



2015 GOVERNOR'S RACE

VOTER'S GUIDE TO BUSINESS ISSUES

A KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PUBLICATION





Kentucky Chamber

KNOW THE ISSUES

AHEAD OF THE 2015 gubernatorial general election, the Kentucky Chamber has put together a voter's guide for the citizens of the Commonwealth. With all of the noise in political campaigns, it can be hard to compare the candidates in races on their stances. So the Kentucky Chamber has compiled the positions of all three candidates in the race for Kentucky's next governor. The following stances have been gathered through responses by each candidate to a policy survey from the Chamber as well as various public remarks made by the candidates. As a non-partisan organization, the Chamber does not endorse in statewide races, but our organization hopes this voter's guide gives the people of the Commonwealth the information they need before heading to the polls Tuesday, Nov. 3.

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ON THE ISSUES FROM THE KENTUCKY
CHAMBER'S NEWS SITE.

MEET THE CANDIDATES



MATT BEVIN

PARTY

Republican

OCCUPATION

Businessman

HOMETOWN

Louisville

RUNNING MATE

Jenean Hampton



JACK CONWAY

PARTY

Democrat

OCCUPATION

Ky. Attorney General

HOMETOWN

Louisville

RUNNING MATE

Rep. Sannie Overly



DREW CURTIS

PARTY

Independent

OCCUPATION

Founder, fark.com

HOMETOWN

Versailles

RUNNING MATE

Heather Curtis

STANCE SUMMARY



SUPPORTS CHAMBER POSITION



OPPOSES CHAMBER POSITION



STANCE EXPLAINED ON ISSUE PAGE

CHARTER SCHOOLS

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

P3 LEGISLATION

RIGHT TO WORK

LEGAL REFORM

SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACES

LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX

OPPOSES MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

MATT BEVIN



JACK CONWAY



DREW CURTIS



*SOME OF THESE STANCES MAY HAVE CHANGED SINCE THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER'S PRIMARY VOTER GUIDE. [CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE PRIMARY GUIDE AT KYCHAMBER.COM.](http://KYCHAMBER.COM)

INFORM YOURSELF. VOTE SMART.



THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WAS THE FIRST NEWS SOURCE IN THE STATE TO CONDUCT SIT-DOWN INTERVIEWS WITH ALL THREE 2015 GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES. CLICK THE IMAGES ABOVE TO WATCH THE FULL INTERVIEWS WITH EACH CANDIDATE. CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE FULL PLAYLIST OF VIDEOS RELATING TO THE 2015 GOVERNOR'S RACE, INCLUDING A VIDEO OF THE ISSUES FORUM FROM THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER'S JULY BUSINESS SUMMIT.

[YOUTUBE.COM/KYCHAMBER](https://www.youtube.com/KYCHAMBER)



JOB CREATION

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER BELIEVES PROMOTING LONG-TERM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB GROWTH SHOULD BE A TOP CONSIDERATION WHEN STATE REVENUE POLICIES ARE ADOPTED. IT IS CRITICAL THAT KENTUCKY BE SUCCESSFUL IN ITS EFFORTS TO PROMOTE BUSINESS RECRUITMENT, CREATION AND EXPANSION.



MATT BEVIN

Matt Bevin said in the Chamber's policy survey: "I am a job creator—that is what I do. I am an entrepreneur that owns all or part of 10 different companies. I know and understand what it takes to start, run, and grow a business. My overall goal is to create a more business-friendly environment in the Commonwealth that will result in job creation. In fact, if you look at my Blueprint for a better Kentucky, you will find the seven point plan that I launched two weeks into my primary campaign. The seven priorities are: (1) Enacting Pro-Business Right-to-Work Legislation, (2) Modernizing Kentucky's Tax Code, (3) Resolving our Pension Crisis, (4) Reforming Kentucky Government, (5) Modernizing Kentucky's Education System, (6) Improving Kentucky Healthcare, and (7) Fighting Federal Government Overreach. While each of these seven priorities are distinct issues, there is one common thread amongst all of them—improving each of these issues will lead to creating a business friendly environment that will, in turn, create jobs."



