



2025 STATE AGENDA





SARAH DAVASHER-WISDOM
President & CEO

LETTER FROM THE CEO

Dear Investor,

As the regional chamber of commerce, Greater Louisville Inc. is the voice for the business community at all levels of government. Each year our staff works with businesses to identify issues hindering economic growth and then advocates daily with elected leaders to make policy changes. The 2025 State Agenda combines many of GLI's long-term priorities with timely issues that are pertinent to our region.

Over the last several years, GLI and our coalition partners have made tremendous strides to make the region's tax climate more competitive. This session, we will see the personal income tax lower by another half percent, which is a huge win as we seek to attract businesses and talent. However, a number of barriers still exist when it comes to competing with our neighboring states. That is why we will continue to support expansion of economic development incentives such as the Kentucky Business Investment program (KBI) to help us attract businesses from various industries and attract talent with a diverse skillset to the region. By expanding our incentives to more business services and technology companies, we can continue our efforts to revitalize downtown and fill vacant office space throughout the community.

As we focus on growth, talent attraction and retention are top priorities for GLI and our investors. We were proud to advocate for the creation of the Talent Attraction and Workforce Retention Interim Taskforce during the 2024 Legislative Session. In an economy where talent can work anywhere, marketing all our region has to offer is critical to attracting the best and brightest to the Commonwealth. Communities and states that are seeing population growth are making significant financial investments to market their communities to relocating talent. We must lean in and do the same. We will continue to advocate for a statewide talent attraction campaign and grant program to support local initiatives like Live in Lou so that we can make even more people aware of the many benefits Greater Louisville offers.

Our 2025 State Agenda is a direct reflection of the priorities of the Greater Louisville business community. It was compiled through months of feedback from GLI's six issue advisory committees and reviewed by our Public Policy Council and Board of Directors.

Your input and your investment in GLI is critical for us to be your voice in Frankfort. We look forward to another successful 2025 Legislative Session with many wins that will transform our region.

Sincerely,

STATE AGENDA AT A GLANCE

BI-STATE

- Establish economic development incentive reciprocity with Indiana
- Support infrastructure and land development in Southern Indiana
- Ease licensing rules across state lines
- Fund regional public transportation
- Explore ways to decrease or eliminate tolls for Louisville-area bridges
- Expand access to regional broadband
- Support continued funding for READI 2.0
- Support tuition reciprocity in Kentucky and Indiana

BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

- Invest in cybersecurity infrastructure and build a pipeline for workforce
- Ensure protections for drug-free employers
- Strengthen economic development programs to increase Kentucky's competitiveness and make programs available to more industries and businesses
- Ensure parity of Kentucky's signature Bourbon industry by streamlining alcohol taxes on canned cocktails
- Streamline Kentucky labor laws to lower tax burden while supporting communities
- Support pro-growth land development policies
- Reduce public pension costs
- Continue work to improve public safety and increase accountability
- Expand programs that support small businesses and entrepreneurs
- Build on Kentucky's state tax reform progress and pass local tax reform legislation
- Support tourism, hospitality, and the arts

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

- Attract and retain skilled workforce through relocation and student loan incentives
- Funding for statewide talent attraction campaign with dedicated funding for regional initiatives
- Examine benefits cliff to ensure smooth transition and continued unemployment for those easing off benefits

- Enact meaningful criminal justice reform to support re-entry and continued employment
- Increase funding for K-12 and higher education
- Fund substance abuse disorder treatment and recovery programs
- Maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce by opposing harmful legislation that could be perceived as discriminatory or unwelcoming
- Encourage second chance hiring
- Stabilize the child care sector and engage the business community in solutions and partnerships
- Remove barriers to workforce participation and educational and training opportunities
- Address young adults and youth that are disconnected from community through programs that connect them with educational and employment opportunities

ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

- Ensure energy affordability
- Retain regulatory professionals
- Fund brownfield remediation programs
- Implement reliable and efficient charging network to support growth of electric vehicles

HEALTH CARE

- Improve health of Kentucky's workforce
- Maintain certificate of need
- Fund the Kentucky Healthcare Workforce Investment fund
- Enact reforms to Medicaid system

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

- Increase investment in mobility
- Invest in water and sewer infrastructure
- Increase infrastructure funding and modernize Kentucky's road aid formula
- Develop multi-modal fund for investment in public transportation, aviation, ports, and freight
- Facilitate growth of communications infrastructure through incentives and by streamlining regulatory processes

BI-STATE

BI-STATE TAX INCENTIVES

Kentucky and Indiana should finalize a framework allowing companies whose workforce reside in both states to take full advantage of existing economic development incentives. A business based in Kentucky should receive credit for creating a job even if the employee lives in Southern Indiana, and vice versa. Incentive reciprocity would support regional economic development efforts and more effectively promote regionalism in Greater Louisville. In addition, for large-scale, high-impact economic development opportunities, GLI encourages Indiana and Kentucky to coordinate on incentive packages to help optimize the region’s ability to attract new businesses and support major business expansions.

PLANNING FOR FUTURE GROWTH & INVESTMENT

With new businesses starting, expanding, and relocating to Southern Indiana alongside a rapidly increasing population, Southern Indiana has seen significant growth in recent years. GLI encourages the Indiana General Assembly to strategically plan for the region’s future by encouraging land development and redevelopment as well as adequately funding infrastructure projects. To further prepare for future growth and economic development, Indiana must continue its support and increase its investment in public transportation in Southern Indiana to preserve and expand routes and ensure the efficient movement of workers, tourists, students, and customers.

An increased investment in state funds for public transportation will ensure that our region can support capital and infrastructure investments by leveraging federal funds now available through the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act.

PROFESSIONAL LICENSING AND CREDENTIALING

Indiana and Kentucky should work proactively to remove barriers to work and regionalism by allowing licensed or credentialed professionals to work on either side of the Ohio River without the burden of seeking additional licenses or certifications or requiring them or their employers to pay additional fees. Both states should ensure that their licensing and credentialing processes do not prevent regional employers from finding the talent they need to grow their businesses.

QUALITY OF PLACE & CONNECTIVITY

The parks as well as pedestrian and cycling pathways along the waterfronts of Louisville and Southern Indiana make Greater Louisville more competitive in attracting and retaining talent and improve quality of life. Policymakers in Kentucky and Indiana should strategically invest in key quality of place projects such as the Ohio River Greenway and Waterfront Park and fully leverage the unique asset of the Falls of the Ohio State Park to attract national and international attention and programming to our region.

Residential Mobility in the Last Year in Jefferson County

Moved within the same county - 8.5%

Moved from a different county, same state - 1.7%

Moved from a different state - 2.0%

Moved from abroad - 1.7%



2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Lawmakers should support increased connectivity between Louisville and Southern Indiana through initiatives such as connecting Portland and New Albany with a second regional pedestrian bridge.

With the increased availability of federal grants, GLI encourages state and local governments in Southern Indiana and Greater Louisville to work together to explore ways to decrease or eliminate tolls for the Louisville area bridges. Current tolling rates combined with planned increases tied to inflation place an undue burden on our region's workforce and discourage commerce and travel through this integral corridor. The revenue forecasts were updated in 2021 to account for changing travel and work trends resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and both Kentucky and Indiana have met and are positioned to exceed the forecasted revenue projections this year. The Joint Board & Tolling Board should consider ways to ease the burden on businesses and the workforce that regularly use the bridges including limiting rate increases and investing in methods of monthly rates that are amenable to the work schedule of hybrid workers who may not be in the office over 20 days a month. By investing in these changes, the Board would signal steps towards creating a stronger regional connection across the river.

