legal liability system and allow for reforms, such as medical review panels.

Monitor Medicaid Expansion

Kentucky expanded Medicaid eligibility by executive order to persons with annual incomes up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level (\$27,310 for a family of three) beginning in January 2014. The federal government will pay 100 percent of the state’s additional cost for the expansion through 2016. However, the state is required to begin paying 5 percent of the costs beginning in 2017, rising in steps each year to 10 percent in 2020. Original projections of the number of Kentuckians who would be eligible for Medicaid under the expansion have proven to be substantially low. Originally, the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services estimated 164,000 additional Kentuckians would be eligible under the Medicaid expansion in FY 2014, and that number would grow to more than 209,000 by 2017 and beyond. Currently, there are more than 443,000 Kentuckians enrolled in Medicaid under the expansion. A quarter of Kentucky’s population is currently served by Medicaid – an unsustainable reality.

The cost of the Medicaid expansion in the recently enacted 2016-2018 state budget is \$74 million in FY 17 and \$173 million in FY 18 for a total of \$247 million over the biennium. These costs are estimated to rise to more than \$500 million in the next biennium. To address these growing costs, the Governor submitted a waiver request to the federal Department of Health and Human Services to allow Kentucky to make several changes to the Medicaid program, including the imposition of monthly premiums and a community service requirement for selected populations. Commerce Lexington supports the intent of the proposed waiver by the Governor to control costs and commends the administration for tackling the challenges of Kentucky’s Medicaid program. Commerce Lexington supports efforts to improve access to healthcare, create a sustainable Medicaid program while protecting critical state investments in education and other vital programs.



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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2020 | 4:00 - 6:00 P.M. | WRIGLEY MEDIA GROUP (804 NEWTOWN CIRCLE, SUITE 120)

Wrigley Media Group's State-of-the-Art Facility Hosts Business Link

When you want your business to look its very best, the team at Wrigley Media Group is there to help businesses and organizations cut through the clutter, using innovative technology to create digital messaging and content that resonates with their target audiences. At the first Business Link networking event of the new year on **Thursday, February 20**, from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m., you'll be able to experience Wrigley Media Group's state-of-the-art facility at 804 Newtown Circle (Suite 120). Don't miss this opportunity to build your client base through networking, while experiencing all that Wrigley Media Group has to offer its clients.

TO REGISTER:

The cost to attend the Business Link event is \$5 for Commerce Lexington members, \$10 for non-members (payable at the door). Members of Lexington Forum can also attend for CLX member rate of \$5 per person. You can also pre-register for Business Link events on-line at www.CommerceLexington.com. If registering online, pick up your beverage ticket at the registration table. **PLEASE NOTE: NO REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN FOR ONLINE REGISTRATIONS.**



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Next Business Link to Highlight American Heart Association

The American Heart Association (AHA) is a leading force for a world of longer, healthier lives. With nearly a century of lifesaving work, AHA is dedicated to ensuring equitable health for all. They are a trustworthy source empowering people to improve their heart health, brain health and well-being. They fund innovative research, advocate for stronger public health policies, and share lifesaving resources and information. Over the past five years, the AHA has invested more than \$9 million dollars to medical research in Kentucky alone, trained thousands in the lifesaving skill of CPR and advocated for smoke free, clean air ordinances in many Kentucky counties and cities. For more information, visit www.heart.org/lexington or call (859) 317-6880.

EXHIBIT SPACE:

Exhibit space is available at this event. Contact Liz Bennett at lbennett@commercelexington.com or reserve online at www.commercelexington.com.

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The 2020 EMERGE Conference presented by Forcht Bank is just around the corner, and you won't want to miss this full-day event that will bring together entrepreneurs, emerging leaders, business professionals, and community members on **Wednesday, March 4**, at the Lexington Convention Center. By unifying Kentucky's emerging leaders, we are empowering our future leaders to participate through networking, collaboration, and opportunities to plug into the community, and a chance for their voice to be heard. This exciting professional development opportunity offers networking, access to community leaders, and education through breakout sessions in professional development, personal growth, and community engagement.



dynamic keynote speakers lined up to motivate and invigorate attendees to action. Sponsored by Lexington Clinic Foundation, **Matt Johnson** will kick off the conference. As the President of On Target Living, Johnson is an internationally recognized expert in expanding human capacity.



