



Kentucky Chamber Senior Vice President of Public Affairs Ashli Watts testifies in favor of **House Bill 2** alongside bill sponsor Rep. Adam Koenig, Kentucky Coal Association President Tyler White, and Kentucky League of Cities Deputy Executive Director J.D. Chaney.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION LEGISLATION RESULTS IN SIGNIFICANT *Savings for Employers*

After the legislature passed important reforms to the state's workers' compensation system during the 2018 session, employers in Kentucky are expected to see big savings because of the new law modernizing the system.

In May, the National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI) filed advisory loss cost changes due to the passage of House Bill 2, workers' compensation modernization, which has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Insurance. This filing is required by Kentucky law.

NCCI's filing concludes that multiple provisions in House Bill 2 will likely produce savings of 5.3% to the Commonwealth's workers' compensation system over time.

At this time last year, after the Supreme Court decision on *Parker v. Webster County Coal*, employers were looking at a significant increase in workers' comp costs if modernization was not passed in the 2018 General Assembly.

Analysis by NCCI of House Bill 2 concluded that once

the entire bill goes into effect, there will most likely be additional future savings to the workers' compensation system, in addition to the -5.3%.

House Bill 2 sponsor, Rep. Adam Koenig (Erlanger), told *The Bottom Line*, "The legislature was confident that House Bill 2 would not only provide treatment for the injured worker but decrease costs for employers as well. I am happy to see that the actions of the General Assembly in passage of House Bill 2 will result in significant savings for all Kentucky businesses."

Senate President Robert Stivers also discussed the bill with *The Bottom Line*, stating the new law should address the biggest cost driver within the workers' compensation system which he said is the medical side. He added workers who are hurt and truly need medical benefits will still get the same type of payments.

Since the passage of House Bill 2, the Kentucky Labor Cabinet has formed the Kentucky Workers' Compensation Regulatory Advisory Committee to work on further implementation of the new law, which will result in additional cost savings for employers.

ANNUAL MEETING KEYNOTE SPEAKER ARTHUR BROOKS: *Bringing America Together*



ARTHUR BROOKS
PRESIDENT
American Enterprise Institute

As America sees an increasing amount of political disagreement and a contemptuous national dialogue, American Enterprise Institute president Arthur Brooks wants to see compassion and dignity enter back into politics.

In an interview with *The Bottom Line* ahead of his keynote address to the Kentucky Chamber's Annual Meeting on July 19 in Louisville, Brooks said his talk to Kentucky business leaders and policymakers will aim to give people a new way of thinking about the division seen in the country and a way to better connect with one another "despite the unpleasantness of our current political environment."

SEE ARTHUR BROOKS, PAGE 5

LEGISLATIVE LEADERS SAY PENSION REFORM WAS A TOXIC ISSUE AND

More Work Remains on Tax Reform

After a difficult 2018 legislative session with reforms made to the state's pension systems and tax code while balancing a budget, Senate President Robert Stivers and Acting House Speaker David Osborne spoke exclusively with Kentucky Chamber news site *The Bottom Line* about what was accomplished by legislators and what must come next.

Acting Speaker Osborne said the pension reform issue was "toxic from the beginning" and called the pension crisis the most controversial and divisive issue he has seen in the 12 years he has been in the legislature and "the most difficult process I've ever been through."

“It has the potential for being a better system than what they currently have with portability.”

— **Senate President Stivers**

Senate President Stivers said he believes communication was a central problem with the process on pension reform as there were many messages floating around and a lot of misinformation.

However, both leaders said they feel the changes made in the 2018 session will stabilize the systems and the legislature can shift its focus to funding the systems while there will need to be additional tax reform in order to make Kentucky more competitive.

"It's a fair system. And even the teachers' unions for the KTRS are saying it has the potential for being a better system than what they currently have with portability," Stivers said, adding new teachers could now take their retirement savings with them if they choose a different career path.

