

## ROAD TO RECOVERY

*LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES  
TO RESTART KENTUCKY  
IN 2021*

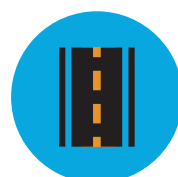
## BOLD STEPS FORWARD

The Kentucky Chamber's 2021 Legislative Priorities outline the bold steps needed to move Kentucky forward to recover from the coronavirus pandemic and become more competitive, prosperous, and business-friendly. The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly disrupted the economic growth trends in the Commonwealth and has left businesses to face great uncertainty. Now more than ever, Kentucky needs an aggressive, pro-growth policy approach to quickly recover from the unexpected set back.

These priorities were determined by our members through survey, research and discussion, and were ultimately approved by our seven policy councils and Board of Directors. These priorities serve as the agenda for our Public Affairs team as they advocate on behalf of our membership during the 2021 session of the Kentucky General Assembly.

### INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure investment is critical for continued economic growth. Increase funding for transportation systems and broadband deployment and support efficient, voluntary consolidation of water and wastewater systems.



### CONTINUE PRO-GROWTH TAX REFORM

Continue tax code reforms to rely more on consumption-based taxes than on production-based taxes to improve Kentucky's competitive position.



### SUPPORT SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER RECOVERY EFFORTS

Remove barriers and support employers that hire or retain people who are in recovery. Employment is crucial for a successful recovery.



### REFORM THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Enact reforms, such as supporting fair chance employers, removing barriers to successful re-entry, and increasing the felony theft threshold. Emphasize substance use disorder treatment and use of probation to get people back to work and to address increasing incarceration rates and costs.



### ENACT COVID-19 LIABILITY PROTECTIONS

Adopt liability protections to protect employers who did their part to stop the spread of COVID-19 while shielding Kentuckians from frivolous lawsuits. Such lawsuits and the threat of lawsuits will increase costs on businesses and slow Kentucky's economic recovery.



### MODERNIZE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Take steps to mitigate the significant tax increase employers face due to the depletion of the unemployment insurance trust fund. Through no fault of their own, many employers were forced to close or curtail operations to stop the spread of the pandemic. That resulted in many workers seeking unemployment benefits, leaving Kentucky in debt. Employers now face significant tax increases to eliminate that debt.



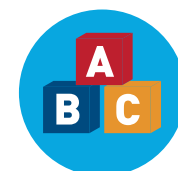
### INVEST IN EDUCATION

Ensure that Kentucky collects data to measure how students' academic performance has been impacted by COVID-19 and respond appropriately. Invest in programs and methods that are proven to work in helping students learn to read. Help ensure all Kentucky students have access to quality broadband.



### FOCUS ON CHILD CARE

Evaluate how to best use available resources to stabilize this essential sector. Continue to expand access to quality care.



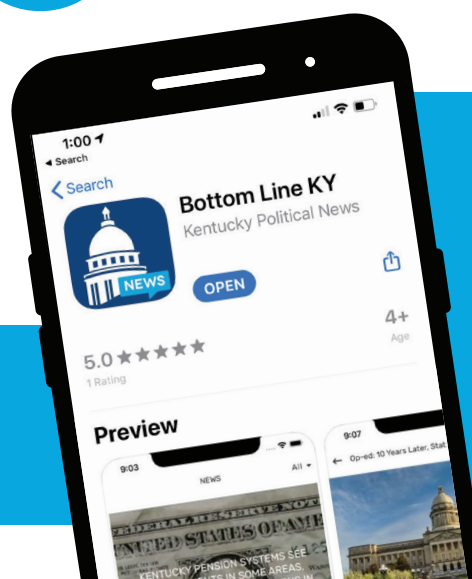
### SUPPORT FOR SIGNATURE INDUSTRIES

Allow signature industries to flourish in Kentucky by working with leaders from the agricultural, bourbon, and equine sectors to ensure regulations are designed to foster growth and not become impediments. Advocate for measures to keep Kentucky horse racing competitive nationally with such features as historical horse racing and sports betting at racetracks.



### WANT TO READ MORE?

You can read more about these and other priorities in the full **2021 Legislative Agenda** at [kychamber.com](http://kychamber.com).



