

**2021**

# STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA





The 2021 legislative sessions in Frankfort and Indianapolis come at a truly unique moment not only in our region's history but our nation's as well. We are facing a global pandemic, a nationwide movement calling for racial justice, and the most daunting economic recession in generations. On top of these challenges, lawmakers in Kentucky and Indiana must craft state budgets in an era of unprecedented fiscal uncertainty.

GLI's 2021 State Legislative Agenda presents the Greater Louisville business community's public policy recommendations for tackling these challenges and positioning our region to swiftly recover our economy and get to work on building a more equitable and inclusive society.

The 2021 State Legislative Agenda incorporates the policy objectives of GLI's NOW Louisville: 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and feedback from the hundreds of business leaders who serve on GLI's Issue Advisory Committees, Task Forces, Public Policy Council, and Board of Directors. Counsel was also provided by GLI's Business Council to End Racism. Our policy priorities seek to support businesses of all sizes through the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recovery, build a more equitable and inclusive community and address the roots of racism in our society, attract talent and develop our workforce, and accelerate economic growth.

**SOME OF GLI'S KEY STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2021 INCLUDE:**

- Establishing protections for regional employers from opportunistic lawsuits seeking to exploit the COVID-19 pandemic
- Ensuring that the restoration of Kentucky's unemployment insurance trust fund does not fall solely on the backs of employers
- Protecting employers from tax increases and securing regulatory relief to drive the economic recovery
- Identifying opportunities to address racial inequities through legislative solutions
- Reforming our criminal justice system to support workforce development
- Rebuilding trust between law enforcement and communities
- Stabilizing our regional child care sector to ensure child care is not a barrier to employment for working parents
- Supporting equitable workforce development and participation strategies through funding for education, public transportation, and training initiatives
- Fostering regionalism through the establishment of reciprocity between economic development incentive programs offered by Kentucky and Indiana

GLI has established itself as a leading voice for business and the Greater Louisville community in Frankfort and Indianapolis. I want to encourage policymakers reading this document to leverage our State Agenda and our Advocacy staff as vital resources in 2021. Similarly, I want to urge business leaders to view the State Agenda as our community's public policy roadmap and to work with our staff to advocate for GLI's top priorities. For our region to overcome the challenges we face and create meaningful, positive change in our community, business and government leaders must work together more closely than ever. GLI stands ready to carry out the objectives and priorities of our regional business community.

**Sarah Davasher-Wisdom**  
GLI President and CEO

**GLI Advocacy Staff**



**Sarah Davasher-Wisdom**  
President and CEO



**Iris Wilbur Glick**  
Vice President, Public Policy and External Affairs



**Charles Aull**  
Director of Public Policy Development

GLI 2021

# State Legislative Priorities

**Business Competitiveness**

- Maintain and strengthen effective economic development incentive programs
- Rebuild trust between law enforcement and communities
- Support small businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs through targeted programming and assistance
- Establish liability protections for employers from COVID-19 lawsuits
- Streamline Kentucky labor and employment laws
- Protect employers from an unemployment insurance tax hike and other tax increases
- Modernize Kentucky's unemployment insurance system
- Ensure employers can continue operating drug-free workplaces
- Prohibit bonding requirements for businesses appealing tax decisions
- Reduce public pension costs to taxpayers and ensure system solvency
- Support pro-growth land development and redevelopment policies
- Authorize sports wagering
- Oppose anti-inclusive legislation that could discourage visitors and out-of-state businesses in our region
- Support Bourbonism, tourism, hospitality, and the arts in their economic recoveries

**Education and Workforce Development**

- Fully fund workforce development programs, such as the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship and adult education initiatives
- Pass meaningful criminal justice reforms to create opportunity and build a more equitable, inclusive, and competitive workforce
- Remove barriers to workforce participation and educational and training opportunities
- Oppose legislation that could harm talent attraction and retention efforts and limit access to global talent for regional employers
- Continue funding substance use disorder treatment and recovery programs
- Stabilize the childcare sector
- Fund full-day kindergarten
- Increased funding for K-12 and higher education
- Modernize teacher compensation to help attract teachers and reward success
- Enhance educational choice through charter schools and education opportunity accounts