SEE TAX REFORM, PAGE 2



FROM THE FRONT

Tax Reform:

After the reforms for future hires have been made, the state still faces around \$60 billion in unfunded liability for the pension systems. Osborne said the liability has an enormous impact on the Commonwealth, but it must be paid. He added the legislature has made a strong commitment to fund the systems, which he said began with the additional \$1.2 billion put toward the systems in the budget passed in the 2018 session.

"There is no amount of reforms that we can do that will alleviate the underlying issue, which is they're underfunded," Osborne stated.

On the issue of tax reform passed at the end of the 2018 session, in part to put more money toward the pension systems while also stabilizing the budget, Osborne said reforming the state's tax code will be a long process that has now been started by easing the burden on many Kentuckians.

"We've got to continue to make sure we stay focused on the ultimate goal of where tax reform needs to be, which is to make Kentucky the best place in the world to build a business and raise a family," Osborne said.

Stivers said tax reform is not something they "particularly care to do, but it is something we had to do." The Senate President said they would have liked to go further on tax reforms in areas such as lowering the personal and corporate income rates and other areas.

"The individual will be able to control his tax exposure because we are dropping the rate and it will be based on your consumption, not on how much you earn," Stivers said. "And if we can go further to make it more like a Tennessee, a North Carolina, or a Florida system, that's where I believe we should go."

READ MORE

For more on what the legislative leaders said on this and other issues and to watch the interviews, visit The Bottom Line at kychamberbottomline.com.

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INTERIM KENTUCKY EDUCATION COMMISSIONER LEWIS FOCUSED ON

Education Performance and Career Readiness

After the resignation of Kentucky Education Commissioner Stephen Pruitt in April, the Kentucky Board of Education named Dr. Wayne Lewis for the interim role.

In his first week on the job, Lewis gave an exclusive interview to The Bottom Line laying out his top priorities he hopes will help Kentucky move forward, stating his main focus will be on improving Kentucky's education performance and preparing Kentucky students for success in the workplace.

Lewis explained the essential skills legislation, championed by the Kentucky Chamber and passed in the 2018 session as a key component to preparing students for careers. "These are the types of things that employers tell us day after day, week after week, that are critical for folks that they're trying to recruit and retain in their places of business. We have to do a better job in Kentucky's schools of ensuring that we are helping students to learn and master these skills so that they're prepared for success in the workplace."

Pointing toward another tool to help advance Kentucky's education performance, Commissioner Lewis commended the legislature for passing public charter school legislation in 2017. He explained, "charter schools give us an additional tool in our toolbelt to be able to help to improve performance, particularly the performance of some groups of students that we've struggled with tremendously over the years."

Though the General Assembly did not fund public charter schools in the 2018 session, Commissioner Lewis said "we are at the place now where charter schools exist in law, they have been created as a part of the public-school system

in Kentucky, and I am asking senior leadership in the Department of Education to help me to explore what the possibilities could be for charter schools moving forward."

Lewis stated one of his top priorities is strengthening career and technical education within the Department and around the state, saying "I think we've made some headway over the years in raising the stature in career and technical education in Kentucky, but quite honestly we still have a long way to go."

Lewis said he is focused on raising proficiency rates, specifically in reading and mathematics. He commends Kentucky's education reforms and improvements made in the early 1990s but says since then the progress has been stagnant and has created various achievement gaps.

Interim Commissioner Lewis is enthusiastic about his new role and the possibilities for his future as the Kentucky Education Commissioner.

READ MORE

Read more about his priorities in the full interview on kychamberbottomline.com.



CHAMBER RECOGNIZES 14 LEGISLATORS AS *MVPs of the 2018 General Assembly*

The 2018 General Assembly passed major reforms that will help move the state forward. The Kentucky Chamber announced the recognition of 14 legislators who displayed conspicuous actions to improve the business climate of the state. Recipients of the 2018 Kentucky Chamber MVP Award showed strong leadership for the business community by sponsoring or carrying Kentucky Chamber priority legislation, showing leadership on passage of critical legislation to improve Kentucky or by taking hard votes in defense of business.