Our luncheon keynote sponsored by Stoll Keenon Ogden PLLC will be **Laura Lane**, who is responsible for all worldwide government affairs activities for UPS in the over 220 countries and territories it serves. Part of her interesting career included work in the State Department, leading the evacuation effort of American citizens from Rwanda in April 1994 with the outbreak of the civil war.

The EMERGE planning committee has two days

Find out more about EMERGE and register online at www.EmergeLexington.com.

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Commerce Lexington Inc. is pleased to announce that the **2020 Leadership Visit presented by Central Bank & Trust Co.** will take Central Kentucky leaders to **Austin, Texas, May 11-13, 2020**. Known as the "Live Music Capital of the World," Austin's ability to 'Keep it Weird' has created a culture of innovation and creativity that is prevalent across the region.

As an attractive place to live and work, Austin has been experiencing rapid population growth over the last decade and more recently has been adding about 100 people per day. That growth has created challenges with infrastructure, transportation and traffic congestion, rising housing costs, and a lack of land for development.

While in Austin, we'll take a closer look at the area's innovation ecosystem, the effectiveness of its

regional economic development plan through Opportunity Austin, talent retention and attraction, efforts to identify and engage more emerging leaders, and initiatives that are addressing the disparity and inequity wealth gap between communities.

HOW TO REGISTER:

Registration is open now for the 2020 Leadership Visit to Austin, Texas. For our accommodations, the group will be staying at the phenomenal Four Seasons Hotel Austin, which sits on the banks of Lady Bird Lake just steps from the city's central business and entertainment districts. For registration information, visit on-line at www.commercelexington.com/austin-2020.html.

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CONNECT: WINNER'S CIRCLE



The top individual producers from the 2019 Winner's Circle campaign were recognized during the Victory Luncheon on December 13th.

Winner's Circle Completes 2019 Campaign

The Winner's Circle program closed out a successful 2019 fundraising campaign with a Victory Luncheon on December 13th at the Lexington Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa. Winner's Circle Chair Larry Jones (Community Trust Bank) announced that volunteers had not only surpassed the goal, but also brought in the highest amount in the 17-year history of the program.

The Winner's Circle initiative, which began in August, enlists the help of about 80 volunteers from throughout the community, who seek to bring in new members, renewals and membership upgrades, while informing existing members of services and marketing opportunities available through Commerce Lexington Inc.

The top-producing teams included the Leadership Lexington Alumni team led by captain Tony Bonner (Dinsmore), the University of Kentucky led by Lisa Greer, Uni-

fied Trust Company captained by Abby Vaughn, the Friends of Commerce Lexington team headed by Lisa Parke (ADVERTISING SPECIALTIES...LLC), and Central Bank & Trust Co. led by Mark Ruddell.

For the fifth consecutive year, Abby Vaughn from Unified Trust Company was the top-producing individual. Rounding out the top five individuals were Todd Sallee (Fifth Third Bank), Cheryl Eadens (Bluegrass Office Systems), Mark Ruddell (Central Bank & Trust Co.), and Tyler White (Kentucky Coal Association).

With the largest goal in the program's history, volunteers embraced the theme of "Why Not?" put forth by Winner's Circle Chair Larry Jones, and it took them all the way to the finish line.

Watch for a more complete recap of the Winner's Circle program in the February issue of Business Focus magazine!

Leadership Central KY Studies Franklin County

Excerpts of Recap by Mitchell Pearson, Executive Director, Visit Jessamine

Leadership Central Kentucky (LCK) explored Franklin County on Nov. 20, 2019. The day began with an ice breaker session with LCK board members at the Kentucky Chamber. Afterwards, the class spent time discussing the book, "One Minute Manager Meets the Monkey" and held a recap with Dr. Virgil Grant. Ashley McCarty, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, discussed the opioid epidemic in Kentucky and how employers are adapting to deal with the crisis and its effects on the workforce.

The class then toured the Stewart Home & School, which was founded in 1893. Our group met with Director Sandra Ball for an overview and brief history of the organization before touring the campus. While on campus, the class was constantly met with smiling faces, inquisitive eagerness and hospitality from the students.