**Health Care**

- Ensure the stability and effectiveness of Kentucky's Medicaid system
- Maintain Kentucky's certificate of need system
- Protect health care providers from COVID-19 lawsuits
- Support health care providers in accessing top talent and overcoming workforce challenges
- Improve the health of Kentucky's workforce through policies aimed at decreasing smoking and nicotine usage and addressing the substance use disorder crisis
- Support policies to eliminate health disparities and promote health equity

**Energy and Environment**

- Continue funding state brownfield remediation programs
- Support the Energy and Environment Cabinet in attracting and maintaining regulatory professionals
- Ensure energy affordability in Kentucky and oppose government mandates that drive up costs
- Allow for reasonable compliance flexibility during times of emergency

**Transportation and Infrastructure**

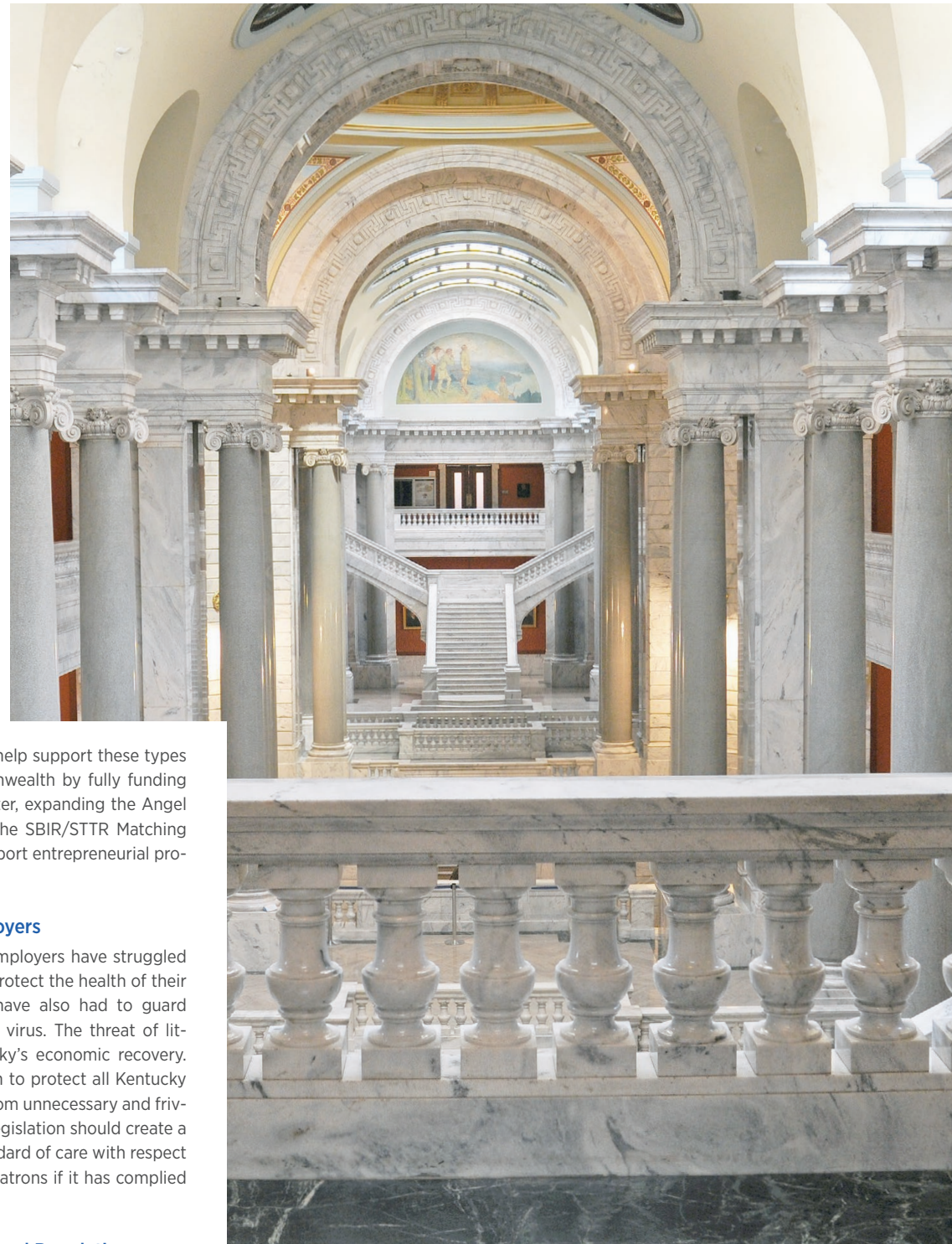
- Increase infrastructure funding and modernize Kentucky's road-aid formula
- Establish a multi-modal transportation fund
- Increase state investment in public transportation
- Support investment in regional water and wastewater systems and protect their ability to deliver quality services
- Support the growth and development of telecommunications infrastructure throughout Greater Louisville