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**Bottom Line KY**

POLITICAL AND BUSINESS NEWS  
FROM THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER







Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Vice President of Public Affairs Kate Shanks testified before the committee in support of the House Bill 1.

## *Lawmakers Pass Bill with Chamber Priority*

### HELPING BUSINESSES WITH UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COSTS

Finishing up the first week of the 2021 session on a Saturday, the legislature gave final passage to many of their top priority bills and sent them to the governor for his consideration.

House Bill 1, sponsored by Rep. Bart Rowland, has five sections that would allow businesses to continue operating and stay open as long as they have a comprehensive operating plan to ensure safety, waive penalties and interest on unemployment insurance tax bills to give businesses flexibility to pay increased rates, and more.

Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Vice President of Public Affairs Kate Shanks testified before the committee in support of the bill, stating the pandemic has been difficult for all Kentuckians and businesses have certainly been negatively impacted. Several businesses were forced to shut down through no fault of their own and have seen many increased costs and lower revenue already, Shanks added.

Unfortunately, she said all Kentucky businesses face a sizable tax increase in 2021 because of the state's record high unemployment, the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund being completely drained and the state borrowing money from the federal government to pay claims.

Shanks said the bill addresses a timing issue to give flexibility to employers who have to choose between paying this tax increase or paying their employees. The increased costs will come due in the first quarter of 2021, while many are still struggling, and this could be the final straw forcing some to shut down without this solution.

Other parts of the bill led Gov. Andy Beshear to veto the bill but the General Assembly expects to be able to override his veto.

Also filed the first week of session was a bill containing the key Chamber priority of protecting businesses and schools from frivolous lawsuits by providing liability protections.

Senate Bill 5, sponsored by Senate President Robert Stivers, would provide protections for businesses, organizations, schools, and individuals who have reopened and are following recommended guidelines or have provided essential services amid the coronavirus pandemic.

According to Stivers, the bill would provide protection for businesses and individuals who own, lease, manage or control a premise that the public enters to obtain goods, services or conduct activities, and act within the guidelines and recommendations pertaining to COVID-19. The bill would not provide protections for businesses or organizations who act in a malicious or grossly negligent manner to ignore executive orders or guidelines.

Senate Bill 5 has only been heard for discussion in committee so far but is expected to begin moving when lawmakers return in February.

### STAY TUNED

Stay tuned to The Bottom Line for important developments throughout the 2021 session at [kychamberbottomline.com](http://kychamberbottomline.com).



## VIRTUAL KENTUCKY CHAMBER DAY

# *February 4, 2021*

For the past 16 years, on the first Thursday of the legislative session, we've gathered in person to hear the governor and top four legislative leaders share their visions for the year ahead. This year was a little different ... due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we made the difficult decision to gather virtually instead.

Therefore, the Kentucky Chamber will be hosting its first-ever **virtual Kentucky Chamber Day on February 4, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. ET**. Make sure to register for this **free event** at [kychamber.com](http://kychamber.com). If you registered for the previous date, you will be automatically reregistered.

**SAVE  
THE DATE!**

We plan to hold an in-person 26th Annual Kentucky Chamber Day Dinner, presented by Fidelity Investments, on **Wednesday, April 21, 2021** at the newly constructed and remodeled Central Bank Center (formerly Lexington Convention Center) in downtown Lexington. We will share additional details soon.





# KNOW YOUR *Legislators*

With many significant pieces of legislation moving through the Kentucky General Assembly, your elected officials need to hear from **YOU** on key issues to help improve the state's business climate. Watch for action alerts from the Kentucky Chamber throughout session and call your legislators at **1-800-372-7181** to express your support for priority bills important to the business community.