REGIONAL BROADBAND ACCESS

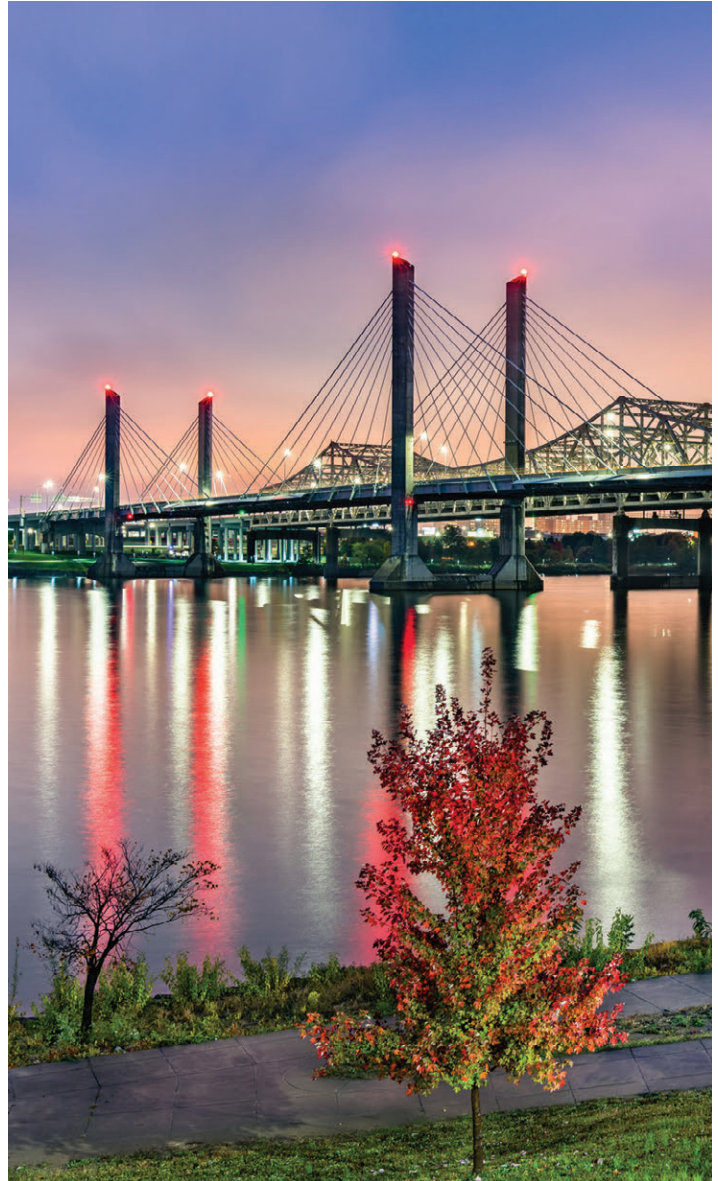
Beyond physical connections, broadband access across Southern Indiana and Greater Louisville is critical for further economic development and connectivity. Policymakers in both states should continue leveraging available federal funding in partnership with internet service providers.

SOUTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

GLI supports efforts to attract and retain talent in Southern Indiana through the Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) 2.0 and the formation of the Our Southern Indiana Regional Development Authority. This multi-county partnership allows the Greater Louisville region to leverage competitive state grant funding for economic development and quality-of-place projects. The Indiana General Assembly should continue to dedicate funding to this important initiative.

TUITION RECIPROCITY

Tuition reciprocity between Kentucky and Indiana increases access and choice for students pursuing higher education and further helps to remove barriers to regionalism in Greater Louisville. Lawmakers and higher education authorities in both states should actively work to support the timely renewal of Kentucky and Indiana's tuition reciprocity agreement and the participation of regional institutions.



**Jefferson County
has over 177,000
workers commuting
in from outside
the county.**

(KY Stats)

BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

CYBERSECURITY

With rising tensions across the globe, the threat to businesses in the United States and Kentucky from cybersecurity attacks and data breaches is rapidly increasing. Cybercriminals are targeting businesses of all sizes, from major health care systems to small main street retail establishments. Investing in cyber-ranges and related infrastructure to allow appropriate testing and preparation will allow businesses in the state to securely operate today and in the future. Building the pipeline for a trained cybersecurity workforce is essential to keeping Kentucky businesses competitive – as of this drafting, there are over 4,000 unfilled cybersecurity jobs in Kentucky. GLI encourages the Kentucky General Assembly to invest in cybersecurity education, innovation, and research. Furthermore, state government officials should continue to invest in and modernize their own cybersecurity defenses, on their own and through appropriate partnerships with the federal government.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACES

Workers terminated for violating an employer’s drug-free workplace standards should not be eligible to receive unemployment benefits. GLI recommends further amendments that ensure workplace safety with regards to workers’ compensation claims. The General Assembly should add language that clarifies if a drug test indicates the presence of marijuana or other controlled substances in the system of a registered qualified medical marijuana patient/worker following an accident during work hours, it will be presumed that the worker was under the influence and the injury was caused by the intoxication unless proven otherwise. This presumption can only be overcome by clear and convincing evidence. If it is not, then an employer is not responsible for wage replacement.

HOUSEHOLD INCOMES IN KENTUCKY

INCOME AND EARNINGS

\$61,118 ± \$653

Median Household Income in Kentucky

\$77,719 ± \$186

Median Household Income in the United States

MEDIAN INCOME BY TYPES OF FAMILIES (IN KENTUCKY)

Families - \$77,935



Married-Couple Families - \$93,544



Nonfamily Households - \$36,323



\$0 \$20K \$40K \$60K \$80K \$100K



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Growing the region's economy through business attraction and expansion efforts is one of GLI's foremost priorities. Business expansions and new employers in Greater Louisville create jobs and provide opportunities for all. Targeted economic development incentives offered by the state play a key role in helping businesses get off the ground, expand operations, and locate new facilities and headquarters in the region.

In the upcoming session, the Kentucky General Assembly must continue to support successful and effective economic development incentive packages and explore ways to increase Kentucky's competitiveness in creating jobs. This should include strengthening Kentucky's Qualified Research Facility Tax Credit to help position Greater Louisville as a center for innovation and ideation. In addition, changes to the Kentucky Business Investment (KBI) program should also be amended to include recurring software subscriptions or licensing fees and the initial software and licensing costs associated with each new full-time job created as eligible costs to qualify for the incentive program. Making these changes to the KBI program would help Kentucky attract businesses which are not capital intensive, but which create high paying wages. These changes would allow the Greater Louisville region to scale its homegrown companies and small businesses and attract cutting-edge enterprises.

Louisville needs additional and enhanced tools to attract new businesses, help existing businesses expand, and retain businesses. It is vitally important that all existing tax credit and incentive programs in Kentucky are working at maximum levels of effectiveness, and are adequately funded. GLI encourages the Kentucky General Assembly to examine existing programs to see where additional opportunity to spur business growth might exist. Where feasible, incentive programs should encourage patronization of Kentucky-based businesses. In addition, Kentucky should more effectively leverage tools to support investment in economically distressed areas, such as increasing the annual cap on the New Markets Development Program Tax Credit. GLI supports a local property tax abatement to help spur economic development. Currently the allowed property tax abatement is on buildings that are 25 years or older and the abatement can only last up to 5 years. The abatement should be expanded to allow for new buildings and to last for up to 25 years. Property tax abatement programs can stimulate economic development by incentivizing property improvements and investments. By reducing or eliminating property taxes for a certain period, these programs encourage property owners to undertake redevelopment projects, construct new buildings, or renovate existing properties.

GLI also supports incentivizing the conversion of downtown office buildings for residential, hospitality, retail, and entertainment purposes.

