



Bluegrass Region's

2020

FEDERAL



PRIORITIES

Central Kentucky Public Policy Group

For more than a decade, the Central Kentucky Policy Group has served as a regional voice for state and federal public policy issues that advance economic development and job creation. The group consists of influential business and community leaders from various sectors within eight counties in Central Kentucky. The group's policy priorities for business growth in the region include support for open trade policies with markets abroad, infrastructure investments, health care reforms to reduce costs and increase transparency, and critical investments in infrastructure. We also support federal research funding, protecting Kentucky's energy economy, and regulatory and tax reforms to help Central Kentucky's business. We continue to urge attention to workforce issues like the opioid epidemic, immigration policies, and reauthorizing the higher education act so students can access financial assistance opportunities.

COUNTIES

**BOURBON
CLARK
FAYETTE
FRANKLIN
JESSAMINE
MADISON
SCOTT
WOODFORD**

Rusty Ashcraft
North Star Strategies, LLC

Kevin Atkins
City of Lexington

Bob Babbage
Babbage CoFounder

Cindy Banks
Winchester-Clark County Chamber of Commerce

Lynda Bebrowsky
Commerce Lexington Inc.

Stephanie Bell
Windstream Communications

Lauren Biddle
Paris-Bourbon Co. Chamber of Commerce

Terri Bradshaw
Kentucky Capital Development

Ann Bridges
East Kentucky Power Cooperative

Mayor Ed Burtner
City of Winchester

Colleen Chaney
Madison County Deputy Judge

Steve Collins
Bluegrass Station

Jack Conner
Georgetown-Scott Co. Chamber

John Cooper
Capital Link Consultants

Joe Pat Covington
Scott County Judge-Executive

Todd Denham
Winchester-Clark Co. Industrial Authority

Emily Downey
Woodford County Chamber of Commerce

William Downey
RJ Corman Railroad Group

Bruce Fraley
Mayor of Berea

David Freibert
Kentucky Utilities Co.

Mendi Goble
Richmond Chamber of Commerce

Gina Greathouse
Commerce Lexington Inc. Economic Development

Ellen Gregory
Midway University

Carmen Inman
Frankfort Area Chamber of Commerce

Pam Jenkins
Kentucky Blood Center

Rachelle Johnson
Kentucky State University

Todd Johnson
Building Industry Association of Central Kentucky

Daron Jordan
City of Paris

Eric King
University of Kentucky

Christel Long
Lexington-Bluegrass Association of Realtors

Bernie Lovely
Gess Mattingly & Atchison, P.S.C.

Mark Manuel
Bluegrass Community and Technical College

Ronda May
Jessamine County Chamber of Commerce

Barry Mayfield,
Kentucky Electric Cooperatives

Kim Menke
Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky, Inc.

Chauncey Morris
Kentucky Thoroughbred Association

Brian Perry
Kentucky Community & Technical College System

Louis Prichard
Kentucky Bank

Linda Rumpke
Columbia Gas of Kentucky

Bob Quick
Commerce Lexington Inc.

Bill Quigg
More Than A Bakery

Felicia Quigg
More Than A Bakery

Mary Quinn Ramer
VisitLEX

Sandy Romenesko
Mt. Sterling Chamber of Commerce

Scott Smith
Smith Management Group, Inc.

Hollie Spade
AT&T of Kentucky

Steve Stevens
Kentucky Realtors Association

David Stipes
Richmond Industrial Development Corp.

Mayor Brian Traugott
City of Versailles

George Ward
UK Coldstream Research Campus

Tyler White
Kentucky Coal Association

Ethan Witt
Eastern Kentucky University

Mike Williams
Bourbon County Judge Executive

Gordon Wilson
Paris-Bourbon Co. Economic Development



TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS

Central Kentucky's location offers the region a logistical competitive advantage when recruiting businesses. The Central Kentucky Policy Group urges the Kentucky federal delegation to support reauthorization bills that continue **long-term funding solutions to strengthen all transportation systems** and additional investment packages in other critical infrastructure for economic development, public safety and workforce development.