JACK CONWAY

“My top priority as Governor will be creating an environment where our economy can grow and where our businesses can create more good-paying jobs,” Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey. “My jobs plan focuses on three areas – building on Kentucky’s strengths and home-grown industries through a renewed wave of support, attracting new businesses to the Commonwealth and supporting existing businesses through infrastructure investments – including broadband, and building the best workforce through investments in education and workforce training. It’s also critical that we make changes in our tax code so that we remain in the best position to grow Kentucky’s economy and create more good-paying jobs. That’s why I’m committed to holding the line on taxes and eliminating the state portion of Kentucky’s inventory tax. As Governor, I’ll also conduct a top-to-bottom review of every tax incentive offered by our Economic Development Cabinet to make sure that businesses have the tools they need to create more jobs.”

DREW CURTIS

In the Kentucky Chamber’s Policy survey, Curtis laid out three key points to his plan for job creation including: “Expand the KYFAME program to all 120 counties; ensure the broadband initiative is cost effective and functionally effective; and encourage job training programs to coordinate to provide maximum reach to both job seekers and job creators.” During a sit down interview with the Kentucky Chamber, Curtis also stated the possibility of bringing more technology jobs to places like eastern Kentucky to help re-vamp the area. “It requires the input of all three types of people. You need to have the business sector, you need to have the universities and you need government involved and not one single one of those can pull it off themselves,” Curtis said in the interview. “The reason why I find that intriguing is because I have been to Boulder, Colorado, a few times and it’s really similar to Pikeville ... So the way you attract a class of coders is you make a place that they want to live, first and foremost, and then they start showing up. And it can be done.”



WORKFORCE

BEYOND WHATEVER IMPROVEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN THE DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE PROGRAMS, KENTUCKY'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN ENSURING THE AVAILABILITY OF A SKILLED WORKFORCE. EMPLOYERS' CAN MAKE A CRITICAL DIFFERENCE IN THE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SERVICES WORKFORCE PROGRAMS DELIVER.



MATT BEVIN



“As Governor, I will incentivize and support an education system that results in a highly employable workforce,” Bevin said in the Chamber’s policy survey. “Well-structured vocational training programs are an example of how we will develop workers with the technical and life skills necessary to contribute to and thrive in a strong economy. We should look at outcome-based funding models for our state universities and community/technical colleges, and ensure that the degrees being offered align with the workforce needs. We should find ways for our community/technical colleges and other workforce development programs to increase partnerships with employers in the same geographical area so that employers can have input in training, and students can have job opportunities awaiting them at graduation. We should broaden our workforce development programs to ensure they are also focused on the development of soft skills that are currently lacking in Kentucky’s workforce.”



JACK CONWAY



Conway said he is not satisfied with the state's workforce development programs.

"Making sure Kentuckians have the skills they need to get hired is the true key to our long-term growth. As Governor, I'll set the goal of creating a coordinated, multi-industry state-wide apprenticeship program to help students earn hands-on experience and also work to aggressively expand existing successful apprenticeship programs, such as the Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing. I'll consider providing tax credits to defray the cost to businesses and grants to encourage the formation of public-private partnerships to aid this endeavor. It's also critically important that our workforce training programs are responsive to the needs of employers and aren't training workers for the jobs of the past. As Governor, I'll ensure that each school within the Kentucky Community and Technical College System conducts an annual assessment of their geographic region to identify the top three growing local industries and report those findings to state government to ensure that we are aligning our workforce development programs with the needs of employers. I'll also encourage technical colleges to offer customized training programs that meet the needs of the growing industries in their communities," Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey.

DREW CURTIS



Curtis said he is not satisfied with the state's workforce development programs. "We need to catalog and coordinate training efforts into one central location to prevent duplication of effort. The single largest obstacle is awareness of all parties — companies, employees, and training facilities. Let's combine these efforts and increase awareness. As luck would have it I am a software developer and have some idea as to how to design such a system," Curtis said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER BELIEVES THE STATE MUST INVEST IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND MAKE GREATER INVESTMENTS IN ENHANCED CHILD CARE PROGRAMS FOR KENTUCKY'S DEVELOPING YOUTH.