KENTUCKY BOURBON

The General Assembly must work to protect and grow Kentucky's homegrown Bourbon industry. The Greater Louisville region has benefited more than anywhere else in the state by the global success of Kentucky Bourbon. Recent policies adopted by the General Assembly ensure distilleries in our region and throughout the state can continue to create unique tourism experiences and attract more visitors along the Kentucky Bourbon Trail.

Even though 95% of the world's supply of Bourbon is produced in Kentucky, other states have taken notice and want what Kentucky has. The General Assembly should continue to elevate our signature industry by lowering the tax burden and reducing unnecessary regulations. GLI supports parity with the treatment of spirits, wine, and beer, and therefore supports streamlining alcohol taxes on canned cocktails by fairly taxing the alcohol by volume (ABV) similarly among alcohol types, as well as allowing all canned cocktails with similar ABV without regard to alcohol type to be sold in the same retail locations.

KENTUCKY LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT LAWS AND REGULATIONS

To streamline compliance for businesses and reduce unwarranted lawsuits, GLI supports increased alignment of Kentucky labor and employment rules with federal standards and opposes legislative or regulatory efforts that would make Kentucky an outlier in this area. Increased alignment should include adoption of federal statutes of limitation for wage and hour and equal employment opportunity claims, caps on damages for alleged emotional harms, assigning liability in accordance with federal law in retaliation claims, and following federal thresholds for applying Kentucky labor and employment laws to small businesses.

GLI recognizes efforts in the General Assembly to clarify issues related to employee classification and misclassification in the construction industry. Legislation to address worker classification and misclassification in Kentucky should protect independent contractor relationships and ensure competitive parity for all businesses in the construction industry. Legislation on this issue must not result in overregulating impacted industries, negatively impacting economic development, or exacerbating workforce challenges. To enhance workforce flexibility and ensure our region's competitiveness, GLI opposes new state and local mandates. When regulations are enacted at the state and local levels which differ from proven, uniform protections, it creates an added cost of doing business for employers and reduces Kentucky's ability to compete with peer cities and states.

LAND DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

Land development and redevelopment strongly support economic growth, job creation, housing affordability, improved quality of life, and urban density. While many decisions regarding land development and redevelopment policy are made locally, the General Assembly can and should play a positive role in promoting pro-growth land-use policies. GLI encourages changes at the state level to make Kentucky more competitive, including:

- Continuing support for Kentucky's appeal bond law to deter lengthy appeals processes aimed at derailing projects supported by the community.
- Enacting a state workforce housing credit to make affordable housing projects more financially feasible for the private sector.
- Supporting the state affordable housing trust fund by increasing the fee collected from deed transfers to fund affordable housing projects across the state.
- Matching state guidelines to mirror federal support for the Kentucky Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program, including extending the phasing of development projects.

- Restructuring statutory language on TIF financing to make it more accessible to developers by lowering the minimum investment threshold required to qualify for financing, raising the cap on multi-use projects, or allowing developers to access more TIF financing upfront.
- Aligning state economic development incentives with federal programs such as Opportunity Zones, New Market Tax Credits, and Renewable Energy Incentives to support business development in these areas.

PENSION REFORM

The General Assembly has made progress in recent years to invest in the unfunded liability of Kentucky's public pension funds. However, further reforms are needed to ensure that the state's economic potential is not restricted and that lawmakers can continue to make much-needed investments in key growth areas such as education, childcare, and workforce development. Members of the General Assembly must work together to enact sustainable reforms to ensure system solvency and reduce costs for the state government and local governments throughout the Commonwealth.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

The General Assembly took bold steps last session to address public safety in our city. GLI was thrilled to see the changes to the group violence intervention program (GVI) and the creation of carjacking as a felony. However, there is more work to be done.

In light of recent increases in accidents involving motorists and pedestrians on Louisville's roadways, along with current law enforcement staffing issues, GLI encourages Kentucky lawmakers to consider allowing consolidated governments defined under KRS 67C the ability to use cameras automated enforcement as an option for traffic control at intersections. Studies have shown the effectiveness of automated enforcement can reduce fatal crashes by 21%. While automated enforcement can raise concerns regarding due process and privacy, many states have structured their laws to treat violations resulting from red-light cameras similarly to parking tickets, in which they would not affect a driver's record or insurance rates. Implementation should be based on safety concerns, concentrating on problem intersections with a history of crash data and violations.

Louisville has also seen an alarming rise in gang-related violent crimes. Group leaders often use underage individuals to carry out these crimes to minimize criminal penalties. This not only increases violence in our community but also perpetuates cycles of violence in youth. Lawmakers should continue to address these crimes happening throughout our city to ensure that the community is safe, and the leaders of tomorrow are not being lost to a cycle of crime.

The homicides in Louisville year to date is 129 up from 122 in 2023.

(Louisville Metro Gun Violence Dashboard)

Lawmakers should provide state funding for new resources and new technology to local police departments, as well as to combat violent crime. Regarding gang violence, much of the violence is perpetrated by a small number of individuals who are on the radar of police. Lawmakers should enact a state wiretapping law to monitor and apprehend gang leaders to prevent violent crimes in our community. With a significant percentage of violent crime being gang-related, this is crucial to identifying and apprehending group leaders, thereby reducing violent crime in Louisville. Kentucky is one of the few states that does not have a wiretapping law.

