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BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

GLI encourages full federal funding for Small Business Development Centers, which support entrepreneurs and small businesses with technical assistance, capacity building, and numerous other key services.

BANKING REGULATIONS

GLI urges Congress to review and repeal overly burdensome banking regulations that stifle lending to businesses, increase costs, and prevent investment. Regulations for banks should take a tailored approach and include risk rather than just asset size.

DATA SECURITY AND PRIVACY

Congressional action is needed to establish a federal data security and privacy protection framework, which would provide certainty and consistency for consumers and businesses.

FAIR LABOR PROPOSALS

GLI supports allowing employers to offer employees compensatory time off as an alternative to monetary compensation for overtime work. In addition, any future changes to the threshold for the employee exemption for overtime pay should avoid excessive increases in costs for employers, especially small businesses, and ensure that employers are able to adapt to rule changes without fundamentally altering their business model.

TAX REFORM

While the landmark Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (TCJA) reformed the U.S. tax code to allow American businesses to compete in today's global economy, additional reforms are still needed. Two key changes that would benefit Greater Louisville's economy include removing new limitations on the business interest expense deduction and making permanent the federal alcohol excise tax rates established by TCJA.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

GLI supports trade agreements that promote open, free, and fair trade with other countries and opposes the imposition of tariffs or any approach to international trade that could bring harm to Greater Louisville businesses or limit access to global markets. To that end, GLI encourages congressional approval of the USMCA and supports the removal of tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from Mexico and Canada and the lifting of retaliatory tariffs on U.S. goods, especially the European Union's retaliatory tariffs on bourbon, Kentucky's signature industry. To ensure fairness in free trade, GLI supports efforts by federal policymakers to deter currency manipulation.

NET NEUTRALITY

Congressional action is needed to remove uncertainty from the market and ensure the issue of net neutrality does not swing back-and-forth every four years. Through legislation that applies to all internet companies and guarantees neutrality, transparency, openness, non-discrimination, and privacy protection for all internet users, Congress can permanently protect the open internet for all users while encouraging continued investment for the next generation of internet innovation.

ARTS FUNDING

Greater Louisville's arts scene competes with the top cities in the world and drives economic growth. GLI supports federal funding for arts programs to help our region continue to attract and retain top talent, boost tourism, and sustain a positive quality of life for our citizens.

BLOCKCHAIN

Blockchain technology promises to disrupt the online economy in a manner which improves the lives of consumers and opens the door to new forms of digital commerce. GLI supports policies which provide regulatory clarity for entrepreneurs and developers who are seeking to unlock the innovation promised by this new technology.

INVESTMENT IN LOW-INCOME, UNDERDEVELOPED AREAS

To spur investment and create jobs in low-income, underdeveloped areas in Greater Louisville, GLI supports making permanent and expanding the New Markets Tax Credit and finding ways to incentivize and encourage businesses already existing within Opportunity Zones to expand and invest additional capital in those areas.

MULTIEMPLOYER PENSION PLAN REFORM

GLI supports reforms to the multiemployer pension system that are fair and reasonable for workers, employers, and the American tax payer. The Central States Pension Fund covers thousands of Kentuckians and more than 377,000 workers throughout the country. Insolvency would be devastating to participants and our regional economy and would put jobs and businesses at risk.

A COMMONSENSE APPROACH TO JOINT EMPLOYER

To help Greater Louisville businesses operate under reasonable, commonsense rules, the federal definition of joint employer should appropriately limit the standard of joint employer and support franchisor-franchisee relationships. GLI supports addressing this issue through the rule-making process but encourages congressional action to codify a workable definition into federal law.

KEEP THE GOVERNMENT OPEN

Government shutdowns have been shown to slow economic growth. GLI urges members of Congress and the White House to work to avoid government shutdowns and to commit to keeping the government open throughout policy negotiations.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE (CONT.)

AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES

Congress should adopt a set of flexible but clear universal standards to encourage the production and deployment of autonomous vehicles, including for commercial purposes. In addition, federal policymakers and members of Congress should work with the Army and Department of Defense to leverage Fort Knox as an area to test, research, and develop autonomous vehicles in Greater Louisville, which is already a key location for logistics and manufacturing. This would solidify our region in an emerging technology sector and cultivate partnerships between Greater Louisville and federal defense efforts.