**Bi-State**

- Continue funding the Indiana Regional Cities initiative
- Support infrastructure and land development in Southern Indiana
- Increase connectivity through public transportation investment and leverage quality of place projects throughout Greater Louisville
- Support tuition reciprocity in Kentucky and Indiana
- Establish bi-state reciprocity for economic development tax incentive programs
- More closely align Kentucky and Indiana labor laws through passage of pregnant workers legislation in Indianapolis
- Ease licensing and credentialing rules across state lines for employers and workers



# Business Competitiveness



## 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 Greater Louisville. In 2021, the 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.

## Public Safety and Law Enforcement

Building safer communities hinges on securing and sustaining trust between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. As the city of Louisville moves forward with reexamining local policies, procedures, and trainings, GLI encourages the General Assembly to ensure that local leaders are equipped with the tools they need to pursue this important work and enact meaningful reforms.

## Small Businesses, Start-Ups, and Entrepreneurs

Creating an environment where small businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs of all backgrounds thrive is key to the future of Greater Lou-

isville's economy. The General Assembly can help support these types of businesses and employers in the Commonwealth by fully funding Kentucky's Small Business Development Center, expanding the Angel Investment Tax Credit Program, continuing the SBIR/STTR Matching Funds Award Program, and continuing to support entrepreneurial programming.

## COVID-19 Liability Protections for Employers

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, employers have struggled not only to keep their businesses going and protect the health of their employees, partners, and customers, they have also had to guard against opportunistic lawsuits related to the virus. The threat of litigation, however frivolous, will harm Kentucky's economic recovery. The General Assembly should pass legislation to protect all Kentucky businesses, including health care providers, from unnecessary and frivolous lawsuits related to the pandemic. This legislation should create a presumption that a business has met the standard of care with respect to protection of its employees, visitors, and patrons if it has complied with appropriate standards and guidelines.

## 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, for example, incorporation of fed-

eral overtime exemptions, adoption of federal periods of limitations 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.

## Unemployment Insurance

Kentucky's unemployment insurance system has been a crisis within a crisis throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The massive unemployment rates brought on by COVID-19 and the government response has shown Kentucky's UI system to be inefficient, at times detrimental to workforce participation, and costly for employers. In the 2021 session, the General Assembly must protect Kentucky employers from an increase in unemployment insurance taxes and ensure business leaders have a seat at the table for discussions on how to replenish the UI Trust Fund and repay federal loans. Lawmakers must also fully embrace the important work of reforming Kentucky's UI system to ensure the system is efficient and focused on employment and workforce participation.

## Drug-Free Workplaces

As the General Assembly continues to explore proposals to legalize medical marijuana, it is imperative that lawmakers also establish workplace and employer protections. Any legislation legalizing medical marijuana in Kentucky must also protect the ability of employers to continue operating zero tolerance, drug-free workplaces as they see fit and guarantee liability protections for employers from alleged workplace safety violations related to an employee's use of medical marijuana. Workers terminated for violating an employer's drug-free workplace standards should not be eligible to receive unemployment benefits. Workers injured on the job because of being under the influence of marijuana should not be eligible for workers' compensation benefits, regardless of whether a physician recommended marijuana.