MATT BEVIN



"I feel strongly that money spent on outdated and ineffective programs should be moved to programs proven to provide better outcomes," Bevin said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey. "Anything less is a waste of precious financial resources needed for ensuring a quality education for young people of every age. I will take a data driven approach, analyzing the myriad of studies and programs, and consulting with early childhood experts and educators to analyze how our dollars can be best allocated and utilized to ensure we are getting the best return on investment in our most valuable resource—our children—our future. As Governor, I would review our options and institute the most effective early childhood education programs available in the country."

JACK CONWAY

"I'm passionate about expanding early childhood education programs in Kentucky because I truly believe that it is an opportunity that we can't afford to miss. As Governor, I will increase the eligibility for public preschool to 3-year-olds at 138 percent of the poverty level within my first year. Within my first term, a top priority will be to increase the eligibility to both 3-and 4-year-olds who are at 200 percent of the poverty level. We will have to make tough choices to pay for this, but I have a record of doing more with less and expanding early childhood education will reap rewards in our future," Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey.

DREW CURTIS

"There is no additional money for early childhood education funding. I am sympathetic to the need but we can't afford to pay the bills we have already," Curtis said in response to the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey.



CHARTER SCHOOLS

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER SUPPORTS THE IDEA OF CHARTER SCHOOLS, INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE TUITION-FREE PUBLIC EDUCATION CHOICES TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS.



MATT BEVIN

“Parents should be empowered to make the basic choices for their children’s education and be given more of a voice in how their children’s education dollars should be used. Kentucky should adopt policies that allow counties to fund (and local educators and parents to establish) public charter schools that cater to the particular needs of each community. Burdensome regulations that get in the way of charter schools should be eliminated.”

JACK CONWAY

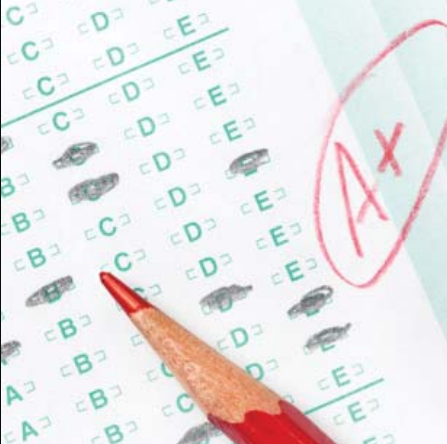


“I support school innovations like charter schools as long as resources and funds aren’t diverted away from Kentucky’s public schools. These schools must also abide by the same high standards, including transparency, as our public schools,” Conway said in response to the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.

DREW CURTIS



“Only in very limited areas with special circumstances, such as West Louisville. We have to be careful not to accidentally destroy our public school system like California did. I’m not sure I’d be interested in expanding anywhere else until we have enough data to show success,” Curtis said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.



HIGHER ACADEMIC STANDARDS

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER SUPPORTS THE RIGOROUS EDUCATION STANDARDS PUT IN PLACE THROUGH THE KENTUCKY CORE ACADEMIC STANDARDS (COMMON CORE).



MATT BEVIN



Matt Bevin told the Kentucky Chamber that he “strongly supports the use of rigorous academic standards and a proven educational curriculum.” He wrote in the policy survey, “I believe that Kentucky should set their own standards with flexibility given to local school boards and educators to tailor each child’s education to his or her needs. In addition, the standards we develop should allow teachers to do what they do best — teach, instead of spending so much of their time being test administrators and completing burdensome paperwork.”

JACK CONWAY



“I support the Kentucky Core Academic Standards. As Governor, I will encourage ongoing input from parents and teachers so we can make responsive tweaks to the Standards as needed. I believe that as much decision making as possible should be handled at the local level when it comes to curriculum in our public schools. But it’s important to remember that since we’ve implemented the Standards, college readiness for Kentucky students has increased from 31 percent to 62 percent, and we can’t let rhetoric stand in the way of the positive momentum that Kentucky is experiencing,” Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.