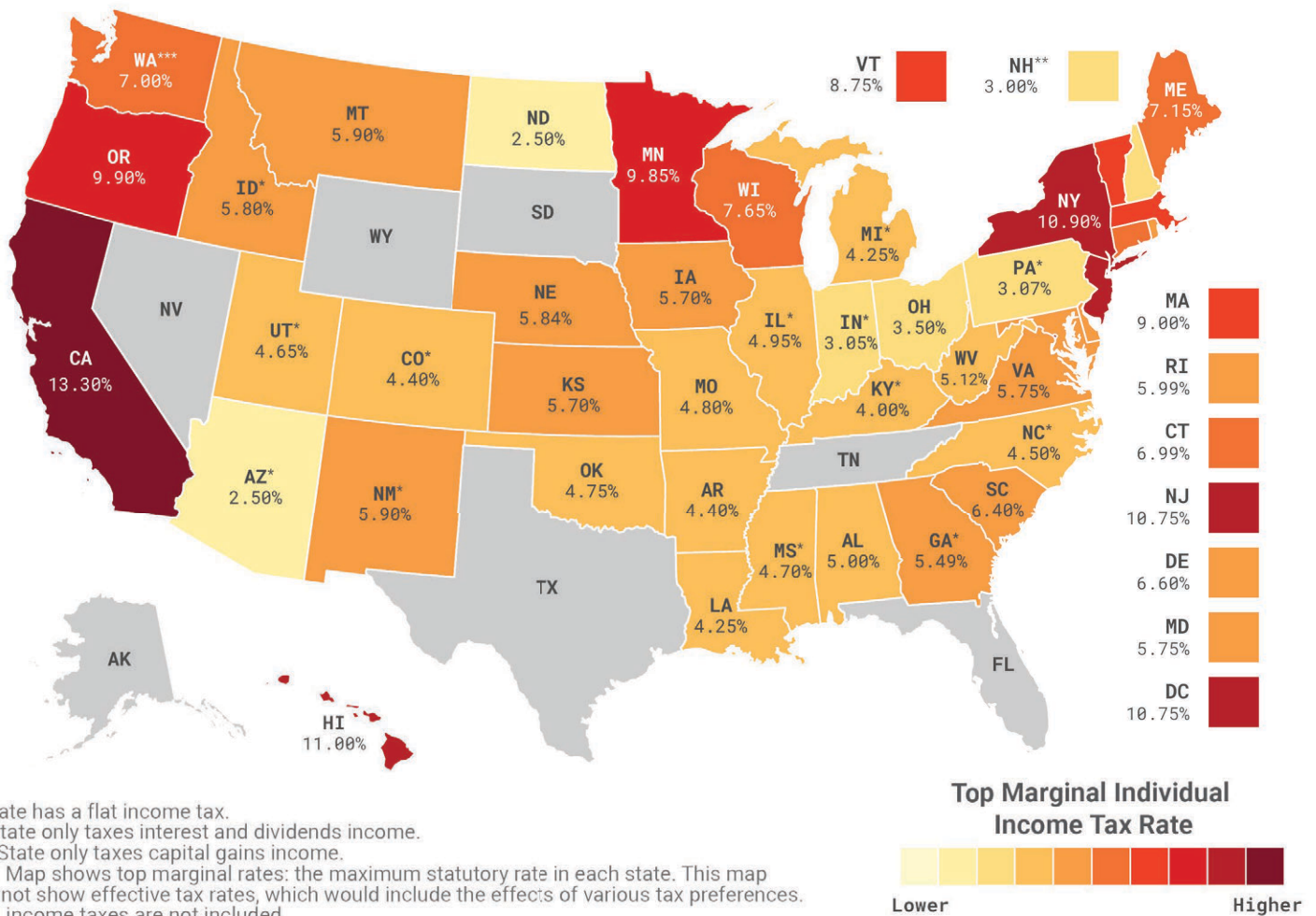
SMALL BUSINESSES, START-UPS, AND ENTREPRENEURS

Last session, the General Assembly focused efforts on making Kentucky a more start-up friendly state. GLI hopes to continue to see this business focus moving into future sessions. Creating an environment where small businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs of all backgrounds thrive is key to the future of Greater Louisville's economy. The General Assembly can continue to support these types of businesses and employers in the Commonwealth by maintaining full funding of Kentucky's Small Business Development Center, expanding the Angel Investment Tax Credit Program to allow for all Kentucky counties to take advantage of the full available credit, continuing the SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Award Program, and continuing to support entrepreneurial programming. Increasing flexibility for state investment dollars and reducing barriers to start new businesses should be prioritized.

Fostering an environment where small businesses and start-up entrepreneurs have access to institutional knowledge and resources is essential for their success and the strength of our local economy. GLI encourages the General Assembly to continue funding through the Kentucky Cabinet of Economic Development for entrepreneurial mentorship programs like Amplify Louisville's entrepreneur-in-residence programs and University of Louisville's executive-in-residence program. GLI supports policy solutions to promote inclusion and minority business growth, such as the modernization of government contracts and certification, contract set asides for minority businesses, tax policies and other benefits, funding of business development programs, and investment opportunities. Raising the state's small purchase limit to \$50,000 (from its current level of \$20,000) would encourage state spending directly from Kentucky's small businesses, many of whom do not have the administrative capacity to competitively bid for every relatively small procurement opportunity.

Furthermore, to expand the option of entrepreneurship to more Kentuckians, GLI supports the addition of small business owner eligibility language to Kentucky's existing Employee Child Care Assistance program.

Top Marginal State Individual Income Tax Rates (As of January 1, 2024)



(*) State has a flat income tax.

(**) State only taxes interest and dividends income.

(***) State only taxes capital gains income.

Note: Map shows top marginal rates: the maximum statutory rate in each state. This map does not show effective tax rates, which would include the effects of various tax preferences. Local income taxes are not included.

Sources: Tax Foundation; state tax statutes, forms, and instructions.

STATE TAX REFORM

In a 21st century economy where businesses and talent can locate wherever they choose, Kentucky must provide a business-friendly environment to attract, grow, and retain tomorrow's employers. GLI firmly believes that creating an environment for business success will place the Commonwealth on a path of unprecedented momentum that will only increase with time.

GLI looks forward to seeing the General Assembly continue to lower the state's individual income tax rate. These reforms improved Kentucky's tax code and will support economic growth and the Commonwealth's business competitiveness. Lawmakers should remain focused on continuing to make tax policy in Kentucky more competitive with surrounding states and encourage business growth in the Commonwealth. This should include decreasing the state's outdated reliance on production-based taxes and allowing for comprehensive tax reform at the local level.

GLI supports repealing the limited liability entity tax (LLET). However, if retained, the cost of goods sold (COGS) definition must be modified to align Kentucky's LLET COGS definition with that of the COGS definition for federal and Kentucky income tax purposes. GLI supports identifying mechanisms to replace lost revenues from an LLET repeal, provided that the outcome was a reduced tax compliance burden on businesses. By bringing Kentucky in line with the federal and its own income tax definition for COGS, it will both enhance compliance by businesses and improve enforcement by the state.

GLI applauds the General Assembly for updating Kentucky's conformity with the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) in the 2024 session. However, we encourage the General Assembly to update the IRC conformity date every session. Adopting an updated conformity date to the IRC benefits Kentucky taxpayers, tax practitioners, and tax administrators. IRC

conformity refers to the degree to which a state tax code conforms to the federal tax code and simplifies a state's implementation of its tax policy by using federal taxable income as a starting point for calculations.

LOCAL TAX REFORM

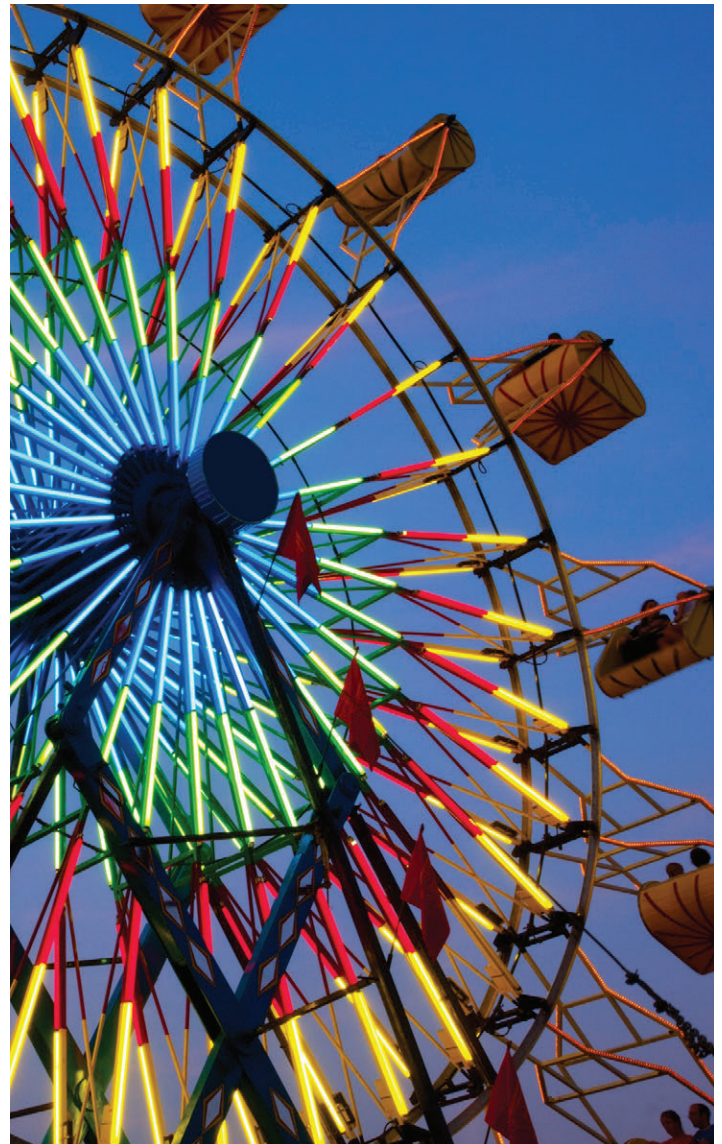
Much has changed in our Commonwealth since 1891, except for a restrictive section of the Kentucky Constitution that limits the legislature's power to comprehensively reform local government tax policies. Section 181 of the Kentucky Constitution only permits the General Assembly to delegate very limited revenue raising options to local governments including property, occupational, and a few fees and license taxes. In light of the impacts of the pandemic, Kentucky's pension crisis, and other social and economic pressures, city and county governments in the Commonwealth need increased flexibility to generate revenues and more leeway to design flexible local revenue systems that capitalize on each community's unique offerings and create an economically competitive environment. This is important not only for providing key services and meeting obligations but for economic development and future growth. State lawmakers must be able to allow city and county governments in Kentucky to develop and implement forward-thinking, business-friendly tax systems to compete and thrive in the 21st century as all of our surrounding and competitor states do.