ROADWAYS: The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports increasing federal funding for critical regional infrastructure projects that improve connectivity for local communities, such as the DOT BUILD GRANT



We also support policies that ensure timelines are maintained for the completion of environmental impact studies and the inclusion of funding for necessitated utility infrastructure costs required by public improvement projects. Without inclusion of such funding, local utility customers would disproportionately bear costs associated with public improvement projects benefitting the public at large.

AIRPORTS: The Central Kentucky Policy Group strongly supports passage of the annual Appropriations bills and/or COVID-19 relief bills to ensure on-going, stable funding for commercial service airport (Blue Grass Airport) and the three general aviation airports vital to the local economy. Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding bills are desperately needed to continue development of the aviation infrastructure needed to support the growth of the region and should be modified during the COVID-19 pandemic to allow greater flexibility regarding how those grants funds can be used, as well as eliminating the local match requirement.



RAIL: The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports the BRACE Act (H.R. 510 and S. 203) and making the Short Line Rehabilitation Tax Credit (45G) permanent. The credit incentivizes railroads to increase their investments, rehabilitate their track, and expand capacity, which ultimately allows short lines to safely and efficiently serve their customers. **[CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE]**





BROADBAND ACCESS:

A free and open Internet has become a platform for innovation and economic activity unmatched in history. The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports creating incentives for investment in broadband networks throughout the region as this infrastructure is critical to economic development. The COVID-19 crisis has made clear that vibrant economic ecosystems need sufficient broadband connectivity to allow Kentuckians to work and study from home. Kentucky's citizens rely on the internet to both connect with the outside world but also to access vital news resources and stay up to date on developments in their communities. This trend will only accelerate in the future, and more support is needed for the deployment of robust broadband access in unserved areas, particularly in rural areas where the costs of broadband deployment are particularly high. This requires consideration of creative solutions that will provide access for all. For example, a modernization of the FCC's Lifeline program might allow for the distribution of broadband benefit cards to eligible households so they can secure benefits from certified communications providers as easily as they use SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits.

FUND BROADBAND ACCESS IN RURAL AREAS: FCC and USDA programs like the Connect America Fund, the upcoming Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction, and the ReConnect Loan and Grant Program have provided opportunities for rural broadband providers to seek additional support in the areas they serve (or seek to serve). However, the funding amounts pale in comparison to the task at hand in order to serve unserved rural areas of the country. Various studies have estimated that it will cost approximately \$80-\$100 billion to connect every home and business in America with fiber. Moreover, existing government programs need to be reevaluated to determine whether they discourage (e.g., through regulatory requirements like the ETC designation) certain well-positioned broadband providers

from participating in government funding programs. Congress must step up to the task now and make this investment in our future to get broadband into the hands of those who need it, particularly rural Kentuckians. There are many bills that would address these issues, on both sides of the aisle. One of those, the **Broadband DATA Act**, passed by Congress in March 2020, will create more accurate broadband maps and direct resources to communities most in need – especially in rural areas.

PASS A FEDERAL NET NEUTRALITY LAW: The Central Kentucky Policy Group also supports thoughtful policies that reflect the needs of the modern marketplace and encourages connectivity, transparency, privacy, and accessibility. The “ping-pong” net neutrality debate at the FCC and in the courts has created a policy void that only Congress can fill. The Policy Group believes that Congress should be able to strike an appropriate balance with a law that balances the needs of consumers to obtain the content of their choice online, while avoiding heavy-handed regulation of the broadband providers that would discourage innovation and investment. The new proliferation of state-level net neutrality laws continues, and Congress must step up to avoid a patchwork policy approach that ultimately harms businesses and consumers.

PROTECT PRIVACY ACROSS THE INTERNET ECOSYSTEM: Consumers deserve to know that no matter where they go online, they will have the same protections. Varying policies from state to state lead to inconsistent safeguards that foster confusion and erode consumer confidence in their interactions online. The Central Kentucky Policy Group urges Congress to pass a uniform law that provides privacy and data security protections and applies the same standard to all companies, whether internet service or edge providers, across the internet ecosystem.