**LEADERSHIP**

SPEAKER

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

MINORITY FLOOR LEADER

MAJORITY CAUCUS CHAIR

MINORITY CAUCUS CHAIR

MAJORITY WHIP

MINORITY WHIP

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY**

**2021 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**REPRESENTATIVE'S HOME COUNTY**

**PARTY TOTALS**

Republican 75

Democrat 25

Last modified on 1/8/21

**LEADERSHIP**

PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

MINORITY FLOOR LEADER

MAJORITY CAUCUS CHAIR

MINORITY CAUCUS CHAIR

MAJORITY WHIP

MINORITY WHIP

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY**

**2021 SENATE**

**SENATOR'S HOME COUNTY**

**PARTY TOTALS**

Republican 30

Democrat 8

Last modified on 1/8/21



THE VACCINE IS HERE; IT IS TIME TO REBUILD THE ECONOMY BY DOUBLING DOWN ON

# Criminal Justice Reform



**BETH DAVISSON**  
VICE PRESIDENT  
WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT,  
KENTUCKY CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

*The following is an op-ed from Kentucky Chamber Vice President of Workforce Development Beth Davisson.*

As Kentuckians begin to receive the first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, it's getting easier to think about the road ahead and recovery. A vital part of that will involve rebuilding our economy and strengthening our workforce. In particular, two actions will be critical to moving Kentucky forward: reforming the criminal justice system and expanding fair chance hiring.

As a result of the pandemic, more than 246,688 Kentuckians have left the labor force and stopped looking for work. As of July 2020, Kentucky ranked 50 out of the 50 states for labor force participation. We are last in the nation when it comes to citizens taking part in the workforce. Before the pandemic hit in March, Kentucky ranked 42nd.

At the same time, we have industries booming in Kentucky and desperately in need of workers. While not a complete list, the Kentucky Chamber has collected more than 92,000 active job postings from employers across the state in the past several months. As we look at Kentucky's economic recovery from the pandemic, we must remain focused on workforce participation. Kentucky businesses need workers, and getting them back on the job is key to recovery.

Low workforce participation is often linked to low-level crimes such as drug-related offenses, high levels of recidivism, and overdose deaths. There is also a strong link between employment and recovery; for example, as the nation's unemployment rate increased by 1 percentage point, the opioid death rate increased by 3.6 percent. That clearly illustrates the multiple benefits of reforming our criminal justice system to help people get back into work while protecting public safety.

The Chamber's "Kentucky Comeback" campaign provides a framework for tackling these challenges. The campaign aims to transform the state's approach to drug addiction and criminal justice while massively reducing barriers to re-entry – helping people struggling with substance use disorder and assisting businesses in developing recovery-friendly work environments. By helping people get jobs, the campaign will help break the cycles of addiction, incarceration, and unemployment that trap far too many Kentuckians.

There is also an important public safety element to the campaign. As community leaders, employers should be doing everything in their power to reduce crime, and getting a job after prison reduces reoffending rates by more than one third.

Kentuckians recognize the importance of changing the system. Earlier this year, a Kentucky Chamber survey found that 91 percent of Kentuckians agreed that barriers for people coming out of prison should be broken down so they can get jobs, support their families, and reduce their reliance on government services.

There is also an overall financial benefit to these reforms. As COVID-19 continues to devastate our economy, we have to find ways to save money and spend tax dollars more effectively. Reducing our incarcerated population with such measures as sentencing and bail reform would save much-needed public funds for critical services like education and health care. A 1,000-inmate reduction in the prison population, for example, would result in \$12 million in savings, according to Governor Andy Beshear.

The vaccines are here. There is a light at the end of the tunnel. We now have to focus on rebuilding our economy and our society quickly and fairly. With so many people needlessly locked up in jails or locked out of jobs, criminal justice reform and fair chance hiring are critical to getting Kentucky back on its feet.



“As community leaders, employers should be doing everything in their power to reduce crime, and getting a job after prison reduces reoffending rates by **more than one third**.”

## KENTUCKY'S PLANNED VACCINATION PHASES

- **PHASE 1A:** Long-term care facilities, assisted living facilities, health care personnel
- **PHASE 1B:** First responders, Kentuckians over the age of 70, K-12 school personnel
- **PHASE 1C:** Kentuckians over the age of 60, Kentuckians older than the age of 16 with highest-risk conditions for COVID-19, all essential workers
- **PHASE 2:** Kentuckians over the age of 40
- **PHASE 3:** Kentuckians over the age of 16
- **PHASE 4:** Children under the age of 16, if vaccine is approved for this age

For latest updates visit [kychamber.com/vaccines](https://kychamber.com/vaccines).

