



Still time for session to be successful!

As the 2014 session of the General Assembly nears the finish line, the Kentucky Chamber would like to refocus your attention on a number of key pieces of legislation the business community supports. There are several bills under consideration that will better position Kentucky for the future by improving our financial condition, demonstrating a commitment to educating our children and making the Commonwealth more attractive for jobs and investment. We urge you to pass the following legislation in the remaining days of session.

State Budget

Prioritizing state spending to ensure a fiscally responsible budget that restores P-12 education funding to at least 2008 levels and keeps our commitment to higher education is critical.

Pension Funding Levels

Under the current budget proposal, the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System is significantly underfunded. Underfunding KTRS will exacerbate the problems and make it more difficult to address later, leaving the state in worse financial shape long-term. In the absence of a significant infusion of funds in this budget, we strongly urge a thorough review of the system to determine a sustainable long-term strategy to ensure solvency. Teachers and taxpayers deserve no less.

P3 Legislation

HB 407 enables the use of public-private partnerships (P3s) by state and local governments to encourage competition for private sector investments, save tax dollars, and promote transparency and accountability. Every state bordering Kentucky already has P3 legislation.

Medical Review Panels

SB 119 would implement a medical review panel process for cases brought against health care providers. This will help limit meritless lawsuits that increase Kentucky's health care costs, while helping expedite legitimate claims. Medical review panels will have a stabilizing influence on our medical malpractice system, making the state more attractive to employers while helping to retain and attract quality healthcare providers.

Telecommunication Reform

SB 99 would modernize Kentucky's outdated telecommunications laws and allows telecommunications companies to invest more in modern high-speed internet and less on outdated landline telephones.

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Juvenile Justice Reform

SB 200 would reform Kentucky's juvenile justice system by helping youthful offenders redirect their lives while ensuring public safety and a more efficient use of tax dollars.

Combatting Heroin Abuse

SB 5 creates more treatment beds for drug addicts and lengthens prison sentences for drug traffickers. This bill is particularly aimed at the growing heroin epidemic that is not only a social problem, but a workforce issue.

Address Low Performing Schools

SB 211 would permit a local board of education to designate persistently low-performing schools as charter schools in order to provide more flexibility to turn around schools that are not meeting the needs of students.

High Performing Teachers

SB 168 allows for suspension or termination of a teacher's continuing service contract if the teacher fails to successfully meet the requirements of a corrective action plan. It also establishes a new process for teachers who are first hired after July 1, 2015, to earn continuing service contract status, rather than guaranteed tenure.

Contractor Notification

HB 467 allows businesses to enter the information of their subcontractors on the Division of Workers' Claims website and receive notification when there has been a change or cancellation in their subcontractor's workers' compensation insurance coverage.

Modernizing Statute of Limitations

HB 369 lowers the statute of limitations for written contracts from 15 years to 10 years. Currently, at 15 years, Kentucky has the highest statute of limitations for written contracts in the nation.

Smoke Free Workplaces

HB 173 and SB 117 would prohibit smoking in all indoor public places and workplaces. It has overwhelming support from Chamber members. There is still time to address this issue.

Revenue Measures

As the budget is debated in conference, revenue measures have a tendency to be discussed. The Chamber has long advocated expanded gaming and pro-growth tax reform as a way to grow state revenues to fund important needs. We would encourage the General Assembly to keep in mind several pro-business tax measures if revenue raising measures are on the table including angel investor credits, reforming the cost of goods sold for LLET, relief for our signature bourbon industry as well as single sales factor apportionment for corporate tax calculations.

We appreciate the sacrifices you make on behalf of our citizens and share your goals to improve our great Commonwealth. Also included is a quick reference of Where We Stand on important issues before you. We stand ready to discuss any of these issues with you and commit to being a constructive partner as you deal with the important issues facing Kentucky.