DEVELOP OUR REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION WORKFORCE

To help address the nation's truck-driver shortage and support the development of transportation workforce in bi-state regions like Greater Louisville, Congress should pursue legislation such as the DRIVE-Safe Act, which would remove outdated age restrictions on interstate transportation for licensed commercial drivers and improve safety standards.

2019-2020
**FEDERAL
AGENDA**

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

STEAM EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

STEAM education and workforce programs are vital to filling open positions in Greater Louisville's regional business clusters and are key to cultivating innovation, entrepreneurship, and a competitive tech sector. Federal support through grants and other funding streams can help our region develop the programs needed to cultivate a competitive, forward-looking workforce.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

GLI supports recent increases to federal funding for early childhood education and development through resources such as the Child Care Development Block Grant. Congress should build on these funding levels to increase access to high-quality early childhood education and development programming.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

GLI supports comprehensive immigration reform to ensure our region can continue attracting talent from around the world and opposes efforts that would restrict the ability of regional employers to find and employ the workers they need. Comprehensive immigration reform should include streamlined and equitable pathways to citizenship, allow businesses to recruit high-skill workers from around the world, and preserve DACA and protect Dreamers from the threat of detainment and deportation.

FUNDING FOR WORKFORCE EDUCATION

GLI supports program funding focused on integrating work-based learning, such as apprenticeships, and prioritization of credentialing outcomes. Congress must also prioritize funding for retraining and reskilling programs to help regions like Greater Louisville adjust to technological change, automation, and other causes of worker displacement.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

GLI supports postsecondary education funding tied to institutional performance and funding for research and development grants to research universities.

FINANCIAL AID AND STUDENT DEBT

GLI urges reforms to financial aid programs to improve access and affordability while incentivizing outcomes. This should include a review of the gainful employment rule. Congress must also act to mitigate the negative impact of rising student debt on economic growth and entrepreneurship by ensuring borrowers have adequate flexibility to repay loans and by supporting business-led efforts to reduce educational debt. Policymakers should incentivize employers to help employees pay off student debt and develop continuing education and tuition compensation programs.

THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

GLI encourages Congress to allocate additional funding through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to support the important work of business-led Workforce Boards like KentuckianaWorks and favors allowing increased flexibility in how these funds are used at the state and local levels.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

Supported employment initiatives can help alleviate workforce shortages and facilitate workforce participation among marginalized communities. GLI supports continued funding for vocational rehabilitation agencies and state supported employment services and encourages programs and policies aimed at assisting employers with employing individuals with substance use disorders, criminal backgrounds, or other barriers to workforce participation.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Criminal justice reform is vital to workforce development efforts in regions like Greater Louisville. Congress should build on legislative achievements such as the FIRST STEP Act to continue refocusing our criminal justice system on rehabilitation, reintegration, and training.

ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

AFFORDABLE CLEAN ENERGY RULE

GLI supports the revised emissions guidelines of the proposed Affordable Clean Energy rule that informs the development, submital, and implementation of state plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from coal-fired steam electric generating units.

WATERS OF THE U.S.

The proposed rule redefining waters of the U.S. achieves a reasonable balance of ensuring environmental protection while not stifling economic development. Throughout the rule-making process, GLI encourages the U.S. EPA and Army Corps of Engineers to seek additional ways to provide clarity to the regulated community with regards to projects that may involve jurisdictional determinations.

REGULATORY REFORMS

GLI welcomes efforts to streamline the federal environmental bureaucracy and eliminate unnecessary and burdensome regulations while still protecting environmental quality. Any such regulatory reform efforts should ensure that federal and state regulatory agencies retain the necessary resources to perform their statutorily required functions in a timely manner, so that American businesses can obtain necessary permits, approvals, and other regulatory reviews in an efficient and expeditious manner.

It is imperative that reforms foster, and not impede, economic growth in the United States. To this end, GLI supports EPA's proposed changes to applicability determinations under the New Source Review permit program for fossil-fired electric generating units. EPA's proposed 1-Hour NSR Applicability Test embraces cooperative federalism by giving states the option (not a requirement) to adopt the revised NSR Applicability Test.

FUNDING FOR BROWNFIELDS REMEDIATION

Brownfields remediation and redevelopment programs are critical for reducing the prevalence of blight and hazardous properties in Greater Louisville. We support funding and access to Brownfields Assessment Grants, Revolving Loan Fund Grants, Cleanup Grants and other programs that facilitate the rehabilitation of these properties.