DREW CURTIS



In the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey, Curtis said he is supportive of the state’s academic standards. “Criticisms of common core abound however changing large systems arbitrarily is costly and disruptive. Let’s stick with this for now until other states develop something better,” Curtis said.



HIGHER EDUCATION

INVESTMENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION SHOULD BE DIRECTLY TIED TO PERFORMANCE AND HELPING ENSURE THESE INVESTMENTS CORRELATE WITH A WELL-PREPARED WORKFORCE. WITH A FOCUS ON LIFELONG LEARNING, THE CHAMBER WORKS TO ENSURE THAT KENTUCKY'S ECONOMY BENEFITS FROM A PREPARED, PRODUCTIVE AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE.



MATT BEVIN

"I have and will continue to meet with University Presidents and the Council on Postsecondary Education to hear their needs as we review current funding and explore improvements in higher education funding," said Bevin in the Chamber's policy survey. "I am also a proponent of transitioning to an outcomes-based funding model. We should set objective goals for our publicly funded higher education institutions, to incentivize performance and desired outcomes. Such a model should include a short, unambiguous list of performance metrics that cannot be manipulated — things like degrees in priority fields (i.e., STEM), progress toward degrees, research activity and job placement rates should be used to evaluate which of our universities receive a proportionately higher or lower share of appropriations. Phasing in such a funding model over the next several years will create competition and accelerate degree production that can be aligned with Kentucky's talent need, creating a more workforce ready talent pool for current and prospective employers."

JACK CONWAY

"We need to make college more affordable for Kentucky students. I'll work with our universities to make sure they are spending resources on students, not excessive overhead, and require transparency and a strict accounting of how schools are spending taxpayer dollars. I'll also encourage and incentivize universities to find creative solutions to maximize savings. One of my goals as Governor will be to renew support for the 'Bucks for Brains' program, which encourages and strengthens research programs at our universities. As our economy continues to improve, reinvesting in this program will be a priority because university research pays dividends in economic development," Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber's voter guide.

DREW CURTIS

"There is no additional money for higher education funding. I am sympathetic to the need but we can't afford to pay the bills we have already," Curtis said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey.



PUBLIC PENSIONS

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER SUPPORTS REFORMS TO THE STATE'S RETIREMENT SYSTEMS TO ENSURE FINANCIAL STABILITY.



MATT BEVIN



“As Governor, I will call for an immediate, outside and transparent audit of every single state retirement plan,” Bevin said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey. “All resulting information will be made available to the public. All new hires must be enrolled in a standard 401(k) type plan similar to those in the private sector and we should examine options that would allow some existing employees to voluntarily move into the same plan. State employees will then own and have managerial control over their own retirement accounts. Putting individual employees in charge of their own retirement plans will free the taxpayers of Kentucky from new future liabilities and will decrease our indebtedness over time. We have a legal and moral obligation to honor our pension commitment to current employees and retirees. All current employees may be required to make increased pension contributions in order to help secure their own pensions and make the system more financially sound. As Governor, I will refuse to take a taxpayer-funded pension and will seek to eliminate taxpayer-funded pension plans for all future elected officials in Kentucky.”



NEWS STORIES

- KENTUCKY CHAMBER CALLS FOR ACTION
- PENSION DEBT LEADS TO CREDIT DOWNGRADE
- PENSION OFFICIALS DETAIL CRISIS AT BUSINESS SUMMIT
- CHAMBER SUGGESTS CHANGES TO PENSION SYSTEMS



JACK CONWAY



“Resolving Kentucky’s pension crisis will take a long-term commitment to making the full annual required contribution (ARC). I am committed to working with both parties to make the full ARC each budget cycle and to identify a dedicated stream of revenue to fund these payments. Finding this dedicated stream of revenue will take a bipartisan effort to eliminate waste and to explore new income streams, like expanded gaming,” Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey. In a sit-down interview with the Kentucky Chamber, Conway also said there are specific changes that need to be made to the systems to ensure solvency going forward including increased retirement age and others. “People are going to have to work longer. For current and future hires, we are going to have to make sure we have the proper contributions going into the systems,” Conway said, noting the change made in 2012 to a hybrid system for new hires which he said he agrees with.