Class members had lunch at the Capitol Plaza and met with Kelly Everman of Downtown Frankfort. Everman spoke about development in downtown Frankfort, exhibiting her passion for the community. Later, the class visited Buffalo Trace Distillery to learn about Kentucky's Bourbon industry, and Goodwood Brewery in downtown Frankfort.

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EXCERPTS OF RECAP BY CLARE MAGEE, HENRY CLAY CENTER FOR STATESMANSHIP AT TRANSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY

Leadership Lexington Gets Inside Look at Lexington Local Government

The Leadership Lexington Youth class took part in Government and Public Safety Day on December 4. Lexington Councilmember Amanda Mays Bledsoe opened the day with a budget presentation and overview of the Urban County Council, followed by a mock council session where class members experienced firsthand the intricacies of passing an ordinance or resolution. Several Councilmembers then spent time in small groups answering questions about current legislation, district challenges, and the complicated process of paving city roads.

Next, the class traveled to the courthouse to hear from Judges Bunnell, Goodwine, Thurston, and Messer. This powerhouse panel of judges contextualized the judiciary process at the district, circuit, and appellate levels, providing class members with unique insights into their personal journeys as public

servants. Following class project reports, the group toured Lexington's Material Recovery Facility (LEX-MRF) and discovered what happens to the materials deposited in blue recycling bins across the city.

The class then visited the Town Branch Wastewater Treatment Plant to witness the process of cleaning water from the sewer and storm drainage systems. LEX-MRF and Town Branch staff did an outstanding job explaining the economics of their fields and opportunities for innovation.

The group finished the day with presentations from Parks and Recreation at McConnell Springs and Lexington Social Services at the Senior Center. The class was impressed by the widespread services provided by each of these departments, from therapeutic recreation at Masterson Station Park to advanced ceramics and watercolor at the Senior Center.

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(Photo by Mark Mahan, Mahan Multimedia).



AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT

Commerce Lexington Recognizes Its Top Ambassadors for 2019

Commerce Lexington Inc. would like to recognize its top Ambassadors for 2019. Members of the Ambassador Committee serve as the organization's liaison between the CLX staff and the members. They assist at ribbon cuttings and grand openings, and help educate members about the benefits of membership through Commerce Lexington Inc. One of these individuals will be named the Ambassador of the Year at the Commerce Lexington Inc. Annual Dinner presented by Fifth Third Bank on **Thursday, January 30**, at Lexington Center. **More event details and registration information appear on Page 7 of this issue.**



A native of Morehead, **Greg Brown** manages the Lexington office of C-Foward, a rapidly-growing IT company. He also handles marketing, business development, and security training for clients.



Originally from Bardstow, **Crystal Newton** began working for Bates Security in 2010 and now manages the marketing and business development of the company's seven brands.

Cheryl Eadens joined Bluegrass Office Systems in 2016. Locally-owned and operated since 1981, BOS sells Canon multi-functional devices, such as copiers, printers, scanners, etc.



A Florence, Ky., native, **Brooke Wheatley** works as an account executive for WLEX-TV, where she started in 2010. She was attracted to the media industry's fast-paced environment.



Read More About Our Ambassadors at www.CommerceLexington.com > Connect > Volunteer Opportunities



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3071 Lyndale Ct., Edgewood, KY 41017
Phone: (859) 380-0122
http://agent.sibcycleline.com/lSanders

Main Street Homes, Inc.

Real Estate
3909 Branham Park, Lexington, KY 40515
Phone: (859) 983-2003
www.RentLex.com

Marrillia Design and Construction

Construction
794 Manchester St.
Lexington, KY 40508
Phone: (859) 685-0414
http://marrillia.com

Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED)

Non-Profit Organizations
433 Chestnut St., Berea, KY 40403
Phone: (859) 986-2373
www.maced.org

Peck Opticians

Opticians
715 Shaker Drive, Ste. 113
Lexington, KY 40504
Phone: (859) 276-2573
www.peckopticians.com

Peoples Bank

Banks
107 W. Main St., Lebanon, KY 40033
Phone: (270) 692-6405
www.pboflebanon.com

Precision Tube, Inc.