Signature Industries

BOURBON:

Kentucky Bourbon is one of the Commonwealth's most treasured signature industries, a booming \$8.6 billion economic engine that generates more than 20,100 jobs with an annual payroll topping \$1 billion. Kentucky distilleries produce 95-percent of the world's supply. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and retaliatory tariffs on American whiskey, Kentucky distilleries were in the middle of a \$2.3 billion capital expansion phase to meet the growing global thirst for our signature spirit. Despite this success, distilled spirits remain the highest taxed industry in the state, and Kentucky is the only place in the world that taxes aging barrels of spirits. Kentucky still produces about 95% of the world's Bourbon, but that historic dominance is now in jeopardy with more than 3,500 distilling operations in all 50 states – most of which have significantly lower tax burdens than Kentucky.



Like many other industries, the drastic effects of the ongoing pandemic have yet to be fully realized by our homegrown Bourbon industry. We do know, however, that as a uniquely American product, Bourbon and distilled spirits are currently feeling the negative effects of the ongoing trade wars, with exports down to major markets like the EU. This extended trade war is also harming Kentucky's farm families, cooperages, glass and other suppliers, hospitality and tourism partners, and ultimately, consumers through higher prices and limited availability.

The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports ensuring that the Federal Excise Tax (FET) reform, which was a part of Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (TCJA), and extended in 2019, be made permanent. The FET has been monumental in helping bourbon businesses expand and grow. Now, with the blow issued by COVID-19, the FET reform extension is more crucial than ever and will certainly have the reverse effect if allowed to expire this year. The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports policies that will alleviate unfair tax and trade issues and increase the competitiveness of the Bourbon industry in the U.S. and the global marketplace.

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 Central Kentucky the title of Horse Capital of the World. The American Horse Council's 2017 Economic Impact Study of the U.S. Horse Industry calculated that the industry had a \$5.9 billion economic impact on Kentucky and generated 60,000 jobs. Because of the substantial economic impact that the equine industry has on our region as well as the state, the Central Kentucky Policy Group supports initiatives to protect and enhance the future growth of the equine industry. This includes the **Market Access Program** that enables 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 the safe import and direct export of horses; and **immigration reform** to meet workforce needs in agriculture industries. The Central Kentucky Policy Group also supports national uniformity in laboratory standards, testing requirements and penalties for Thoroughbred racing, accomplished via federal legislation or alternative means.



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Signature Industries

TOURISM:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports extending the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) through the remainder of the year and allowing small businesses and 501(c)(3) nonprofits who have already received a PPP loan to apply for a second loan. This support also includes expanding eligibility for the PPP to all destination marketing organizations (DMO), including any 501(c) nonprofit, quasi-governmental organization and provide federal grants to DMOs to promote safe and healthy travel practices. We also support additional efforts to assist restaurants and hoteliers, including enacting H.R. 7809, the HOPE Act, co-sponsored by Congressman Barr and providing borrowers of commercial mortgages, who have been hit the hardest economically by COVID-19, financial assistance through the HOPE Preferred Equity lending facility.

INDUSTRIAL HEMP PRODUCTION:

Thanks in large part to 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 by farmers and businesses. The Central Kentucky Policy Group 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 Food and Drug Administration.

Health Care

LIABILITY & WORKFORCE:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports liability reforms to protect Kentucky's health care sector and resources to support workers on the frontlines of battling the COVID-19 pandemic, including the provisions in the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act (S. 3599) to make changes to worker visa program to help ensure hospitals have proper staffing to address the health crisis and beyond. To be better prepared for future pandemics, we support investments in public health that promote research and development, provide planning protocols for local communities, ensure adequate supplies of PPE, and strengthen the overall health care infrastructure.

INSURANCE COSTS:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group continues to be concerned about the cost of health insurance for employers and employees and support policy changes that control costs, advance quality of care, provide flexibility, promote greater transparency and improve health outcomes.



DRUG EPIDEMIC:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports efforts to curb the drug epidemic through prevention, treatment and criminal justice reforms. We support improved collaboration among local, state and federal elected officials; public health officials; law enforcement; health-care providers; and employers to ensure resources are available and being effectively used to combat the illness of addiction.