"With so many important issues in play during this high-profile legislative session, we feel it is important to highlight the efforts of those legislators who went out of their way to help create a positive business climate and improve Kentucky's financial house," said Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Dave Adkisson. "These 14 legislators fought for a better business climate and helped advance Kentucky."

In addition to monitoring the progress of bills that directly relate to the strength of the Commonwealth's business community, the Chamber tracks how each legislator votes on these bills. The Chamber's MVP Award recipients displayed more than just a business-friendly voting record but went out of their way to support an issue critical to the business climate in Kentucky.

MORE INFO

See how the MVP Award recipients and other legislators voted on business issues during the 2018 Kentucky General Assembly, view the Chamber's Results for Business publication at kychamber.com.

Below are the legislators selected for this year's MVP awards and highlights of how they went to bat for the business community this session:

- **President Robert Stivers** carried House Bill 2, workers' compensation reform, was a strong advocate for business issues including passing a budget that prioritizes education funding, pension reform that puts Kentucky on a path toward sustainability, and tax reform that improves Kentucky's competitiveness.
- **Acting Speaker David Osborne** demonstrated leadership for key business issues including passing a budget that prioritizes education funding, pension reform that puts Kentucky on a path toward sustainability, and tax reform that improves Kentucky's competitiveness.
- **Sen. Damon Thayer** showed leadership in passing key business issues including passing a budget that prioritizes education funding, pension reform that puts Kentucky on a path toward sustainability, and tax reform that improves Kentucky's competitiveness.
- **Rep. Jonathan Shell** sponsored House Bill 3, which incorporates essential skills into the K-12 education system and showed leadership in passing a budget that prioritizes education funding, pension reform that puts Kentucky on a path toward sustainability, and tax reform that improves Kentucky's competitiveness.
- **Rep. Adam Koenig** sponsored House Bill 2, workers' compensation reform, and showed leadership for the business community on several issues.
- **Sen. Ralph Alvarado** sponsored many pieces of legislation to improve Kentucky's legal liability climate, specifically Senate Bill 2, a constitutional amendment on tort reform, and carried peer review legislation to passage.
- **Rep. Bam Carney** carried pension reform legislation that puts Kentucky on a path toward sustainability.
- **Sen. Joe Bowen** sponsored pension reform legislation and was essential to the passage of reforms.
- **Rep. Jim Gooch** sponsored House Bill 227, legislation to modernize private rooftop solar laws, and showed leadership for the business community on several issues.
- **Rep. Jason Nemes** sponsored House Bill 198, transparency in private attorney contracting.
- **Rep. Addia Wuchner** sponsored House Bill 4, medical peer review legislation.
- **Rep. John Sims** voted across party lines multiple times to support key Chamber priorities including workers' compensation, peer review and transparency in private attorney contracting. Rep. Sims also was the primary co-sponsor of essential skills legislation.
- **Rep. Steven Rudy** chaired the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee, helping craft a biennial budget that prioritizes education funding, and passed House Bill 366, tax reform legislation that improves Kentucky's competitiveness.
- **Sen. Chris McDaniel** chaired the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee helping pass a biennial budget that prioritizes education funding and passed tax reform legislation that improves Kentucky's competitiveness.

UPCOMING EVENT

Agenda

BUSINESS SUMMIT
AND ANNUAL MEETING

Presented by Bingham Greenebaum Doll LLP

JULY 19-20 | **BRAND NEW!** OMNI LOUISVILLE HOTEL

Thursday — July 19

1:00 p.m. — Registration

1:30 p.m. — Welcome

Renee Shaw | Public Affairs Managing Producer & Host, KET
Janet Jakubowicz | Chair, Partnership Board, Bingham Greenebaum Doll, LLP

1:35 p.m. — Program Overview

Joe Craft | President, CEO, and Director, Alliance Coal, LLC and Chairman,
Board of Directors, Kentucky Chamber

1:40 p.m. — Kentucky vs. the U.S.