## CHAMBER PUBLISHES FEDERAL AGENDA AHEAD OF ADMINISTRATION CHANGE



## 2021 FEDERAL AGENDA

Read more at [kychamber.com/federal](https://kychamber.com/federal).





# KENTUCKY CHAMBER PARTNERS WITH KENTUCKY CABINET FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO

## *Connect Members with European Companies*

The Kentucky Chamber has announced a partnership with the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, the Discover Kentucky initiative, to help connect Kentucky Chamber members with European companies interested in entering the U.S. market or partnering with Kentucky businesses.

This year has been filled with challenges, and while the coronavirus pandemic disrupted many traditional channels of economic development, it has also opened up new opportunities for Kentucky businesses to expand their access to potential international markets and partnerships through relationships with the Chamber.

Discover Kentucky's goals are to facilitate introductions between the Chamber and European businesses with significant interest in the U.S. market, foster relationships in order to maintain Kentucky top of mind for future expansion projects, and provide continuity despite changes in administration.

The process begins with the Cabinet for Economic Development's European representative office vetting requests received from European companies interested in entering the U.S. market, establishing distributor partnerships, or any other interest in collaboration with American businesses. The Chamber then makes introductions between Kentucky businesses and the European company based on their needs and interests. Following introductions, a quarterly check-in process is implemented to further the connection and assess whether the company is ready to engage in expansion related efforts.

### GET INVOLVED

Learn more or get involved with the Discover Kentucky initiative, contact **Jessica Moore** at [jmoore@kychamber.com](mailto:jmoore@kychamber.com).

# KENTUCKY CHAMBER WORKFORCE CENTER CONNECTS STUDENTS AND LOCAL BUSINESSES

## *Virtually Through Bus to Business*

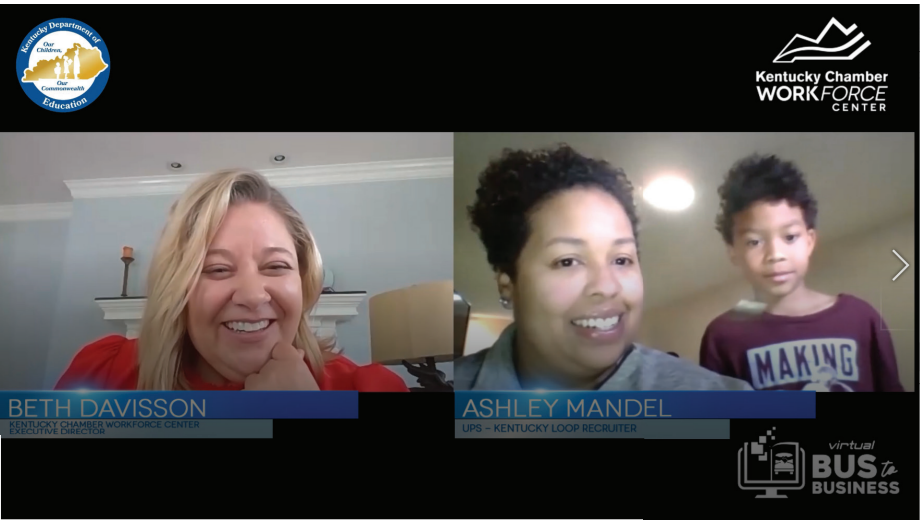
In response to the struggles Kentucky faces with its workforce shortage, the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Workforce Center created the Bus to Business program to help develop the workforce of tomorrow. The purpose of the program is to foster relationships between schools and Kentucky businesses in order to make students aware of the type of career pathways available to them in their own communities. The program also allows businesses to engage with their future workforce and begin mentoring and developing relationships with students for a role at the company at a young age.



The Bus to Business program launched in October 2019 as a one-day event where students from 30 different schools visited 32 businesses across Kentucky, meeting with business leaders and learning more about career opportunities available after graduation. This year, in response to students remote learning, Bus to Business shifted to an entirely virtual format that will run for the duration of the 2020-2021 school year. Launching in October 2020, the virtual Bus to Business program has already reached over 15,000 students across the state.

While the format of the program has changed, its goal has not. Through the virtual format, students are able participate in live sessions with businesses across the state, watch video tours of companies, interviews with industry professionals, learn about critical jobs in Kentucky, understand what higher education or certifications they will need to pursue in order to be competitive in their desired field and connect with businesses who offer "earn and learn" programs both during and after high school.