**“The business competitiveness of our region has improved in recent years thanks to GLI's advocacy for issues such as right to work, tax code modernization, and workers' compensation reform. This year's priorities build on these victories to continue ensuring that Greater Louisville is primed for economic growth and has a supportive business environment as we work to accelerate our economic recovery.”**

**Jim Dahlem**

GLI Business Competitiveness Co-Chair



### Tax Relief

GLI applauds the work of the General Assembly in recent sessions to reform Kentucky's tax code to support economic growth and the Commonwealth's business competitiveness. Lawmakers should remain focused on continuing to make tax policy in Kentucky more business friendly. This should include decreasing the state's outdated reliance on production-based taxes and allowing for comprehensive tax reform at the local level.

In 2021, lawmakers will need to be sensitive to the fiscal challenges of businesses as employers drive Kentucky's economic recovery. In addition to protecting Kentucky employers from increases to unemployment insurance taxes, the General Assembly must avoid any sort of tax increase on businesses, which would harm the ability of employers to bring employees back to work and make the investments needed to grow our economy. Lawmakers should also pass legislation to align, where appropriate, state tax policy with tax-relief provisions of the CARES Act and allow business expenses paid for with Paycheck Protection Program funds to qualify as eligible business expense deductions on Kentucky returns.

GLI opposes allowing the Kentucky Department of Revenue or local taxing jurisdiction to require bonding for taxpayers and businesses to appeal adverse decisions by the Kentucky Board of Tax Appeals. A bonding requirement could restrict the ability of many small businesses to appeal decisions and have their cases reviewed by the courts. Such a requirement runs counter to pro-taxpayer legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2018 and harms Kentucky's business competitiveness.

### Pension Reform

Kentucky's public pension crisis continues to cast a shadow over the state's economic potential and restricts the ability of the General Assembly to make much-needed investments in key growth areas such as education, child care, 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.

### Land Development and Redevelopment

Land development and redevelopment strongly supports economic growth, job creation, housing affordability, improved quality of life, and urban density. While many decisions regarding land development and redevelopment policy is made locally, the General Assembly can and should play a positive role in promoting pro-growth land-use policies. This includes:

- Strengthening 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
- Matching state limits to mirror federal support for the Kentucky Historic Preservation Tax Credit program
- 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 the federal Opportunity Zone program

### Sports Betting

With sports betting legalized and regulated in nearly every surrounding state, Kentucky is once again turning its back to economic opportunities and new sources of revenue to help address the pension crisis. In 2021, lawmakers should view sports betting as one of several tools in the tool box to help drive Kentucky's economic recovery, create jobs, business and tourism opportunities, and help shore up state revenue shortfalls.

### Kentucky Bourbon

The General Assembly must work to protect Kentucky's homegrown Bourbon industry and help position it to continue driving economic growth throughout the Greater Louisville region. Kentucky's Bourbon industry is supported by small business retailers that provide specialized product knowledge and ample selection of craft wines and spirits to consumers. Allowing the sale of wine in grocery stores would threaten this structure and negatively impact our signature industry by giving an unfair competitive advantage to wine over spirits when it comes to the convenience of purchasing. In addition, opportunities like cocktails-to-go have shown recent promise in helping the industry and its partners weather some of the storm caused by COVID-19. The General Assembly should make this provision permanent.

### 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. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has hit these sectors particularly hard, and they will need the full support of the General Assembly to help them recover.

- To encourage any individual or organization interested in visiting the Greater Louisville region and supporting regional businesses, the General Assembly should avoid and actively oppose legislative efforts that could create perceptions of Kentucky as unwelcoming or intolerant.
- The General Assembly should prioritize investment in the arts through the Kentucky Arts Council and other cultural institutions, including the Kentucky Center, a facility owned by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, which has a major positive impact on regional tourism and our local economy. GLI encourages and supports the state's investment in any re-opening costs or special needs the Kentucky Center has to return this jewel of downtown Louisville to the hub of activity it is for our city and region.
- Restaurants should be given as much flexibility as possible to pivot their business models in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and their individuals needs during the economic recovery.



## Education and Workforce Development

### Workforce Training & Preparation

Greater Louisville employers continue to face workforce challenges. Regional employers shoulder thousands of dollars in training and retraining costs and miss out on 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 new 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.

- Establish a permanent fund for grants to workforce boards and other providers to provide 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 in Kentucky.
- Continue to fund and support the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship program.
- Support the expansion of apprenticeships and adult education programs.
- Permanently provide funds for GED testing and obtaining career competency credits.