Photo from www.lge-ku.com

LOW COST ENERGY ADVANTAGE:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group recognizes that low-cost, reliable energy provides a critical operating advantage for job creation in an increasingly competitive global economy. Kentucky offers some of the lowest electricity rates in the nation due in large part to the abundance of coal, natural gas and two regional transmission organizations as resources for electricity generation. Further, the group opposes government energy mandates at local, state or federal level that destroys Kentucky's low-cost, reliable energy advantage.

This competitive advantage has allowed Kentucky to retain and attract thousands of manufacturing jobs and attract dozens of energy-intensive industries like steel, aluminum, automotive, aviation and aerospace that employ tens of thousands of Kentuckians. Central Kentucky businesses and economic developers remain concerned about proposed regulations on carbon emissions, electricity generating facilities that use coal, and new regulations on Kentucky's mining industry.

The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports the U.S. EPA's Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) Rule, which will help Kentucky protect its low electricity rates, and the revised definition of Waters of the United States (WOTUS), which provides much needed clarity to businesses. We also urge state and federal officials to monitor, clarify definitions and ensure compliance flexibility including Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR), New Source Review (NSR), Clean Water Act Effluent Limitation Guidelines (ELG), and natural gas pipeline safety.

- **SUPPORT KENTUCKY'S COAL INDUSTRY:** Support coal remaining an integral part of our country's energy portfolio and ensure a level playing field for

all low-cost fuel sources to secure low-cost electricity rates. Coal provides 73-percent of Kentucky's electricity, which helps make Central Kentucky's energy rates some of the most economical, reliable and resilient in the U.S.

- **MINERAL RECOVERY:** Encourage the recovery of rare earth, critical minerals, and advanced carbon fiber from the state's coal reserves to protect national security.
- **SUPPORT NATURAL GAS:** Encourage the investment in production and use of other reliable energy fuels like natural gas and support for flexibility in compliance with safety regulations. Kentucky's oil and natural gas industry total value of production is over \$1 billion and employs over 9,000 Kentuckians.
- **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.
- **SUPPORT RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENTS:** Support research, development and utilization of new technologies for a cleaner energy strategy for continued reductions in carbon and greenhouse gas emissions while limiting unreasonable adverse impacts on the coal and gas industries.
- **SUPPORT 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.

Higher Education

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION:

In support of our public higher education partners, the Central Kentucky Policy Group continues to support reforms to the Higher Education Act to improve student access to educational opportunities and create an education system that has the flexibility to be innovative and responsive to employers. We support maintaining the federal student loan programs that Kentucky college students rely on, help with education and training for workers dislocated by the pandemic, simplifying and enhancing financial aid programs, and ensuring accurate measurements of student success and reducing regulatory burdens.

THESE REFORMS INCLUDE:

- Improving college access and affordability for all students.
- Improving accountability measurements and transparency over financial aid and student loan programs.
- Fully funding and modernizing Pell to better serve today's non-traditional, low-income students and incentivize completion, including incarcerated students.
- Promoting innovation in the system, including federal legislation that allows college flexibility to pursue more competency-based education opportunities for students.

KENTUCKY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE:

The 16 Colleges of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) quickly responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, turning to remote instruction to complete the spring and summer terms. Now, as the Commonwealth's largest provider of postsecondary education serving a state with high unemployment numbers, the 16 Colleges of KCTCS are on the front lines addressing workforce concerns. KCTCS Colleges help expedite a return to employment through career development and provide access to training and up-skilling. To ensure student and community safety as the summer and fall terms commenced, the Healthy at KCTCS Plan was developed with a focus on student academic and college success in a healthy and safe environment. All 16 Colleges are now offering on-campus and virtual classes and services and are offering multiple learning options for students to provide flexibility--with most of our offerings online or in a combination of classroom/lab and online work. KCTCS Colleges have listened to workforce partners and ramped up short-term training solutions to meet the workforce needs especially of the logistics/transportation, utilities, manufacturing and healthcare sectors. This is critical toward jump-starting Kentucky's economy.