Ted Abernathy | Managing Partner, Economic Leadership LLC
Sponsored by Crowe, LLP

3:00 p.m. — Trade, Tariffs and Kentucky’s Economy

John Murphy | Senior Vice President for International Policy, U.S. Chamber of
Commerce
Honorable Ryan Quarles | Agriculture Commissioner, Commonwealth of Kentucky
Rocco Rossi | President and CEO, Ontario Chamber of Commerce
Dave Tatman | Executive Director, Kentucky Auto Industry Association
Moderator: Ashli Watts | Senior Vice President, Public Affairs, Kentucky Chamber
of Commerce
Sponsored by UPS

4:00 p.m. — Kentucky Politics

Scott Jennings | Co-founder and Partner, RunSwitch PR
Matt Jones | Host, Kentucky Sports Radio (KSR)
Moderator: Jaqueline Pitts | Communications Director, Kentucky Chamber
Sponsored by U.S. Bank

5:00 p.m. — Day one Business Summit concludes

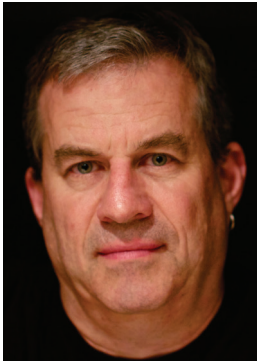
Annual Meeting Reception with sponsors — Hosted by Joe and Kelly Craft

6:30 p.m. — Annual Meeting Dinner Keynote: Bringing America Together

Arthur Brooks | President, American Enterprise Institute, social scientist and author



Arthur Brooks
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
*President, American Enterprise Institute,
Social Scientist and Author*



Sam Quinones
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Journalist and Author

Friday — July 20

8:00 a.m. — Registration and breakfast

8:30 a.m. — Welcome

Joe Craft | President, CEO, and Director, Alliance Coal, LLC and Chairman,
Board of Directors, Kentucky Chamber

8:45 a.m. Opening Keynote: Dreamland: The True Tale of
America’s Opiate Epidemic

Sam Quinones | Journalist and Author
Sponsored by Norton Healthcare

10:00 a.m. — Selling Kentucky

Terry Gill | Secretary, Cabinet for Economic Development
Jay Salyers | Senior Vice President, Miles Partnership
Moderator: Kevin Smith | Vice President, Kentucky Beam
Bourbon Affairs, Beam Suntory
Sponsored by Kentucky Department of Tourism

11:00 a.m. — Immigration, Workforce and Economic Growth

Jeremy Robbins | Executive Director, New American Economy
Sponsored by Stoll Keenon Ogden PLLC

11:30 a.m. — Key Issues Facing Kentucky’s Future

Dave Adkisson | President & CEO, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
Sponsored by Brown-Forman

12:00 p.m. — Luncheon Keynote: A Conversation with Joe Craft

Joe Craft | President, CEO, and Director, Alliance Coal, LLC
Interviewer: Elizabeth McCoy | CEO, Planters Bank, Inc.
Sponsored by Kentucky Department of Agriculture

1:30 p.m. — 13th Annual Business Summit concludes

“Dreamland” Author

SAYS NOT ONE SIMPLE FIX EXISTS FOR THE OPIOID CRISIS,
MANY DIFFERENT THINGS MUST BE DONE AT ONCE

As the scourge of opioids and heroin continue to cause struggle and heartache in Kentucky and across the nation, the author of an award-winning book described as the “single most well researched, well written, and heartbreaking account on the plague of the opiate addiction” details how the country got here and what must be done to address the epidemic in an interview with The Bottom Line ahead of his speech to Kentucky business leaders in July at the Kentucky Chamber Business Summit.

Sam Quinones is a journalist, storyteller, former LA Times reporter, and author of three acclaimed books of narrative nonfiction. His most recent book is **Dreamland: The True Tale of America’s Opiate Epidemic**.