**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. Lawmakers have also given serious consideration to legislation related to cash bail, felony theft, and removing barriers to education for convicted felons. In 2021, GLI encourages lawmakers to take bold action in the area of 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 come into contact with Kentucky’s criminal justice system.

- Reform cash bail in Kentucky.
- Raise the threshold for felony theft.
- Remove 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.
- Support local governments and nonprofits in implementing effective education and employment-focused re-entry programs in jails throughout Kentucky.
- Continue improving Kentucky’s expungement system by reducing wait periods, streamlining procedures, lowering costs, and making more records eligible for automatic expungement.
- 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 and encourage second-chance employment practices and education opportunities.
- Monitor and assess current and future legislative measures that may have a disproportionate impact on communities of color, including criminal statutes and proceedings.

**Attract and Retain Talent**

Stagnant population growth and 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. The General Assembly should work to augment regional initiatives like Live in Lou by proactively encouraging individuals with training in high-demand industry sectors to live and work in Kentucky through tax incentives and streamlined and supportive processes for transferring professional licensing and credentials from other states or countries.

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 also 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.

**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.

**Stabilize Kentucky’s Child Care Sector**

High-quality, accessible 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. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has thrown Kentucky’s childcare sector into a state of crisis, which could create barriers to work for parents and caretakers and deprive children of learning opportunities at a pivotal time in their development. In 2021, the Commonwealth must fully leverage available state and federal resources to stabilize the childcare sector and make the necessary investments to ensure the sector’s long-term success and stability. GLI supports significant expansion of high-quality, full day childcare and early childhood education services, using a mixed delivery model to improve access and increase options available to Kentucky families. This should include an expansion of eligibility for the Child Care Assistance Program paired with increases to reimbursement rates for childcare providers.

**Full-day Kindergarten**

GLI is supportive of increased state support for full-day kindergarten in all school districts across Kentucky, especially in recognizing the benefits to at-risk student populations and creating equitable opportunities for all Kindergarten students. While most districts currently offer full-day kindergarten, the state only provides funding for half-of-a-day, which requires local districts to cover the remaining costs. By providing the necessary funding to cover full-day kindergarten, local school districts can then reallocate those resources to address other educational needs in their communities.

**“It is a simple fact that our region’s economy will never reach its full potential without a world-class workforce. The private sector is intensely focused on workforce development, but we need policymakers to join us in breaking down barriers to work, education, and training and creating more opportunities for all individuals in our community to find success.”**

**Kevin Smith**  
GLI Education and Workforce Development Chair

**K-12 Public Education**

GLI appreciates efforts by lawmakers to increase state investment in public education through increased SEEK funding. While we fully recognize that resources will be tight, GLI strongly encourages the General Assembly to continue increasing its investment in public education in FY2022 state budget. To build the future workforce that Kentucky needs and ensure educational equity throughout our region, the state cannot afford to lose this momentum. Lawmakers must also continue support the important work of Family Resource and Youth Service Centers, which provide critical assistance to students and families in overcoming barriers to education.

GLI views modernizing teacher compensation as a key element in optimizing success for all students and attracting experienced and diverse

talent to our region’s public schools. In 2018, the General Assembly passed legislation to clarify the ability of districts to offer financial incentives to teachers at high-need schools. Lawmakers should build on this legislation by empowering districts to tie compensation and bonuses to factors such as performance and subject matter in addition to more traditional factors such as experience and academic credentials, which currently form the foundation for determining teacher compensation in the Commonwealth. Along with a competitive and dynamic compensation structure, the state should provide the necessary funding and assist local districts in providing educators with ample professional development opportunities that increase their effectiveness in the classroom and lead to better student outcomes.

**Educational Choice**

Educational choice is vital to a thriving local education ecosystem. Increasing the choices parents and caretakers have when selecting educational pathways for their student makes regions like Greater Louisville more attractive to families and businesses and leads to improved learning outcomes and a more competitive homegrown workforce.