The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports KCTCS in its efforts to urge passage of the Health, Economic Assistance, Liability Protection and Schools (HEALS) Act. For KCTCS, this critical legislation supports loss of funding from enrollment challenges as students work through child- and elder-care, unemployment, and health concerns. Additionally, considering the inclusion of a headcount-based formula for distributing any higher education funds in the next COVID-19 stimulus bill may be helpful. Community colleges benefit greatly from a headcount formula versus one based on Full Time Equivalency, because it reflects the reality of the student population served, which the State's Legislative Review Commission has noted differs significantly from the public universities.

KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY:

KSU also supports additional funding relief and liability protections for higher education related to COVID-19 being considered by Congress. Additionally, The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 authorized discretionary funding for the Strengthening of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) – Title III, an effort to close the achievement gap of minority and low-income student populations. Continued federal investments for HBCU's are vital in assisting institutions as they infuse the use of technology throughout the curriculum, develop instructional pedagogy and renovate historic infrastructure. We support increased federal funding for HBCUs to strengthen the capacity at Kentucky State University, the Commonwealth's public HBCU.



Higher Education

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY:

UK's principles of ensuring student success and protecting the health and well-being of its students, staff and faculty anchor the decisions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. UK is proud of the exceptional response by members of its campus, many of whom are working tirelessly at the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis. UK is committed to responding with a collective commitment to reinvent itself fortified by the university's vital missions of education, research, service and care. As UK HealthCare, UK Research, UK Athletics and other areas return to safe and reinvented normal operations, challenges remain. UK is contending with more than a \$70 million shortfall in Undesignated General Funds, which represents the gap between revenues we previously anticipated and the expenditures required to advance missions.

The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports UK in its efforts to secure higher education funding and the supplemental research relief funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) contained in the Health, Economic Assistance, Liability Protection and Schools (HEALS) Act and encourage Congress to work together to pass this critical legislation as universities rise to meet new challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.



EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY:

EKU's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been, and continues to be, rooted in the well-being of all members of our community. Primary goals and objectives include protecting public health and continuing to advance the missions of education and research. A collective plan was developed and implemented to ensure on-campus instruction could resume while prioritizing the health of ECU students, faculty and staff. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided vital funds to help fill a substantial budget shortfall as on-campus instruction came to a halt in the spring. Through the CARES Act, ECU obtained \$5,271,384 in funding that flowed directly to students to assist in offsetting expenses incurred as a result of COVID-19. As the Commonwealth of Kentucky faces a significant projected budget shortfall for the current fiscal year due to COVID-19, we support additional federal measures to help navigate through the pandemic.



The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports ECU in advocacy for the proposed higher education funding provisions in the Health, Economic Assistance, Liability Protection and Schools (HEALS) Act and urges its passage. ECU supports funding flowing directly to institutions, and the inclusion of liability protections related to COVID-19. This assistance would help ECU throughout the pandemic to continue in its mission as a school of opportunity, preparing students to contribute to the success and vitality of their communities, the Commonwealth and the world.

As the operator of Model Lab School, the Commonwealth's only laboratory school serving nearly 700 K-12 students, ECU requests inclusion of public laboratory schools in the K-12 provisions of the HEALS Act, ensuring the funding eligibility for public laboratory schools is the same as that of other public school districts.

Military



BLUEGRASS STATION:

Bluegrass Station continues to keep pace with the needs of its customers, including defense agencies, state agencies and their contractors. As a defense-industry centric facility and as an economic engine belonging to the Commonwealth, Bluegrass Station needs this city/state/federal interagency cooperation in finding solutions for future needs. The successful repurpose of restricted acreage to Homeland Security and the subsequent addition of six buildings resulted from an interagency team approach. These successes have set the stage for more growth, requiring intermodal infrastructure improvements. Bluegrass Station seeks to use the best balance of state, local, federal and private resources to benefit its customers and the citizens of Kentucky.