Quinones told The Bottom Line he started writing *Dreamland* without much knowledge of the opioid crisis but was focused on the rise in heroin trafficking he witnessed as a reporter in Mexico for 10 years, where he wrote his first two books.

As he began his research, Quinones said it became clear to him the overprescribing of pain medications and the changes in how America shifted its approach to pain management opened up the growing market for heroin as people no longer have access to expensive opioids and turn to the cheaper option of heroin.

“That indiscriminate prescribing in huge amount, going in for a routine surgery and the pain is going to last 3-4 days and you come away with a doctor’s prescription for 30 days’ worth of pain pills and then a refill and then another refill after that... none of [this crisis] happens without that,” Quinones said. “In time, it just became pills for everybody—no matter what the pain, no matter your background. And all of that then creates the heroin problem we have today. But none of this happens at all without all the change in pain management that took place in the 1990s and early 2000s.”

When asked what will need to be done in order to address the opioid epidemic and what public policies could be put in place, the author stated there is not one simple

solution and the country will have to do many things at once to tackle the issue. Among those items, he said, is lobbying insurance companies on reimbursement programs to treat pain without the painkillers as he said insurance company behavior is a critical part of the mix. Quinones also pointed to the need to revamp the curriculum for medical schools to examine how they teach pain treatment, and Americans looking more closely at the cause of their pain and making changes to their diet and exercise routines.

Quinones also stated the crisis will not be fixed overnight as the epidemic was created over the course of more than two decades and suggested easy fixes for pain management issues is how we got into the crisis in the first place and the public should give policymakers some breathing room and time to craft meaningful solutions.

Ahead of speaking at the Kentucky Chamber’s Business Summit in July, Quinones added the opioid crisis is many things and one of those is a business issue as he stated it is difficult to revive many sectors if companies are unable to find employees because they are unable to pass a drug test. He added the crisis is also an obstacle to many areas of economic development and progress.

Dreamland author Sam Quinones will serve as the opening keynote speaker on day two of the Kentucky Chamber’s Business Summit on Friday, July 20, 2018 at 8:45 a.m. to discuss his award-winning book and share his insights on the opioid challenges that have ensnared Kentucky and the nation.

READ MORE

Read more of his interview with The Bottom Line at kychamberbottomline.com.

FROM THE FRONT

ARTHUR BROOKS:
HIGHLIGHTS A DESIRE TO
SHIFT DIVISION IN COUNTRY

To A Better Way
To Connect With
Others

“The result is that we’re forgetting that we are a country full of people who fundamentally need each other—especially those who are different than us or might disagree with us,” Brooks said.

Brooks is the author of multiple books including “The Conservative Heart” in which he writes about the idea that the conservative movement needs to transition to a more compassionate approach to politics. He said he became passionate about the free enterprise movement because of his belief that free markets, strong civic instruction, and American leadership around the world provide the best chance to live a life of freedom and opportunity and can serve as a key way to address poverty.

“By focusing on the why—values of compassion, freedom, opportunity, and care for the least of these—rather than the what, I believe we can make the free enterprise movement appealing to an audience beyond even traditionally conservative circles,” Brooks said.

With the election of President Donald Trump and the divisiveness in the country becoming even more evident in recent years, Brooks said he believes the political shifts happening in the country are rooted in what he calls the “dignity deficit,” which he attributes to economic and other societal issues in the last decade that he says has many individuals questioning if the American Dream is attainable for them.

“When people feel as though society is telling them they aren’t needed or that they can’t succeed in life, the attenuation of a sense of dignity is enormous. This sense of frustration was a key driver of President Trump’s 2016 victory. So, what either of our parties look like in the future is hard to say at this point, but it will certainly depend, at least in part, on how our leaders respond to the problem of the dignity deficit,” Brooks told The Bottom Line.

As for Brooks’ philosophies on politics and how he feels about the current political



dialogue happening in the country and the way the president communicates with the American people, Brooks stated one thing that concerns him about the political dialogue is the amount of contempt, which he feels is corrosive to democracy.