DREW CURTIS



Curtis’ plan includes suggestions such as obtaining a line of credit to be tapped as needed, fully funding the actuarially required contribution each year with an additional amount to help shore up the systems faster and more. In his interview with the Kentucky Chamber, Curtis said while he was looking into the issues in the state he “almost quit” when reviewing the underfunded pension liabilities. But to solve it, Curtis said he would like to implement his solution which he believes could work. “So the problem you’re trying to solve is basically, what is the actual issue? Well, the checks must go out. That’s it. Because the minute the checks don’t go out, we have defaulted. So it is kind of simple but it turns out that other solutions that have been proposed have not been trying to solve that problem. They have been trying to solve the funding ratio which is not bad but the funding ratio is an indicator. We don’t need to fund the indicator, we need to make sure this thing can actually support itself,” Curtis said. In response to the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey, Curtis suggested voters view his full plan at http://drewcurtis.nationbuilder.com/drew_curtis_releases_plan_to_fix_ky_pensions.



HEALTH CARE

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER IS FOCUSED ON DEVELOPING COMPREHENSIVE, LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS TO HELP SLOW THE INCREASING COSTS OF HEALTH CARE IN KENTUCKY AND TO PROMOTE PUBLIC POLICIES THAT WILL HELP IMPROVE THE OVERALL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR CITIZENS.



MATT BEVIN

Bevin opposes Kentucky's state health exchange, Kynect. In the Chamber's policy survey, he said "I plan to use the open enrollment period in 2016 to transition people from the state-level exchange to the federal exchange. Once all are transitioned, I would shut down the exchange. Thirty-four states have never offered a state level exchange and Kentucky should join that majority. This will ensure continued access to health care coverage, while saving Kentucky taxpayers millions in state tax dollars. There is no financial advantage to keeping a duplicative state-level exchange (Kynect) when the same needs are met at the federal level without the extra cost to Kentucky taxpayers."

JACK CONWAY

In the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey, Conway said he is supportive of the state's health exchange set up through the Affordable Care Act. "Governor Beshear has made Kentucky a model state for insuring more of its citizens through a homegrown solution. Dismantling Kynect would cost our state millions of dollars, result in higher premiums for Kentuckians, and force Kentuckians onto a federal exchange that doesn't give us any flexibility. There is always room for improvement, but it is critical to maintain our Kentucky solution that has helped so many become insured," Conway said.

DREW CURTIS



In the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey, Curtis said he is supportive of the state's health exchange set up through the Affordable Care Act. "Because changing large systems arbitrarily is costly and disruptive. Let's stick with this for now until other states develop something better," Curtis said.



MEDICAID

IN ADDITION TO CONTINUING TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND OVERSIGHT OF THE MANAGED CARE APPROACH, THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER RECOMMENDS WELLNESS ACTIVITIES, PROGRAM REVIEW AND IMPROVED PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION TO MAKE THE MEDICAID PROGRAM MORE CLOSELY RESEMBLE A PRIVATE INSURANCE MODEL



MATT BEVIN

“We cannot continue to offer Medicaid at 138% of the federal poverty line as it exists today—we simply cannot afford it,” Bevin said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey. “I would repeal the expansion as it currently exists, and seek a Section 1115 waiver from the Center for Medicaid Services, that would allow us to customize a plan that works better for Kentucky. We can develop a plan that incentivizes proper use, encourages healthy behavior, improves health outcomes, and uses health care dollars more efficiently. Indiana and several other states have requested and received approval under the Section 1115 waiver authority, and I would build our plan using the best elements of what other states have offered. This is a vastly superior approach to the one size fits all Medicaid expansion pushed on us by Obamacare.”

JACK CONWAY

“A study commissioned by Gov. Beshear from Deloitte Consulting found that not only will the Medicaid expansion in Kentucky pay for itself, it will generate \$30 billion for Kentucky’s economy over the next six years. As Governor, I’ll make the tough decisions about what we can and can’t afford and scale back if necessary. I do not support kicking the hundreds of thousands of Kentuckians who have benefited from the Medicaid expansion off their health insurance,” Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.