Not only will this change increase economic development and improve community services, but it will also make Kentucky more competitive with our surrounding states by allowing us to move away from a system that taxes productivity instead of consumption.

Acknowledging the unique character of each and every local jurisdiction across the Commonwealth, Kentucky should also continue its efforts to make income-based local taxes more uniform to transition from or reduce the disparate treatment of taxpayers, particularly those who deliver income in multiple jurisdictions. Furthermore, state, and local tax administrators should continue to streamline the tax filing, processing, collection, and enforcement processes across Kentucky.

TOURISM, HOSPITALITY, AND THE ARTS

Louisville's tourism, hospitality, and arts scenes have long been major drivers of economic growth and talent attraction in Greater Louisville. The arts and hospitality scene across the region continues to attract tourism and business for Louisville. GLI encourages lawmakers to continue their support for Kentucky Venues, the operator of the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center and Kentucky International Convention Center. Kentucky Venues generates over \$360 million in economic impact each year and 69% of the hotel occupancy in the Greater Louisville region comes from the 300 - 350 events that Kentucky Venues hosts each year. GLI is proud to support Kentucky Venues as a major tourism driver for the region.



**Kentucky Venues
generates over
\$360 million in
economic impact
each year.**

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT

Stagnant population growth, talent attraction, and retention are challenges impacting all regional employers and pose a serious threat to economic growth in Kentucky and Greater Louisville. To address these challenges, GLI launched Live in Lou, a talent attraction initiative aimed at increasing our region's skilled workforce, reversing population growth trends, and ensuring that Greater Louisville grows at a rate that is competitive with peer cities.

GLI was thrilled to see the establishment of the Workforce Attraction and Retention Interim Taskforce last session and encourages the General Assembly to fund a statewide talent attraction campaign with money included specifically for regional initiatives, like Live in Lou, that proactively encourage individuals with training in high-demand industry sectors to live and work in Kentucky, and the Greater Louisville region.

RELOCATION INCENTIVES

In order to capitalize on the national shift toward remote work, the General Assembly should adopt a relocation incentive program to attract new talent, including remote workers, to the Commonwealth. This could be implemented in a number of ways including home construction and rebate incentives, new mover land grants for new home builders, or direct cash payments for new movers to the state working full-time remotely at a business based outside of Kentucky.

STUDENT LOAN TAX INCENTIVES

Retaining workforce is a key component to growing our state and regional economy. GLI encourages the General Assembly to implement a student loan tax incentive to encourage recent college graduates to stay in Kentucky as they begin and grow their careers. Easing the burden of student loan debt through tax credits could be a powerful tool in retaining this educated segment of the workforce that will have higher earning and spending power for our local and regional economies.

BENEFITS CLIFF

With Kentucky's workforce participation rate hovering around historically low levels, it is imperative that the General Assembly address the multi-faceted reasons that many Kentuckians opt out of the workforce. A major barrier to work for many Kentuckians is the benefits cliff, which refers to the decrease in public benefits that can occur when recipients are subject to a small increase in earnings. Kentucky has already implemented programs to address this, such as the transitional benefits policies in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). GLI encourages lawmakers to implement additional policies that could aid in the transition for Kentucky families, such as establishing state refundable tax credits and tapering out benefit amounts rather than abrupt cutoffs. Taking these steps would help smooth the transition and encourage workers to embrace career opportunities and higher wages.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Criminal justice reform is central to reversing years of misguided policies that have led to overincarceration, trapped numerous Kentucky families in cycles of poverty, disproportionately impacted marginalized communities, and contributed to workforce challenges for Kentucky employers. With GLI's support, the General Assembly has passed several important bills in recent sessions to reform Kentucky's criminal justice system. This includes improving criminal records expungement and parole processes as well as raising the threshold for felony theft. Lawmakers have also given serious consideration to legislation related to cash bail and removing barriers to education for convicted felons. In the coming session, GLI encourages lawmakers to take bold action in criminal justice reform with the goal of reducing incarceration and recidivism rates in Kentucky and encouraging workforce, educational, and substance use treatment opportunities for all individuals who encounter Kentucky's criminal justice system. Policy suggestions include:

- Reform cash bail in Kentucky to address inequities for communities of color and those in poverty who are disproportionately affected. The current system often forces individuals who cannot afford bail into pre-trial detention, negatively affecting their ability to maintain employment before their case is adjudicated.
- Eliminate the ban on individuals convicted of a felony from receiving KEES funds.
- Consider legislative solutions to allow Kentuckians with felony records to regain their right to vote.
- Continue incentivizing education, training, treatment, and employment in Kentucky's probation and parole systems.
- Develop increased alternatives to imprisonment and more effectively optimize current alternative programs and pilot programs, such as the pilot pretrial diversion program established by the General Assembly for substance abuse disorder.
- Support local governments, higher education institutions, and nonprofits in implementing effective education and employment-focused re-entry programs in jails throughout Kentucky.
- Implement a statewide program that would provide state-issued identification to all people leaving incarceration in Kentucky, enabling them to better access housing, employment, healthcare, and mental health services that are necessary for successful re-entry.
- Continue improving Kentucky's expungement system by reducing wait periods, streamlining procedures, lowering fees, digitizing records, and implementing updates to allow for automatic expungement of certain eligible offenses.
- Ensure that any individual who encounters the criminal justice system and needs substance use disorder treatment or mental health services has ample access to treatment opportunities and providers. Pursue policies to support successful re-entry by working with corrections and employers to structure community supervision requirements that are conducive to employment.
- Monitor and assess current and future legislative measures that may have a disproportionate impact on communities of color, including criminal statutes and proceedings.
- Narrow Kentucky's persistent felony offender laws, which in their current forms can lead to increased mandatory sentencing for lower-level felony offenses and have been found to disproportionately affect minority populations while contributing to overcrowding in jail and prison populations. Decrease the number of fines and fees that justice-involved individuals are subject to. Individuals in poverty are often incarcerated longer or solely for non-payment of fines or restitution, contributing to overcrowding of Kentucky's county jails and making it harder for those individuals to maintain employment.



**11% of all working age
Kentuckians do not have
a high school diploma or
equivalent certification.**

(Prichard Committee)

HIGHER EDUCATION

With the goals of ensuring high-quality lifelong learning opportunities for its residents, increasing degree and certificate attainment leading to meaningful work opportunities, and meeting the growing demand for talent in the Greater Louisville region, post-secondary institutions and students must be supported. Kentucky's college enrollment rate has trended downward for the last several years, falling to 50.5% in 2019, significantly lower than the national college going rate of 66.2%. This gap leaves Greater Louisville at a disadvantage behind its peer markets as we work to compete and grow the talent and workforce the region needs today and in the future.