Manufacturers
1025 Fortune Dr., Richmond, KY 40475
Phone: (859) 623-5595
http://precisiontube.com

Saunders Oculoplastic Surgery, PSC

Physicians & Surgeons, Ophthalmology
Doctors Park, 1517 Nicholasville Rd., #101, Lexington, KY 40503
Phone: (859) 277-4403
www.justinsaundersmd.com

New Trustee Member

The Signature Club of Lansdowne Clubs

3256 Lansdowne Drive
Lexington, KY 40502
Phone: (859) 277-6600
www.signatureclub.org

Simply Clean Carpet Care

Cleaning Services Commercial & Residential
4409 Rolling Creek Circle
Lexington, KY 40515
Phone: (859) 321-2070

New Trustee Member

Studio46 Media

Marketing Consultants/Services
657 Blue Sky Pkwy., Lexington, KY 40509
Phone: (859) 263-5148
www.studio46media.com

The Peoples Bank

Insurance
23 W. Main St., Taylorsville, KY 40071
Phone: (502) 477-2240
www.tpbtaylorsville.com

Troutman & Napier, PLLC

Attorneys
1910 Harrodsburg Road, Suite 202
Lexington, KY 40503
Phone: (859) 253-0991
www.troutmamnapiet.com

WTVQ

Television Stations
6940 Man O' War Boulevard
Lexington, KY 40509
Phone: (859) 294-6074
www.wtvq.com

MEMBER PERSONNEL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bank of the Bluegrass & Trust Co. announced that **Katie Hicks** has joined its Loan Operations Department and **Corey Zacher** is the new Assistant Financial Center Manager at the East High Street location.

Dickinson Wright PLLC announced that three of the firm's attorneys in the Lexington office have been named to 2020 Kentucky Super Lawyers, including **Brian M. Johnson**, **David A. Owen**, and **Henry C.T. Richmond, III**, while two attorneys have been named to 2020 Kentucky Super Lawyers Rising Stars, including **Logan J. Mayfield** and **Emma Wolfe**. Super Lawyers is a listing of outstanding attorneys from more than 70 practice areas who have attained a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement.

Dinsmore and Shohl LLP was recognized as a top performer at this year's Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD) annual meeting in Washington, D.C. The designation is reserved for LCLD members and law firms most active in the council's programs and that most align with and promote its mission of "creating a truly diverse U.S. legal profession." This is the third time in five years that the firm has received this honor.

Dinsmore and Shohl LLP recently earned top honors in the 2020 edition of *U.S. News – Best Lawyers*' "Best Law Firms" rankings, including Tier 1 national listings in Mass Tort Litigation/Class Actions – Defendants, Mining Law, and Public Finance Law. The firm also received 118 Tier 1 Metropolitan listings, including 19 practice areas in its Lexington office.

Fowler Bell PLLC announced that the 2020 *Super Lawyers* list includes attorneys **Guy R. Colson**, **John E. Hinkel, Jr.**, **Susan S. Kennedy**, and **Taft A. McKinstry**. Super Lawyers is a rating service of outstanding lawyers from more than 70 practice areas who have attained a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement.

LexArts announced the election of seven new members to its board of directors: **Lauren Case**,

Fayette County Public Schools; **Colin Doherty**, Hook Interactive; **Ken Gish**, K&L Gates; **Emmy Hartley**, Team Cornett; **Jill Hall Rose**, Rose Law Office and Don Hall GM Supercenter; **Chad Rudzik**, Fifth Third Bank; **Camden Skidmore**, Republic Bank; **Robin Thomerson**, Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP; and **Yajaira Aich West**, PNC Bank.

Lexington Public Library welcomed **Paige Halpin Smith** as development manager, where she will provide advocacy, private funding, and strategic partnerships through the Lexington Public Library Foundation to enhance the public library system.

McBrayer PLLC has earned a spot on the list of the nation's top law firms by *U.S. News-Best Lawyers in America* in their "Best Law Firm's" publication. The Lexington office was given Tier 1 recognition in the areas of Administrative/Regulatory Law, Commercial Litigation, Criminal Defense: White-Collar, Health Care Law, Land Use & Zoning Law, Litigation – Real Estate, Litigation – Trusts & Estates, and Real Estate Law.