DREW CURTIS

“A recent Deloitte survey predicts that the increased economic activity from healthcare spending should cover costs when Kentucky needs to pay 5% in 2017. It also says we should be fine when Kentucky needs to pay 10% in 2020. Projections are only projections however so we need to keep a close eye on this,” Curtis said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey. “I am also a HUGE fan of Senator Alvarado’s idea to expand Kynect to other states and use income from that to cover healthcare costs. This is simply a brilliant idea.” For more information on the idea from Republican state Sen. Ralph Alvarado, visit kychamberbottomline.com and search Medicaid.



PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER SUPPORTS PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP LEGISLATION (P3) TO PROVIDE AN EXPLICIT FRAMEWORK FOR THE USE OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AS AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF PROCUREMENT, CONSTRUCTION, OR FINANCING OF CAPITAL PROJECTS AND SERVICES BY STATE GOVERNMENT.



MATT BEVIN



“I believe that government at every level needs to be more efficient and seek ways to operate within its budget,” said Bevin. “This is no different than how we as taxpayers must operate our own homes and businesses. This may include P3s for certain projects such as student housing, but this would need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. I am not, for example, a proponent of using P3s for key infrastructure projects related to the movement of goods to market as this will invariably lead to tolling. Please see the video of my interview with the Kentucky Chamber [at kychamberbottomline.com] for my detailed thoughts on this issue.”

JACK CONWAY



“I support public-private partnerships because they are an important tool that can help jump-start critical infrastructure projects across Kentucky. I support legislation that allows us the flexibility to enter into public-private partnerships while also ensuring that protections are in place to safeguard the interests of taxpayers,” Conway wrote in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.

DREW CURTIS



Curtis said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey that he is supportive of public-private partnerships. “However I want deal structure to be scrutinized. If a hedge fund or other large investor is interested in a PPP because it’s a good deal, Kentucky should perhaps look at taking that deal,” Curtis said.



RIGHT TO WORK

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER SUPPORTS LEGISLATION TO MAKE THE COMMONWEALTH A RIGHT-TO-WORK STATE AND ALLOWING WORKERS TO CHOOSE WHETHER OR NOT THEY WISH TO JOIN A UNION. THE CHAMBER ALSO SUPPORTS EFFORTS BY LOCAL COUNTIES TO PASS RIGHT-TO-WORK ORDINANCES TO MAKE THEIR REGION MORE COMPETITIVE.



MATT BEVIN

“Right to Work legislation would help make Kentucky a more attractive place for new businesses,” said Bevin in the Chamber’s survey. “Not passing such legislation, puts us at a disadvantage to bordering states such as Indiana, Tennessee, Virginia, and other states in our region with whom we compete for jobs. Kentucky is the only southern state that has not enacted right to work legislation and we can no longer afford the opportunity cost of being an outlier.”

JACK CONWAY

Conway said he does not support right to work legislation. “I think making Kentucky a right-to-work state is a solution looking for a problem. Under Gov. Beshear, Kentucky led the country in economic development projects and our unemployment rate fell well below the national average. There are ways to make Kentucky more attractive to employers. As Governor, I’ll conduct a top-to-bottom review of incentives in the Economic Development Cabinet to make certain that Kentucky has the right tools in the toolbox to attract more good-paying jobs. I’m also committed to holding the line on taxes and phasing out the inventory tax to lower costs for Kentucky businesses,” Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.

DREW CURTIS

Curtis said he is not a supporter of right to work legislation but would like to see the results of the local efforts to pass ordinances at the county level. “At this time I can’t prove it is effective in creating jobs. I would let Warren County continue its experiment however. Let’s see what that tells us,” Curtis said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.



MINIMUM WAGE

TO ENHANCE WORKFORCE FLEXIBILITY, THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER OPPOSES STATE AND LOCAL WAGE MANDATES, SAFETY REGULATIONS AND ADDITIONAL STANDARDS THAT EXCEED FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS.