"I listened to the engineers the most because that is the career I wish to pursue. I was able to hear about the education they acquired and what their everyday life is like as engineers," said Elkhorn Crossing School sophomore Caroline Lyons about her Bus to Business experience at the Georgetown Toyota plant last year. "To me,



it's important for all students to have interactions with employers because it allows them access to information and it may help them figure out what careers they wish to pursue."

"We are excited to expand the reach of the Bus to Business program to more students across Kentucky through this school year's virtual program. We are thrilled to provide students with more opportunities and resources to get exposure to the exciting career opportunities across the Commonwealth," said Harper Smith, manager of the Kentucky Chamber Workforce Center.

### SIGN UP TODAY!

Sign up online at [kychamber.com/bustobusiness](https://kychamber.com/bustobusiness) to become a part of Bus to Business 2020-2021.



# Thank you for your investment.

The following is a list of new members of the Kentucky Chamber. Please help us thank these companies for investing in the Chamber's mission by giving them your business.

## EQUITY PARTNER

AdventHealth  
Gainesway Management Corporation  
Ruby Has Fulfillment  
Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital

## CORNERSTONE

Be Visible  
Bluegrass Area Development District  
Capstone Realty, Inc.  
Dyno Nobel Incorporated  
Landscaper's Corner  
Learning Grove  
Universal Medical Supply