APPROPRIATE TREATMENT STRATEGIES AND REGULATIONS FOR PFAS

GLI encourages EPA to develop a better understanding of the public health and environmental risks posed by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and the transport pathways by which these chemicals move within the environment. Ensuring that EPA's response to PFAS is fully grounded in scientific analysis will help ensure regulations are appropriate, improve the treatment strategies by public clean water utilities, and avoid unintended consequences.

HEALTH CARE

ADDRESSING SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

GLI encourages continual and regularly-scheduled appropriations of resources to fund comprehensive treatment and recovery programs for substance use disorders (SUD). In addition, Congress should permit SUD records to be shared between covered entities by passing legislation to align 42 CFR Part 2 with HIPAA. This would help ensure patients are able to receive the quality, integrated care they need.

FUNDING FOR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

GLI supports proposals to allocate increased resources for mental health treatment and research and encourages the implementation of programs that provide treatment alternatives to incarceration.

RAISE THE MINIMUM SMOKING AGE

GLI supports legislative proposals to raise the legal age to purchase tobacco products and vaping devices to 21. By helping to reduce smoking rates and curtail the rise of vaping among teenagers, this policy will lower costs for employers, improve the health of our regional workforce, and reduce strains on our health care system.

CHANGES TO THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

GLI continues to advocate for additional delays to, or full repeal of, the taxes imposed by the Affordable Care Act, including the Cadillac Tax, the Health Insurance Tax, and the Medical Device Tax. These taxes would drive up costs for insurers and manufacturers as well as businesses and individuals. GLI also supports reforming the employer mandate and calls for a return to the 40-hour workweek as the threshold for determining which employees are entitled to employer-provided health care coverage.

MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

GLI urges Congress to expand current legislation that increases access to health care through telehealth and alternative payment models for both Medicare and Medicaid populations. Congress should also enact legislation that allows for flexibility in Medicaid, Medicare, and Medicare Advantage Plans qualified benefits that will expand offerings for affordable and accessible care to beneficiaries.

ASSOCIATION HEALTHCARE PLANS

AHPs have helped thousands of small business owners and entrepreneurs access quality health care and provide coverage for their employees and families. GLI supports giving these plans more flexibility under ERISA and allowing sole proprietors to join AHPs, which would help a key part of Greater Louisville's economy access health care coverage.

THE STARK LAW

GLI is supportive of efforts underway to update and reform the Stark Law. Reforms should include allowing federal and state governments to encourage innovation in the provision of quality and cost-efficient health care and changing the applicable penalties to be proportional to the nature of the violation.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

BEGIN REBUILDING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Congressional action to rebuild infrastructure is vital to the economic future of Greater Louisville. Congress should pursue legislation that increases the federal fuels user fee and repeals language from the FAST Act that reduced the Federal Reserve dividend rate to fund infrastructure and transportation projects. In addition, lawmakers should streamline permitting processes and remove barriers that prevent the leverage of private capital for public infrastructure projects.

GROW GREATER LOUISVILLE AIRPORTS

GLI applauds Congress for passage of the five-year Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2018 but encourages lawmakers to increase federal appropriations for the Airport Improvement Program to the 2011 funding level of \$3.5 billion per year. GLI also supports proposals to relax restrictions on flight sharing to promote the use and growth of general aviation airports within our region.

WATER, WASTEWATER, STORMWATER, AND FLOOD PROTECTION

Additional federal resources are sorely needed in Greater Louisville for water, wastewater, stormwater, and flood protection infrastructure. Such resources are critical not only for safety and public health but also economic development. GLI encourages federal support through infrastructure legislation, continued State Revolving Fund appropriations, and the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act.

INLAND WATERWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

Inland waterways play a key role in international and domestic trade. Full federal funding to support critical water infrastructure improvements is necessary to promote inland waterway commerce.

FEDERAL RESOURCES FOR RAILROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

GLI supports increased federal funding for maintaining and improving the safety of railroad infrastructure. Dedicated resources for short line tracks and regional railroads are needed for the sustainability and improvement of multi-modal freight transportation in Greater Louisville.

FUNDING FOR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Greater Louisville relies upon tens of millions of dollars in federal funding in support of the Transit Authority of River City (TARC) and federal grants for parks and highway projects. The federal government must continue supporting public transit with operating and capital funding. Federal grant programs such as BUILD should support the maintenance and growth of public transit systems in key economic and workforce hubs like Greater Louisville.

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