“If we only ever view the other side as knaves and fools, not worthy of respect or consideration, we will find it increasingly difficult to find any points of agreement and make progress for those who most need our institutions to function well. Contempt ultimately hurts Americans who are poor far more than those who are well-off. This makes it critically important that we recognize this problem and work to remember once again how to disagree constructively,” Brooks said.

Brooks will give the keynote address “Bringing America Together” at the Kentucky Chamber Annual Meeting on July 19 at the Omni Louisville Hotel at 6:30 p.m.

MORE INFO

Visit us online for the full daily agenda or to register at kychamber.com/business-summit.



2018 Primary
Elections:

RESULTS FROM HOTLY
CONTESTED GENERAL
ASSEMBLY AND
CONGRESSIONAL RACES

In May, Kentucky voters went to the polls to cast their votes in the 2018 primary elections. Many races at the local, state, and federal level were on the ballot, including many hotly contested races for the state legislature. Here are the results for some of the most watched races of the 2018 primary elections.

Senate District 26 — Republican

- Sen. Ernie Harris – 52% (WINNER)
- Alex R. White – 48%

Senate District 36 — Republican

- Sen. Julie Raque Adams – 91% (WINNER)
- Sheeba Jolly – 9%

House District 4 — Republican

- Fred Stubblefield – 47%
- Rep. Lynn Bechler – 53% (WINNER)

House District 19 — Republican

- Rep. Michael Lee Meredith– 65% (WINNER)
- Brian Kent Strow – 35%

House District 71 — Republican

- Rep. Jonathan Shell– 49%
- Travis Brenda – 51% (WINNER)

Some other incumbent House members also saw defeat in their primary elections including Reps. Wesley Morgan, Tim Couch, and Dennis Horlander.

At the federal level, 6th District U.S. Congressman Andy Barr (R-Lexington) will face retired Marine Lt. Col. Amy McGrath (D), who defeated Lexington Mayor Jim Gray and State Senator Reggie Thomas, in the fall elections. And 3rd District U.S. Congressman John Yarmuth (D-Louisville) will face former Kentucky Health and Family Services Cabinet Secretary Vikki Glisson.

In interviews with The Bottom Line, Senate President Robert Stivers and Acting House Speaker David Osborne expressed they are confident about the fall elections and believe the House and Senate will both maintain strong Republican majorities.

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Read more at kychamberbottomline.com.

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THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS WELCOMES THE Class of 2019

The Leadership Institute for School Principals welcomes the class of 2019 at the new BB&T Leadership Institute in Greensboro, North Carolina.

This class includes two principals from counties that have never sent principals before, expanding the total reach of the program to 93 counties across Kentucky.

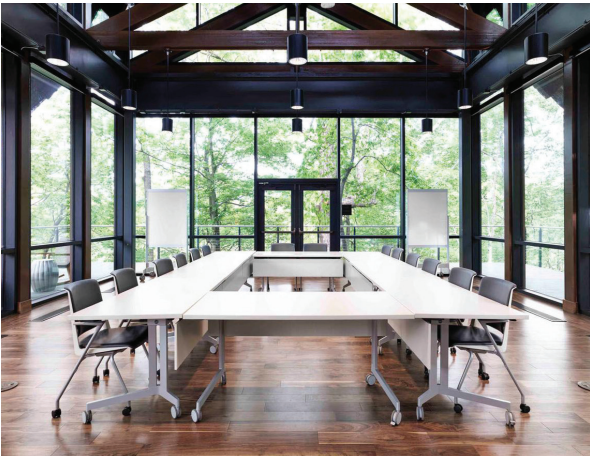


Leadership Institute for School Principals

The training is provided at no cost to the principals or their districts and is possible because of support from the BB&T Leadership Institute, and generous donations from the business community.

To support a principal in your community please contact Kelly Wolf at 502-848-8725 or kwolf@Kychamber.com.