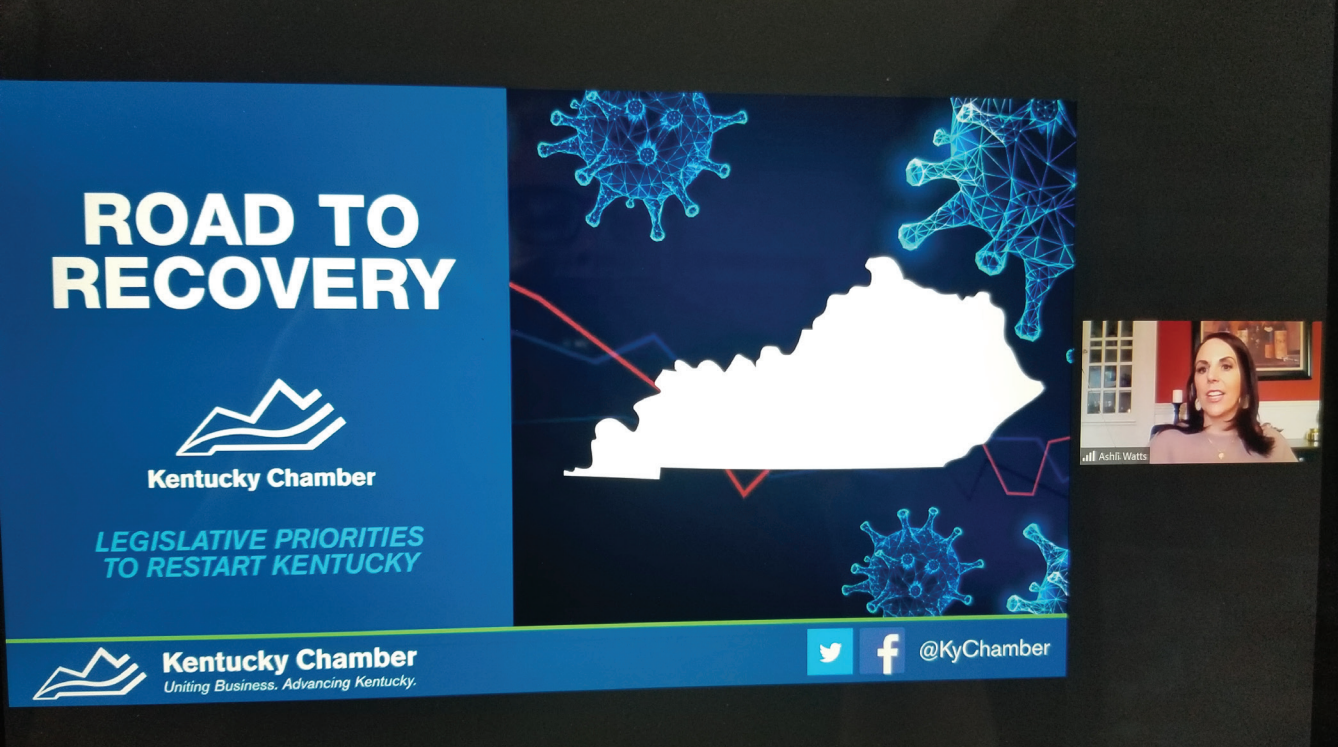
## STAKEHOLDER

American Heritage Textiles, LLC  
Anderson Apothecary  
Arq, LLC  
Barrett Maintenance, Inc.  
Bluegrass Station  
Bowling Green Dermatology & Skin Cancer Specialists, PLLC  
Cane Run Farm  
Canopy  
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce  
Commonwealth Tool & Machine, Inc.  
Compass Addiction Services  
Current HR  
CWF Products  
Definitive Infotech Services & Solutions, LLC  
Dupree Financial Group, LLC  
Encore Wealth Management Group  
German American Bank  
Greater Breckinridge County Chamber of Commerce  
Hancock Bank and Trust Company  
Irvine Municipal Utilities  
Kemper & Kemper  
Kentucky CASA Network  
Lake Barkley Chamber of Commerce  
Magna Pharmaceuticals, Inc.  
Ohio County Chamber of Commerce  
Paducah-McCracken County Riverport Authority  
People's Self-Help Housing, Inc.  
Piccoli Horses  
Pioneer Logistics Group, Inc. dba Pioneer Supply Group  
R. Bruce Scott  
Russell County Chamber of Commerce  
Save-a-Lot Food Store  
Scottsville-Allen County Chamber of Commerce  
Sisu Mental Health Services  
Spencer County Chamber of Commerce  
Taliaferro, Carran, Cowherd & Hampton, PLLC  
The Chamber of St. Matthews  
The Commitment House  
TPM, Inc.  
Tri-County Fertilizer  
Woodford County Chamber of Commerce

## KENTUCKY CHAMBER NEWS

For address changes and subscription information, call **502-848-8743**.

For advertising information, contact **Hannah Wood** at **502-848-8743** or email **hwood@kychamber.com**.



## 2021 LEGISLATIVE ROADSHOW Goes Virtual

In the months leading up to the 2021 General Assembly, Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts held meetings with local chambers across the state to discuss the business community's top legislative priorities to help the state recover from the coronavirus pandemic and rebuild its economy.

Watts met with over 15 local chambers virtually to discuss the business community's top priorities for 2021, which include:

- Invest in infrastructure
- Continue pro-growth tax reform
- Support substance use disorder recovery efforts
- Reform criminal justice system
- Enact COVID-19 liability protections
- Modernize unemployment insurance
- Invest in education
- Focus on childcare
- Support for signature industries



**NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE CLASS OF 2022!**



**Leadership Institute for School Principals**

Please share with your local principals and superintendents.

Find the application and more information online at **principalsleadky.com**

## We Help Keep You Safe at Work

Purchase PPE at [www.kychamber.com/ppe](http://www.kychamber.com/ppe)

### KENTUCKY CHAMBER CONTINUES TO OFFER PPE

The Kentucky Chamber continues to offer various PPE items for employers, including 3-ply disposable masks, non-touch thermometers, nitrile gloves and sanitizing wipes. Items are shipping from the Chamber's offices in Frankfort and ship next business day via UPS.

Visit us online at [www.kychamber.com/ppe](http://www.kychamber.com/ppe).



# KEY KENTUCKY CHAMBER *Consultants Retire*

After more than 14 years working with the Kentucky Chamber, policy consultants Diana Taylor and Bob Gray have retired.

Taylor and Gray played a key role in policy development as well as the research and writing of Kentucky Chamber reports, such as “**The Leaky Bucket**” and many others. Their tenure with the organization concluded in December 2020 with the “**Achieving Equity to Build a Better Kentucky**” report being their final project.

Prior to joining the Chamber, Taylor served as a reporter and also Chief of Staff for Governor Brereton Jones, while Gray retired from state government serving in both the Legislative Research Commission and the State Auditor’s office.