Kentucky Ranks 41st in Post-Secondary Enrollment.

(Prichard Committee)

It is imperative that Kentucky increase its investment in postsecondary education to 2007-2008 per student levels or greater to help keep student costs down. A highly educated and skilled workforce drives the economic engine of the Commonwealth. Universities, colleges, and other institutional alternatives, including technical school and competency-based programs, must all be supported to meet the diverse needs of the region and deliver affordable, effective, and impactful higher education outcomes. Health care outcomes are enhanced by increasing the pipeline of nurses, physicians, and other health care providers, which attracts employers and employees to the state and region. To increase student access and success, the state should provide consistent support for dual credit and early college programs. GLI also encourages the General Assembly to provide funding for world-class research facilities in Engineering, Robotics, Automation, and Advanced Manufacturing to drive university-industry engagement in the region's key technology areas.

K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION

State support for public education is essential to advance the work of local school districts, grow Kentucky's future workforce, and to attract new businesses and residents. As school districts struggle with staff shortages, GLI encourages lawmakers to fund teacher recruitment and retention programs. Such programs should be sufficiently flexible to respond to the unique needs of urban, suburban, and rural school districts. Lawmakers should build on past legislation offering incentive pay for teachers by empowering districts to take such factors as performance, subject matter, and community resource needs into account when determining teacher compensation and incentives, in addition to more traditional factors such as experience and academic credentials. Additionally, providing funding assistance for classified staff including school nurses, bus drivers, nutrition workers, and many more roles, is essential for the efficient operation of schools and to fully support students for academic success.

“The work that GLI is doing for Education and Workforce development is paramount to the improvement and success for the Greater Louisville region.”

– DeVone Holt, President and CEO, Muhammad Ali Center, and GLI Education and Workforce Policy Committee Chair.

Ensuring a quality education for every student is critical. Student achievement is directly linked to economic growth and to have a strong future economy we must prioritize public education. The state and region must focus on accelerating student achievement to remain globally and regionally competitive.

GLI understands the importance of providing the best education to the children of the Commonwealth and appreciates the focused efforts of the General Assembly in navigating the ongoing concerns with Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS). With nearly 100,000 students and 165 schools, the success and efficiency of JCPS operations is critical for our community. GLI encourages the General Assembly to continue a mindful discussion of the impact of JCPS on the Louisville community and to seek an outcome that sets Louisville up for long-term success and economic growth. Any changes made to improve the district's efficiency should be research based and performed in collaboration with the district's superintendent.

GLI has continually supported exploring ways to improve operational efficiencies for the district, including the 2014 financial audit and the 2017 audit by the Department of Education, which resulted in the foundation of JCPS' Future State Plan. Since those audits, JCPS leadership has implemented important changes to their structure and operations, amid unprecedented workforce and pandemic challenges. However, we continue to believe the district's superintendent needs more flexibility for effective decision-making and communication.

GLI has been a long-time partner of JCPS' successful Academies of Louisville program, which focuses on work-based learning and prepares students for in-demand careers, and GLI continues to advocate for expansion of the Middle School Explore program as well as increased business community engagement to create strong talent pipelines for new, highly skilled jobs in the region.

In addition to providing quality education for these formative years, setting students up for success as they seek higher education is crucial. Last year Kentucky saw record declines in student participation in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by those looking to attend college. GLI encourages state agencies to work with JCPS, as well as districts across the state, to ensure that students understand the importance of FAFSA, and time is dedicated in school to make sure those students eligible for the benefits have the resources they need to complete the application.



MAINTAINING A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

To further support talent attraction and retention in Kentucky and Greater Louisville, lawmakers should ensure state policies and relevant public agencies fully support immigrants and refugees who relocate to the Commonwealth from abroad. Lawmakers must adamantly oppose any legislative or regulatory action that could be perceived as discriminatory or unwelcoming and instead embrace policies that foster diversity, inclusion, and equity.

Employers must be allowed to autonomously control their hiring and recruitment practices. Current laws allow employers to adopt the standards that work for their individual businesses and those laws should be maintained. GLI discourages lawmakers from restricting employers' rights to implement DE&I policies important to their culture and operations.

KENTUCKY'S SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER CRISIS

As Kentucky continues to address substance use disorders, the General Assembly must remain committed to allocating state funds and taking full advantage of available federal funds to provide the necessary resources for treatment, prevention, and job training.



SECOND CHANCE HIRING AND LICENSURE

The General Assembly should act to encourage individuals who have encountered the criminal justice system to pursue careers that require occupational licenses by mandating pre-application determinations for those licenses. This would allow jobseekers to know whether their criminal history is disqualifying before investing in the training and education required for the license. Occupational licensing reform and similar initiatives can increase workforce participation among this population and decrease recidivism.

STABILIZE KENTUCKY'S CHILD CARE SECTOR

GLI was pleased to see the investment made by the General Assembly in recent years to sustain and grow the child care sector. In 2024, significant policy improvements and investments were included in the biennial budget including maintaining support for working families, child care providers, and encouraging innovative delivery solutions. High-quality, accessible, and affordable child care and early childhood education is critical to workforce participation, building a more inclusive economy, and putting children on a pathway to future success. Despite investments at the state and federal levels, the child care sector faces significant challenges, creating barriers to work for parents

and caretakers as well as depriving children of learning opportunities at a pivotal time in their development. Kentucky must prioritize stabilizing the child care sector and make the necessary investments to ensure the sector's long-term success and growth. GLI supports legislation and appropriations investing in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and meeting the demands of working parents who need accessible, reliable, and quality child care. These vital program solutions should include:

- Maintaining CCAP provider reimbursement rates at federally recommended levels and set rates based on cost modeling that consider the true price of care and appropriately supports rural providers.
- Continuing to allow all child care employees to participate in CCAP through classification as a protected population.
- Reducing CCAP burdens & benefit cliffs by allowing families to retain their earned income based on a limited co-pay structure and maintaining a six-month transition period for families exiting the program due to modest wage increases.

Growing the early learning workforce should be a top priority for policymakers. Recruiting and retaining early childhood educators and increasing quality of education remains a significant and immediate barrier for child care programs. Kentucky must continue to invest in strategies to address dire staffing shortages, including maintaining the improved early childhood education credential scholarship program for individuals actively working in early childhood programs and covering the cost of mandatory background checks for child care employees.

GLI recognizes that the business community has a role to play in overcoming child care challenges and applauds the General Assembly for their continued support of the Employee Child Care Assistance Program, a public-private partnership that encourages employers to offer child care assistance to their employees while providing matching contributions with state funds. We encourage lawmakers to improve the program based on employer feedback provided in the first year of implementation and encourage widespread participation within the business community. GLI also encourages state lawmakers to prioritize programs that incentivize businesses to offer onsite child care centers and to partner with child care providers to meet the needs of their workforce.

GLI supports significant expansion of high-quality, full-day, full-year child care and early childhood education services, using a mixed delivery model to improve access and increase options available to Kentucky families.