GLI encourages lawmakers to clarify funding for charter schools to remove uncertainty and encourage authorization of these institutions in Kentucky. To further increase the educational options available to parents and guardians and ensure equitable access to quality learning opportunities, GLI supports legislation to establish an Education Opportunity Account Program in Kentucky. By incentivizing individuals and businesses to donate to organizations that serve low-income populations, Education Opportunity Accounts can give more families flexibility and choices in education regardless of their income. GLI also advocates for school assignment plans that support student diversity, equity, and choice and opposes legislative proposals that limit parental choice and fail to provide clear evidence of addressing the achievement gap.

**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 tech talent in the Greater Louisville region, 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. 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. To increase student access and success, the state should provide consistent support for dual credit and early college programs.





# Health Care

## 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, which cultivates a healthy population, provides a smooth transition to private coverage for Medicaid recipients leaving the system, and minimizes burdens on providers, insurers, and employers. Reforms should also serve to increase efficiencies within Kentucky’s Medicaid system, reduce fraud, support underserved communities, and encourage and reward workforce participation.

To allow 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 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services guidelines.

## 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.

## Protect Health Care Providers from Frivolous Lawsuits

GLI supports establishing state-level protections for employers from frivolous COVID-19 related lawsuits and continues to advocate for comprehensive reforms to Kentucky’s legal liability climate, which studies have shown to be one of the top 10 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. Passage of confidential peer review and medical review panels in past sessions were steps in the right direction, but 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. 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.

## 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.

## 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.

GLI continues to support efforts aimed at reducing tobacco and nicotine usage. This includes increasing taxes on cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and smokeless tobacco, 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.

Continuing the fight against the substance use disorder epidemic is also vital to improving the health of Kentuckians. In 2021, lawmakers should continue to provide the resources necessary in the state budget for effective treatment and prevention strategies in the Commonwealth.



**“Health care has long been a pillar of the Greater Louisville economy, and we should all be proud of the sacrifices and hard work of our health care heroes in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, the health care sector will need the full support of state lawmakers, as we continue the fight against the pandemic, drive the region’s economic recovery, and work to create a healthier community.”**

**Riggs Lewis**  
GLI Health Care Chair

# Energy & Environment

## 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.

## Compliance Flexibility during States of Emergency

GLI was supportive of guidance produced by EPA to give regulated industries increased compliance flexibility in response to the disruptions and safety concerns of the COVID-19 pandemic. GLI encouraged the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet and the Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District to promote similar guidelines for facilities that fall under their jurisdictions. As the pandemic continues to unfold and in anticipation of future emergencies, the General Assembly should establish expectations that regulatory bodies in the Commonwealth allow for appropriate levels of regulatory compliance flexibility for impacted industries during states of emergency.