Midway University recently announced the addition of four new trustees to its board of directors, including **Dr. Ardis Hoven** (UK College of Medicine), **Billy Van Pelt** (American Farmland Trust), **Ieasha Allen** (Lexmark), and **Dr. J.J. Housley** (UK Healthcare).

NAI Isaac Commercial Properties welcomed **Josh Cox** as the newest member of its facilities services department.

Sayre Christian Village announced several staff promotions, including **Ann Reed**, LNHA to vice president of healthcare services, **Joe Drumm** to vice president of residential services and facility operations, and **Elise Hinchman** to vice president of marketing and development.

The American Bar Association (ABA) Health Law Section recently ranked **Stites & Harbison, PLLC** in seventh place in its 2019 Regional Law Firm Recognition List for the South Region. This year marks the firm's sixth consecutive time being

named to the Top 10 list. The Health Law Section is the voice of the national health law bar within the ABA.

U.S. News & World Report and *Best Lawyers* recently recognized **Stites & Harbison, PLLC** with three Tier 1 national rankings in the areas of Litigation – Construction, Litigation – Real Estate, and Trademark Law. The firm was recognized with 82 Metropolitan rankings in seven regions, representing 46 legal practice areas. Law firms were evaluated and ranked through a combination of hard data, peer reviews and client assessments.

Windstream Communications has been awarded a platinum 2019 HIRE Vets Medallion Program Award by the U.S. Department of Labor. The award recognizes job creators for their leadership in recruiting, employing and retaining military veterans. During last year's demonstration program, Windstream received a gold award. The platinum award is the program's highest level of recognition.

Recent appointments to the **Women Leading Kentucky** board of directors include **Phyllis Alcorn**, Women's Business Center; **Emily Cowles**, McBrayer Law Firm; **Mary Kate Gray**, LG&E and KU; **Hannah Sloan**, UK Federal Credit Union; and **Tukea Talbert**, UK Healthcare.

Wyatt, Tarrant and Combs LLP announced that one of its partners, **Kevin Johns**, was elected as a "Fellow" of The American College Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC), an international nonprofit association of lawyers and law professors who are skilled in the preparation of wills and trusts; estate planning; probate procedure and administration of trusts and estates.

SUBMIT PERSONNEL NEWS:

Submit your company's awards, personnel changes, additions, or promotions for *Business Focus* to mturner@Commercelexington.com. Information is published in the order received @ as space permits.



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COMMERCE LEXINGTON: UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 2020:

- 8** Leadership Lexington Youth Program presented by UK HealthCare: Arts Day Session.
- 9** Leadership Lexington presented by McBrayer, PLLC: Health & Human Services Day Session.
- 14** @330 Series presented by Distillery Heights, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m., at CLX first floor conference room. - **SEE PAGE 6**
- 15** Leadership Central Kentucky presented by LG&E and KU at Fayette County.
- 16** New Member Luncheon presented by Melia Realty Group, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., at CLX first floor conference room.
- 16** Imperial Russia international trip Informational Meeting, 5:30 p.m., at CLX first floor conference room. - **SEE PAGE 7**
- 30** Annual Dinner presented by Fifth Third Bank, 5:00 - 8:30 p.m., at Lexington Center. - **SEE PAGE 7**

FEBRUARY 2020:

- 5** Leadership Lexington Youth Program presented by UK HealthCare: Ambassadors for Change Day Session.
- 12** Economic Outlook Conference, 8:00 a.m. - noon, at Lexington Center. <http://gatton.uky.edu/economic-outlook>
- 13** Leadership Lexington presented by McBrayer, PLLC: Arts Day Session.
- 19** Leadership Central Kentucky presented by LG&E and KU at Madison County.
- 20** Business Link sponsored & hosted by Wrigley Media Group (804 Newtown Circle, Suite 120), 4 - 6 p.m. - **SEE PAGE 29**

MARCH 2020:

- 4** EMERGE Conference presented by Forcht Bank, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., at Lexington Center. - **SEE PAGE 30**