WORKFORCE TRAINING & PREPARATION

Greater Louisville employers continue to face severe workforce challenges. Regional employers shoulder thousands of dollars in training and retraining costs and miss opportunities for new projects and growth due to unfilled positions and workforce capacity limitations. Equally as pressing, the rise of automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and other innovative technologies will increasingly lead to significant labor force disruption and will require a fundamental rethinking of workforce training and retraining initiatives. It is critical that lawmakers view Kentucky's current and future workforce challenges as a significant barrier to economic growth and make the investments needed to build a workforce that can meet the needs of employers and anticipate the unique demands of a 21st century economy. GLI encourages the General Assembly to support these critical efforts, especially as federal funding and programming has declined in recent years. The General Assembly should:

- Establish a permanent fund for grants to workforce boards and other providers to develop more industry-focused training and retraining initiatives targeted at high-demand jobs with good career pathway opportunities.
- Create and fund initiatives aimed at cultivating a competitive tech workforce, including trained AI data scientists to support sustained AI experimentation, development, and deployment along with advanced manufacturing industries in Kentucky.
- Continue to fund and support the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program, as well as invest in efforts to expand awareness of the program, and improve efficiency and ease of use for applicants.
- Connect the more than 300,000 working age adults without a high school degree or equivalent certification with apprenticeships and adult education programs.
- Support continued funding for Goodwill of Kentucky's The Excel Center, which works with adults to help them earn high school diplomas and prepare them for college or career.
- Permanently provide funds for GED testing and obtaining career competency credits.

YOUNG ADULT AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING

There are approximately 12,000 disconnected youth in Jefferson County between the ages of 16-24, which is higher than many of our peer cities. This problem can have many far-reaching consequences for communities that fail to address it including high unemployment rates and higher rates of crime and homicides. Metro Louisville has invested in programming to combat this trend through programs like The Spot, which offers support and career resources for this target population. Without continued investment for this type of programming, the problem of disconnected youth could cost Louisville and Kentucky taxpayers billions of dollars. GLI encourages the General Assembly to support this work.

Live in Lou's private label campaigns have driven more than 2000 job seekers to apply for local positions.



ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

As the state seeks to gain a competitive advantage against our peers, it is crucial that policies develop that allow for predictable and simplified planning for businesses in the state and those looking to relocate to Kentucky. GLI supports the simplification of permitting processes for renewable energy projects to ensure that there is certainty and attainability for those seeking permits. Support by the General Assembly and state more broadly would ensure that as Kentucky moves forward into a new era of energy, that all players are working to secure the industry's success.

GLI also opposes the state required 1000-foot setback for all renewable energy projects. The General Assembly should move away from this arbitrary measurement in favor of one that provides more leniency for projects looking to support a renewable energy future in Kentucky.

AFFORDABLE ENERGY

Access to energy resources at competitive rates is vital to attracting and retaining businesses and talent in Greater Louisville. Kentucky has long enjoyed the distinction of being an affordable energy state. GLI supports policies that serve to help regional energy companies to continue providing services and resources at competitive rates and is opposed to mandates that threaten to drive up costs for energy providers and consumers.

RETAIN REGULATORY PROFESSIONALS

Businesses operating in the energy and environmental sectors are required to work closely with the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet to ensure compliance with numerous administrative and environmental regulations. GLI continues to advocate for the Commonwealth to retain a staff of highly skilled, knowledgeable professionals to assist with compliance and permitting processes. Retention of this staff is more critical than ever and training any new hires to perform at peak levels supports the Cabinet's work as well as efficiently serving the businesses that interact with them. By adequately and consistently funding Cabinet staff training and personnel costs, the General Assembly can help to ease these processes and allow businesses to grow and operate more efficiently.

BROWNFIELD REMEDIATION

Brownfield remediation and redevelopment programs are critical for reducing the prevalence of blight and hazardous properties in Greater Louisville. GLI supports programs aimed at assisting businesses and developers with brownfield remediation and redevelopment through assessment services and funding opportunities.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Kentucky has seen significant investments in electric vehicle production announced recently. To support the increase in electric vehicles and ensure that Kentucky becomes a hub for this growing market sector, Kentucky must implement a visible, robust, and reliable fast-charging network across our state's roadways.



**Kentucky is ranked 32nd nationally
in the cost of electricity prices.**

(U.S. Energy Information Administration)

HEALTH CARE

A HEALTHIER KENTUCKY

Kentucky has long suffered from poor health outcomes in comparison to the rest of the nation, which has resulted in reduced quality of life, placed strains on our health care systems and state budget, and harmed the competitiveness of our workforce. Particularly among communities of color, increased support, education, and resources should be considered. GLI strongly supports measures aimed at improving the health of Kentuckians and encourages policy efforts that eliminate health disparities and advance health equity in our region, including efforts aimed at reducing tobacco and nicotine usage. This includes removing smokers as a protected class, funding smoking cessation programs, and allowing for increased regulation of the use and marketing of tobacco and nicotine products.

It also includes investing in critical capital improvements at Louisville's Community Care Campus which provides a 24/7 respite for individuals experiencing homelessness who also require medical care. This is an important collaboration between multiple health care businesses in Louisville that can lead to dramatic changes for those experiencing homelessness.

CERTIFICATE OF NEED

GLI encourages the legislature to maintain the current system of Certificate of Need. The current system takes the impacts and benefits of new medical facilities, health services, and major medical equipment into account to provide health care more efficiently to Kentuckians.

HEALTH CARE TALENT & WORKFORCE NEEDS

To adequately serve a growing and aging population, Kentucky must address the shortage of medical professionals by creating and supporting programs to build the medical workforce and by providing incentives that will retain and attract health care professionals and workers.

GLI applauds the Kentucky General Assembly for passage of the Kentucky Healthcare Workforce Investment Fund to remove barriers to health care careers and address the industries' workforce shortages.



MEDICAID

A healthy workforce is vital to economic development but must come at a cost to the state that is sustainable. This core principle should serve as the foundation of any changes to how Kentucky serves its Medicaid population. Modifications to Kentucky's Medicaid system should focus on effective state spending on health care, improve equitable health outcomes, provide a smooth transition to private coverage for Medicaid recipients leaving the system, and minimize burdens on providers, insurers, and employers. Reforms should serve to increase efficiencies within Kentucky's Medicaid system such as encouraging the use of generic drugs when appropriate. Further efforts should focus on reducing fraud, waste, and abuse; supporting underserved and rural communities; encouraging and rewarding workforce participation; and investing in local economies.

To allow for Kentucky to continue receiving the federal matching funds it needs to administer Medicaid services and cover the Medicaid population, the General Assembly should ensure that all taxes impacting the health care sector in the Commonwealth comport with requirements and guidelines of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Behavioral health services are a significant driver of increased costs in the state's Medicaid program. GLI encourages the state to reinstate prior authorizations for behavioral health services and partner with providers who are committed to quality, evidence and outcomes-based care and focused on the treatment and recovery of Kentucky's most vulnerable citizens.

WELLNESS AND PROACTIVE DISEASE PREVENTION

As the costs of medical care continue to increase, it will be increasingly critical to integrate wellness and disease prevention strategies to alleviate the economic burden on both private and public health care. Policy and funding that prioritizes public health and wellness outcomes should be a focus for a sustainable future. GLI encourages lawmakers to promote policies, regulations, and consumer protections that educate citizens about potential environmental health hazards and identify and limit environmental exposures to natural and manufactured contaminants, especially in vulnerable populations.

**Kentucky ranks 25th-highest
based on healthcare spending
per person nationally.**

(Legislative Research Commission)

PROTECT HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS FROM FRIVOLOUS LAWSUITS

GLI supports comprehensive reforms to Kentucky's legal liability climate, which studies have shown to be one of the top ten worst in the country.

For Greater Louisville to continue cultivating its status as a center for high-quality and innovative health care, state lawmakers must enact liability protections and reforms to curtail and contain frivolous lawsuits in the medical industry. More reforms to Kentucky's legal liability climate – such as restrictions on fraudulent legal advertising, limits on claimants' attorney fees, and a constitutional amendment to allow caps on damages – are needed. The current litigious climate has led to rising malpractice insurance costs that negatively affect health care affordability and accessibility for patients. Kentucky should establish itself as a leader in protecting health care professionals from frivolous lawsuits. This would improve patient care and help our region retain and attract health care professionals and businesses.



TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

INVEST IN MOBILITY

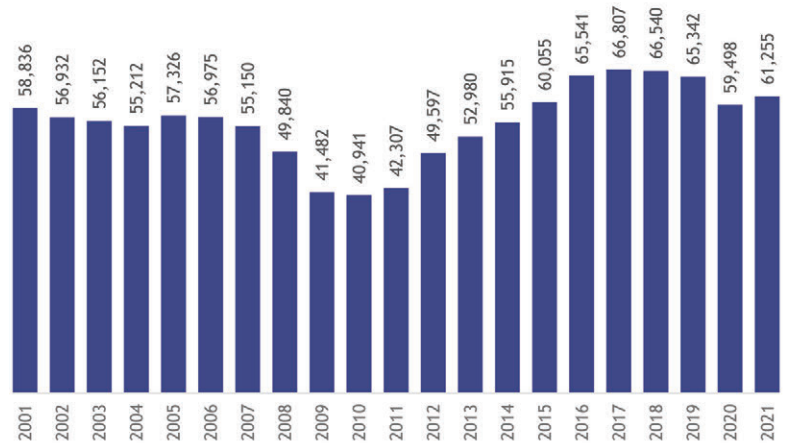
In Greater Louisville, a robust public transportation system is key to delivering a qualified workforce to employers, getting students to class, and supporting strong economic development.

Additional state level commitment to transit funding is imperative to support mobility throughout Greater Louisville and providing better public transit service that would increase employers' access to the region's workforce. GLI encourages lawmakers to establish a dedicated and sustainable revenue source for public transportation that will adequately address the mobility needs of our region.

With increased federal funding available through the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act and grants through the Federal Railroad Administration, GLI encourages state and local officials to capitalize on this record level of investment to extend passenger rail service through Louisville. Rail service would create efficient and accessible connectivity between Louisville and peer markets, which is critical for continued economic and population growth.

Workforce shortages in key transportation sectors, like aerospace engineering, are affecting the Greater Louisville region and the state's ability to compete for companies and talent operating in this high growth sector. GLI encourages lawmakers to focus on industry-specific programs that will grow this workforce among Kentucky's population and attract professionals from around the country. GLI applauds the work of the General Assembly as they begin to address industry shortages through legislation like SB 127 in 2024 for the aviation sector. More work remains, and GLI hopes to see these investments made for other struggling sectors as necessary.

Transportation Equipment Manufacturing Employment in Kentucky



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, accessed February 2023.

INVESTMENT IN QUALITY WATER & SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

To improve the quality of regional water and sewer infrastructure, legislative and regulatory action should encourage sustainable and long-term growth in regional sewer capacity and regional water expansion projects. To avoid catastrophic loss and damage, resources are needed to repair and modernize flood protection systems. In order to meet the demands and needs of economic growth, investment in wastewater and stormwater infrastructure should be made to enable sustainable growth. Stormwater quality treatment techniques such as pervious pavement should also be included in these efforts. GLI opposes efforts to repeal Kentucky's statewide fluoridation standards for community water systems. Allowing local governments to regulate water fluoridation could create a county-by-county patchwork of rules, which would harm the ability of regional drinking water systems to provide quality services, support economic growth, and protect public health.



MODERNIZE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING & ROAD-AID ALLOCATION

As a critical coordination and manufacturing hub, Greater Louisville relies heavily on a reliable, high-quality network of bridges and roads to support economic development and growth. GLI continues to support increased investment in Kentucky's roads and highways and opposes efforts to divert road-fund dollars to pay for General Fund obligations. To maximize the impact of increased infrastructure investment, the General Assembly must also modernize the road-fund allocation formula that Kentucky has used to allocate gas tax revenues since 1948 to more accurately account for lane mileage, traffic counts, and population growth.

COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE FUTURE

Kentucky should ensure that regions like Greater Louisville are well-positioned for the future by supporting the development and modernization of telecommunications infrastructure. Beginning in 2021, significant federal government funding became available for broadband deployment through programs like the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund and State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds and soon more will come through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) fund. The 2020 Kentucky Legislature funded the Kentucky Broadband Deployment Fund that is administered

by the Kentucky Infrastructure Authority (KIA) with the \$300 million appropriation of ARPA funding. With the passage of House Bill 315 in 2022, the Kentucky General Assembly created further guidance for fund distribution and established the new Office of Broadband Deployment within KIA. GLI supports continued funding for broadband deployment grants for wired and wireless networks and opposes measures that threaten to impede or hamper investment in digital infrastructure. The new FCC Broadband map makes it clear that unserved locations are often scattered between or in very close proximity to underserved locations. Holistic projects that include both unserved and underserved locations will attract more private investment, as these projects allow providers to reach the scale needed to deploy broadband in an efficient, cost-effective way. In 2024 the Kentucky General Assembly had the foresight to pass HB 267 to clarify that the IJA funding will be disbursed pursuant to the federal BEAD guidelines to avoid potential conflict with existing state legislation that could have caused delays in implementation.

To further encourage investment in telecommunications infrastructure, the General Assembly should also ensure that regulatory processes are as streamlined as possible and provide for fair and reasonable terms, conditions, and rates to access state-controlled rights of way and infrastructure. To that end, GLI supports the goals of FCC's Declaratory Ruling and Third Report and Order on wireless broadband deployment, which aims to facilitate a timely buildout of 5G. Regulations must support, not impede, the development of these critical infrastructure assets by technology and communication providers.

In urban areas, where broadband infrastructure has been deployed by numerous wireline and wireless providers, state and local governments should seek to utilize this existing infrastructure by partnering with and supporting private providers, rather than build duplicative, taxpayer-funded networks. Additionally, GLI is supportive of state and local conversations regarding access to utility poles to ensure rules and regulations are agreeable to all invested parties and contribute to the successful expansion of broadband into rural areas.

In 2024, the General Assembly made Kentucky more competitive with surrounding states by passing HB 8, pursuant to which providers will be eligible to recover 50% of sales tax paid for Broadband equipment up to a total cap of \$5 million each year for all providers. If there are claims for more than \$5 million, each provider will receive its proportionate share based on what it paid in sales tax. With the implementation of the BEAD funding and the prior ARPA funding, the sales tax paid by the industry will far exceed \$5 million and the industry is hopeful that the impact of this tax credit will motivate future consideration of an increased cap.

GLI ADVOCACY

GLI relies on hundreds of volunteers from the Greater Louisville business community to develop legislative priorities and set positions on key public policy issues that affect economic growth and workforce development. With the support of GLI's Board of Directors, GLI's Public Policy Council advises on all advocacy positions with the assistance of six Issue Advisory Committees. The dedicated volunteers that lead the Public Policy Council and GLI's Issue Advisory Committees and the hundreds of members who give their time are the key to GLI's success in advocating for the business community's priorities:

PUBLIC POLICY COUNCIL

Chair – Les Fugate, Brown-Forman

BI-STATE ISSUES

Chair – Stephen Lukinovich, Cherry Bekaert

BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

Chair – Jim Dahlem, Dahlem Company

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Chair – DeVone Holt, Muhammad Ali Center

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Chair – Jennifer Cave, Stites & Harbison

HEALTH CARE

Chair – Lourdes Baez, Baptist Health

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Chair – David Beck, Kentucky Venues

GLI GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS & COMMUNICATIONS TEAM



SARAH DAVASHER-WISDOM
President & CEO



SHELBY SOMERVELL
Senior Vice President,
Government Affairs and
External Relations



OLIVIA OLSON
Senior Director,
Communications & PR



HELEN HACKER
Director, Government
Affairs & Policy



[GLI]