## Attract & Retain Regulatory Professionals

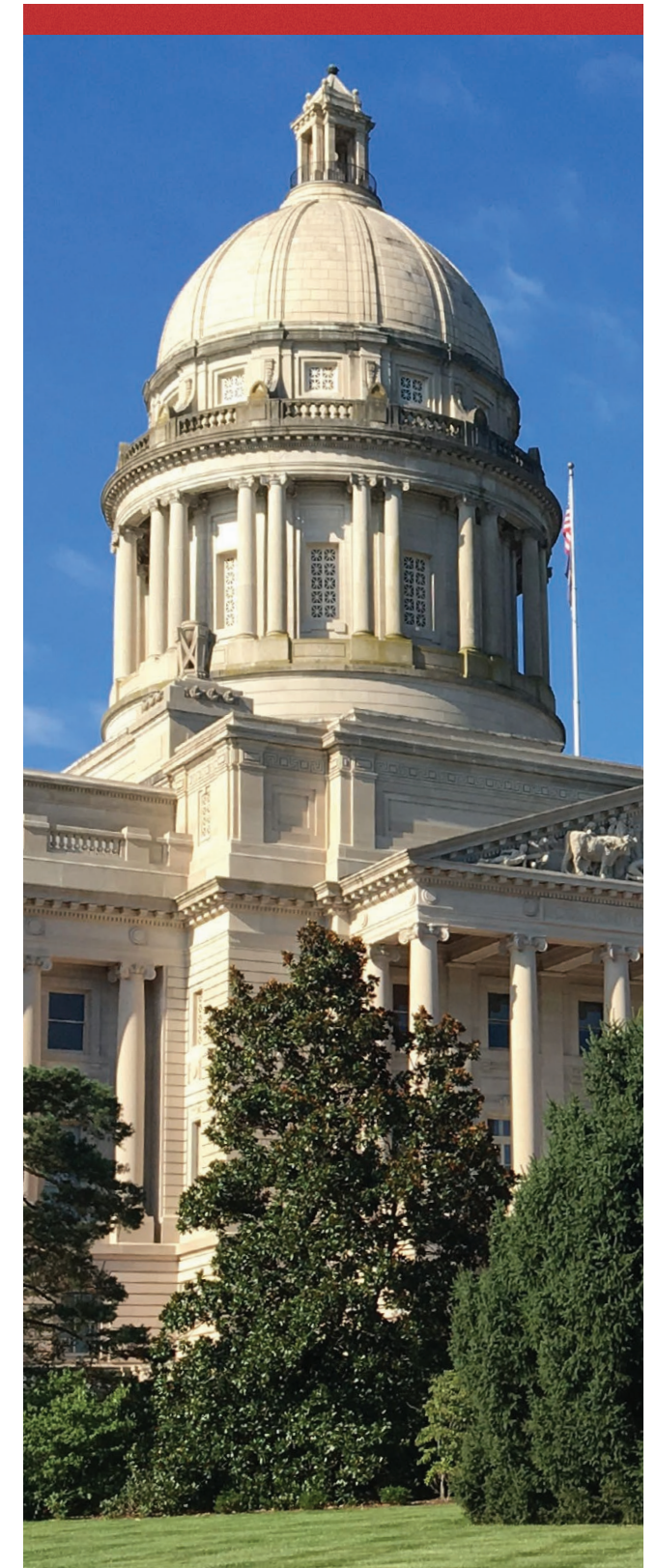
Businesses operating in the energy and environmental sectors are required to work closely with the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet to ensure compliance with numerous administrative and environmental regulations. GLI continues to advocate for the Commonwealth to attract and retain a staff of highly skilled, knowledgeable professionals to assist with compliance and permitting processes. By adequately and consistently funding Cabinet personnel costs in the next budget cycle, the General Assembly can help to ease these processes and allow businesses to grow and operate more efficiently.

## 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.

**“Smart energy and environmental policies need to ensure sustainability and protect public health while also driving economic growth and positively contributing to our region’s business competitiveness. GLI’s 2021 legislative priorities serve as a roadmap for pro-growth environmental policies and for lawmakers to continue making Greater Louisville a leader in energy affordability.”**

**Jennifer Cave**  
GLI Energy and Environment Chair





# Transportation & Infrastructure

## Modernize Infrastructure Funding & Road-Aid Allocation

As a critical logistics 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 through an increase to the state gas tax and other road fund revenue streams 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.

GLI also supports the establishment and funding of a multi-modal transportation fund by the General Assembly to more effectively and systematically invest in public transportation, aviation, ports, freight, and pedestrian and bike mobility.

**“Increased investment in transportation and infrastructure has rarely been needed as badly as it is right now for our community. With our region facing so many challenges, lawmakers must increase state investment in our roads, highways, and bridges, fully support mobility, and encourage the development of all our forms of infrastructure in Greater Louisville. This will drive our economic recovery and position our bi-state region for future growth.”**

**Chris Dickinson**

GLI Transportation and Infrastructure Chair

## 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. Insufficient capital investment in public transportation at the state level has hindered the growth of public transportation in our region and pushed the need for replacement buses to a critical point, jeopardizing service. Additionally, the loss of federal toll credits, used as the local match for federal funds has created an urgent need for an increase in state investment and must be addressed during the budget session. In the 2021 session, GLI urges lawmakers to establish a dedicated and sustainable revenue source for public transportation that will adequately address the mobility needs of our region.

## Investment in Quality Water & Sewer Infrastructure

To improve the quality of regional water and sewer infrastructure, legislative and regulatory actions 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. Water quality treatment efforts and storm water conservation efforts 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.