BLUEGRASS ARMY DEPOT:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group urges the Kentucky federal delegation to remain aware of the need to work with the Department of Defense in efforts to strategically plan for the sustained economic development of Blue Grass Army Depot and the surrounding region after the chemical demilitarization project is complete in 2023. Strict regulations within OEA prohibit financial assistance until the demil project is three years or less from mission completion. At the height of the project, the estimated payroll is approximately \$185.01 million in 2022 with a total of 1,773 employees. We ask for continued assistance from the Kentucky federal delegation to help community leaders maintain effective communication with Department of Defense officials about investment opportunities.

Regulations

FEDERAL REGULATORY REFORM:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group strongly supports commonsense regulatory reform that restores accountability, transparency and public participation in the rule-making process across all federal agencies. We support the development of regulations that are stakeholder driven and based on scientific evidence, technical viability and economic rationality. We urge Congress and the Administration to engage in a thorough review of existing regulations MOU's, MOA's and guidance documents across all agencies, specifically those involved in regulating commerce, to identify policies that need to be clarified, eliminated or modified to increase economic competitiveness for businesses.

We continue to oppose federal regulations that are unreasonable and result in a significant adverse

economic impact on our citizens, farmers, cities and industries. We support the Administration's efforts to establish decision-making timeframes for environmental assessments for federally funded projects such as transportation and infrastructure. Members of Congress may need to consider legislative changes to support this effort.

STATE FLEXIBILITY:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group appreciates the U.S. EPA's efforts to provide states with more flexibility in managing their environmental programs. We encourage the EPA to continue these efforts and search for more creative ways that EPA and states can collaborate on regulatory and enforcement issues.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports open trade policies with promising markets abroad and removing barriers that shut U.S. exports out of foreign markets. We remain concerned about trade and tariff policies that have a negative impact on Central Kentucky's industries, including agriculture, advanced manufacturing and bourbon. These impacts include supply chain disruptions, increased costs for parts, equipment and other supplies, and competitive disadvantages in the marketplace due to increased manufacturing costs.

IMMIGRATION REFORM:

The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports comprehensive immigration reform that modernizes the guest worker visa program to address needs of all Kentucky workplaces. This includes policy changes important to the agriculture and equine industry, including renewing the Returning Worker Exemption and raising the limit for the H2B visa program.



Workforce

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PROGRAMS:

The Federal Workforce Investment Program is a critical component to providing a highly skilled and educated workforce for businesses in Central Kentucky. Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) has been a positive step forward. The Central Kentucky Policy Group supports continued investments and policy reforms that align and improve existing workforce programs at the state level, and to support local and regional sector partnerships with employers to meet the workforce needs of a 21st Century economy. Especially given the impact on of the COVID-19 crisis on the local economy, the Central Kentucky Policy Group urges Congress to provide for workforce development efforts aimed at immediately engaging dislocated workers with skills training and job placement opportunities in high demand sectors, and overhauling incumbent worker programs to help businesses train workers, avert layoffs and encourage upskilling. We continue to support the Work Ready Community, Sector Strategies, High Impact Workforce Investment Boards and Unified Business Services work at the state and local level. Federal leadership is vital in policy guidance to states and local communities among U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, Health and Human Service, Commerce and USDA around education and training programs, including partnership expectations, common definitions, performance metrics, etc. It is also important to continue to strengthen accountability, integration and collaboration among all partners engaged in workforce development.

Recent Accomplishments for Central Kentucky

Initial Funding for Feasibility Study for I-75 Connector

Funding for Kentucky Blood Center in Eastern Kentucky
to meet needs for expanding healthcare providers

Funding for Bluegrass Army Depot

Funding for Newtown Pike Extension

Reauthorization of SBIR-STTR federal grant programs to help
high-tech and start-up businesses grow in Central Kentucky

Funding for Eastern Kentucky University's
Cellulosic Derived Bio-Fuels Program

Long-term transportation funding including FAST Act

Federal R&D grant funding for the University of Kentucky,
including 21st Century Cures Act

Federal Tax Reform: Tax Cuts and Jobs Act

Financial Services Reform:
Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act