“The impact Bob and Diana have had on the Chamber cannot be understated. Their institutional knowledge, research capabilities and ability to share data in a way in which resonated with the business community has allowed the Chamber to grow not only in terms of advocacy, but also in fact-based research. Personally, they have been mentors to me and their involvement in the Chamber has truly made an impact for the betterment of our Commonwealth,” said Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Ashli Watts.



**BOB TAYLOR**  
POLICY CONSULTANT



**DIANA TAYLOR**  
POLICY CONSULTANT

**April 21** | **26th Annual Kentucky Chamber Day Dinner**  
Central Bank Center – *Lexington*

**June 16** | **17th Annual Best Places to Work in Kentucky**  
Central Bank Center – *Lexington*

**June 21** | **Golf Invitational at Valhalla**  
Valhalla Golf Course – *Louisville*

**August 31-September 2** | **37th Annual Kentucky SHRM Conference**  
Galt House Hotel – *Louisville*

**September 23-24** | **15th Annual Business Summit and Annual Meeting**  
Louisville Marriott Downtown – *Louisville*

**November 16** | **Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame**  
Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa – *Lexington*

*\*All dates and locations are tentative and subject to change.*

## Kentucky Chamber Key Investors

### Commonwealth Partner



### Chairman’s Circle



### Champion



### Advisor



### Trustee

Addiction Recovery Care	Citizens National Bank	Johnson & Johnson Services, Inc.	Mississippi Lime	Speranza Therapeutics
AppHarvest	Coca-Cola Bottling Company Consolidated	Kentucky Hardwood Lumber Co.	Mubea North America	Stantec
Association of Equipment Manufacturers'	Commonwealth Credit Union	Kentucky League of Cities, Inc.	National Grid Renewables	Steptoe & Johnson PLLC
Assured Partners	Community Trust Bancorp. Inc.	Kinetic by Windstream	Nationwide Insurance	Stock Yards Bank and Trust
Bexion Pharmaceuticals	Computer Services, Inc. Db a CSI	Laurel Grocery Company	Norfolk Southern Corporation	Sullivan University System
Big Ass Fans	Dean Dorton	Logan Aluminum, Inc	Pinnacle Treatment Centers	Sumitomo Electric Wiring Systems
Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital	Deloitte Consulting	Louisville Water Company	Piramal Pharma Solutions	Tennessee Valley Authority
CareSource	Dismas Charities	Marathon Petroleum Company LP	Planters Bank, Inc.	Transit Authority of River City
Carespring Healthcare Management, LLC	Dorman	Martinrea Heavy Stamping	Raytheon Company	Washington Penn Plastic Co., Inc.
Century Aluminum of Kentucky, LLC	FMS Commercial Cleaning	McBrayer PLLC	Regal Beloit America, Inc.	Whitaker Bank
CertainTeed	Gray Construction	Merck & Co.	Republic Bank	
Chase	Hyster-Yale Group Inc.	Meritor-Florence	Scotty's Contracting & Stone LLC	





# Start 2021 off right by saving money

The Kentucky Chamber offers these **exclusive benefits** to save your business money and time so you can stay competitive in today's marketplace.



## SMALL GROUP HEALTH COVERAGE

The newest health coverage solution designed to help small businesses with plans designed to serve **employers with 2-50 employees**. Your business will be covered with great benefits at a lower cost and more predictable rates, all backed by Anthem of Kentucky.



Anthem  | SMALL BUSINESS

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

ClearPath Mutual is open for business and committed to helping Kentucky employers save money and protect our community and employees. All members who meet underwriting guidelines will receive a **10% discount**.



## ACCIDENT AND CRITICAL ILLNESS INSURANCE

Members enjoy **exclusive savings** with The Standard on accident and critical illness insurance. Enhance your benefits package and offer employees a choice of affordable options for easing the financial burden that can come with a serious illness or accident.



## CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE

Shawna Burton — sburton@kychamber.com | (502) 848-8797 | [kychamber.com/membersavings](https://kychamber.com/membersavings)



Kentucky Chamber

# NEWS

JANUARY 2021



# 2021 SESSION WITH ACTION ON COVID-19 PRIORITIES