## Telecommunications Infrastructure for the Future

With the coming of new technologies, Kentucky should ensure that regions like greater Louisville are well-positioned for the future by supporting the development and modernization of telecommunications infrastructure. Kentucky is the only state in the region that does not provide incentives to encourage investment in broadband networks and other telecommunications technologies. GLI supports efforts that put Kentucky on an even footing with our surrounding states in terms of broadband deployment incentives for wired and wireless networks and opposes measures that threaten to impede or hamper investment in digital infrastructure.

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, small cell infrastructure by providing guidance to state and local governments and eliminating unnecessary regulatory barriers.

Further, ensuring that Kentuckians have access to broadband is critical. 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.



# Bi-State

## Our Southern Indiana Regional Development Authority

GLI supports efforts to attract and retain talent in Southern Indiana through the Indiana Regional Cities Initiative and the formation of the Our Southern Indiana Regional Development Authority. This multi-county partnership will allow 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.

## Planning for Future Growth & Investment

With new businesses starting, expanding, and relocating to Southern Indiana alongside a rapidly increasing population, Southern Indiana is ripe for significant growth in the coming years. GLI encourages the Indiana General Assembly to strategically plan for the region's future by encouraging land development and redevelopment and adequately funding infrastructure projects. To further prepare for future growth and economic development, Indiana must 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.

## Quality of Place & Connectivity

The parks and 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. 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.

## 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 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.

## Bi-State Tax Incentives

Kentucky and Indiana should restructure economic development tax incentives to allow businesses to receive incentives for jobs created in either state as opposed to only receiving incentives for creating jobs filled by a resident of their respective state. Instead, a business based in Kentucky should receive credit for creating a job even if the employee lives in Southern Indiana. Similarly, a business based in Southern Indiana should receive credit for creating a job even if the employee lives in Kentucky. 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.

## Regional Broadband Access

Beyond physical connections, broadband access across Southern Indiana and Greater Louisville is critical for further economic development and connectivity. Indiana should modernize regulations allowing for the addition of fiber cable to current telecommunications infrastructure on private property.

## Pregnant Workers Legislation

The more comparable Kentucky and Indiana labor and employment laws are, the easier compliance and operations will be for bi-state businesses in the greater Louisville region. With Kentucky's recent passage of The Pregnant Workers Act, GLI encourages Indiana to be the next state in the country to adopt this legislation, which supports female participation in the workforce and provides important legal clarity and guidance for employers.

## 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.

**“With thousands of workers, employers, visitors, suppliers, and customers traversing bridges across the Ohio River everyday, Greater Louisville is truly a bi-state community. We need public policies from Frankfort and Indianapolis that reflect this reality. GLI appreciates lawmakers who work together to promote regionalism and support and celebrate economic growth throughout all parts of Greater Louisville.”**

**Lourdes Baez**

GLI Bi-State Chair



GLI's State Legislative Agenda is a product of the Greater Louisville business community. GLI Advocacy staff work with hundreds of volunteers who serve on issue advisory committees, task forces, the Public Policy Council, and the GLI Board of Directors. Advocacy staff also coordinate with key community partners and stakeholders to ensure our priorities truly reflect the needs of our region.

Just as the successful production of GLI's State Legislative Agenda depends on the engagement of regional business leaders, so too does successful advocacy. Greater Louisville business leaders are strongly encouraged to reach out to their elected officials in Frankfort and Indianapolis and use the 2021 Agenda as a guide to advocate for the needs of our region. Please visit [GreaterLouisville.com/Advocacy](https://GreaterLouisville.com/Advocacy) to learn more about opportunities to engage with elected officials or reach out to a member of our Advocacy team.

## GLI Public Policy Leadership

### Public Policy Council

Chair: Tim Hagerty, Frost Brown Todd

### Bi-State

Chair: Lourdes Baez, Baptist Health

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### Transportation and Infrastructure

Chair: Chris Dickinson, Civil Design Inc

“The development of GLI's public policy priorities is a membership-driven process, with input provided by hundreds of business leaders and community stakeholders from throughout our region. I personally want to thank all of the volunteers who contributed their time and expertise to the development of GLI's legislative priorities. When policymakers read the 2021 State Agenda, it is critical that they understand that this document truly reflects the values and priorities of GLI's membership.”

**Tim Hagerty**

GLI Public Policy Council Chair



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