Pictured Above and Right: The BB&T Leadership Institute's new 60,000-square-foot campus.



UPCOMING EVENT

34TH ANNUAL KENTUCKY SHRM CONFERENCE

Presented by Kentucky Chamber Workforce Center

PROVIDES HIGH QUALITY TRAINING FOR HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS

AUGUST 28-30

BRAND NEW! OMNI LOUISVILLE HOTEL

The Kentucky Society for Human Resource Management (KYSHRM) and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce will host the 34th Annual Kentucky SHRM Conference.

The conference is a one-stop-shop for human resource professionals throughout Kentucky, offering three preconference workshops, over 60 unique workshops (in the areas of benefits and compensation, human resource law, management, motivation, and business management strategy), professional development credits, an exhibit hall boasting more than 110 sponsors and exhibitors, and numerous networking opportunities. Attendees also will enjoy two receptions, one of which will be held at PBR Louisville: A Cowboy Bar at Fourth Street Live!



Annie Meehan
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Professional Speaker



Brad Shuck
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
*PhD, Associate Professor
University of Louisville*



Jack Uldrich
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Global Futurist, Speaker and Author

Keynote presentations during the event will include:

• 4:00 p.m. | Tuesday, August 28

Going Beyond the Surface of Employee Engagement: Exploring the Principles that Matter in Human Resources by Brad Shuck, PhD, associate professor, University of Louisville

• 8:45 a.m. | Wednesday, August 29

Business as Unusual: How to Future-proof HR Against the Top Workforce Trends Transforming Tomorrow by Jack Uldrich, global futurist, speaker and author

• 12:00 p.m., | Thursday, August 30

Leading a Life of IMPACT by Annie Meehan, professional speaker

34th Annual Conference

KYSHRM
Aug. 28-30, 2018 | Omni Louisville Hotel | Louisville



presented by



MORE INFO

Visit the conference website and register at kyshrmconference.com.



MAJORITY LEADER MCCONNELL AND KENTUCKY LEADERS WORKING ON

Ways to Address Opioid Crisis

As Kentucky continues to struggle with the impact of an opioid crisis, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell held a press conference in Louisville in April to discuss legislation introduced to help transition people from treatment to employment.

Kentucky U.S. Senator McConnell stated the most important thing in addressing the opioid crisis is trying to get people back to work to assist in recovery. McConnell said the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery through Effective Employment and Reentry (CAREER) Act focuses on this strategy and will likely be part of a larger package seeking to address the opioid issue across the country, which he stated is a top priority of the U.S. Senate.

Provisions in the legislation would enable state-based pilot programs established under the bill to encourage local businesses and treatment groups to form partnerships to help individuals in recovery find and maintain employment. The CAREER Act would also encourage expanding transitional housing options for recovering addicts until they secure permanent arrangements and give states more flexibility to spend federal career services and training funds to support individuals transitioning from treatment to the workforce.

McConnell was joined at the press conference by members of the business community who participated in a roundtable on the issue.

Kentucky Chamber Senior Vice President of Public Affairs Ashli Watts mentioned

another roundtable recently convened by the organization with business leaders from five surrounding states that have been hit hardest by this epidemic to discuss the opioid crisis as a workforce problem and determine a path to move forward. Following the event, all five state Chamber presidents sent a letter to Leader McConnell and other federal legislators encouraging them to find a policy solution that truly focuses on treatment with an end goal: getting people on the path to recovery and back into the workforce.

Watts stated the CAREER Act will help the states hit hardest offer services for individuals transitioning out of treatment programs and back into the workforce.

“We know addiction is a lifelong disease, and individuals need support that extends beyond the doors of a treatment center and the Kentucky business community wants to be part of that solution. We know that a job and employment can be key to sobriety and by helping to get people healthy and back to work, it benefits employers, businesses and our communities overall,” Watts said.

LEARN MORE

Learn more about the legislation on The Bottom Line at kychamberbottomline.com.

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