MATT BEVIN

“I believe in letting free markets determine wage increases,” said Bevin in the Chamber’s policy survey. “Governments artificially raising the minimum wage stagnates job growth in many areas of Kentucky already struggling.”

JACK CONWAY

“I support a minimum wage increase in Kentucky but would prefer an increase at the federal level to keep Kentucky on an even playing field,” Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.

DREW CURTIS



In the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey, Curtis said he would support an increase in the minimum wage with one exception. “However I would carve out small businesses from needing to pay minimum wage. Large corporations like Walmart and McDonalds can take the revenue hit from a minimum wage increase, but small businesses can’t. Small businesses also aren’t the ones responsible for pegging wages to minimum wage. Sometimes people might be willing to work for a small business for reasons other than money (i.e. helping a friend out) - let’s make this legal. If we carve small businesses out from minimum wage hikes, suddenly no one is against them,” Curtis said.



LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER SUPPORTS LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX LEGISLATION (LIFT) TO ALLOW CITIZENS IN A COMMUNITY TO VOTE TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT THEY WANT TO INCREASE THEIR OWN SALES TAX SLIGHTLY IN ORDER TO PAY FOR A CERTAIN PROJECT IN THEIR AREA.



MATT BEVIN

In the Chamber's survey, Bevin said he sees both the advantages and disadvantages of the Local Option Sales Tax (also known as LIFT). "I am personally not an advocate for LIFT because ultimately, it can allow Frankfort to pass the buck, so to speak, to the local level," he said. "However, I do see how it could benefit some communities and why they might desire such an option. Ultimately, this would require an amendment to the state's constitution and should be placed before voters for approval."

JACK CONWAY



"I support allowing Kentuckians a chance to vote to amend the constitution to allow the option of financing projects on a temporary basis through the local option sales tax. The need to fund these projects must be balanced with the need to keep taxes low to keep Kentucky competitive," Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey.

DREW CURTIS

"I need to see the specific implementation first. Not blanket opposed," Curtis said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey. In a sit-down interview with the Kentucky Chamber, Curtis said depending on the details of the project, he could be supportive in most cases. "If a local community decides they want to pay more tax for a local thing, they should be able to do it," Curtis said.



KENTUCKY'S COAL INDUSTRY

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER SUPPORTS LEGISLATION TO ENSURE THE LONGEVITY AND SUCCESS OF KENTUCKY'S SIGNATURE COAL INDUSTRY.



MATT BEVIN

"I would begin by not enforcing onerous federal regulations that are economically detrimental to our state and harmful to our citizens," Bevin said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey. "This includes EPA regulations destroying our coal industry. Federal government regulations have killed thousands of jobs in Kentucky, and nowhere is this more evident than with the unreasonable regulations on the production and consumption of coal. Never in the history of the world has there been more consumption of coal than there is today. Kentucky should be participating in this global demand. The Governor's office will use its constitutional right under the 10th Amendment when enforcing environmental laws. This may include instructing its regulatory enforcement agencies to ignore federal regulations that are unreasonable and excessive. I will not just be a friend of coal, I will fight to ensure that we mine coal and produce electricity with coal here in this state. Coal is and should continue to be a key part of our economy. A Bevin-Hampton Administration would also work to reform our judicial review process that holds up coal production and nuclear power plants in frivolous lawsuits and bureaucratic red tape. Growing other areas of Kentucky's energy sector should also be incentivized. Our state is blessed with an abundance of natural resources. We can lower the cost of energy, decrease our dependence on foreign oil, and create badly needed jobs by exploring and developing these resources."

JACK CONWAY

“Kentucky’s coal industry keeps our energy prices low and puts food on the table for our families. As Attorney General, I stood up for our coal economy and sued the EPA over regulations that would hurt Kentucky jobs and raise our utility rates. As Governor, I will do everything possible to protect this industry because it is vital to our economic success. I will aggressively market Kentucky coal and explore new export potentials both nationally and abroad. I am committed to working with our coal industry to seek ways to make coal more economical to mine to ensure that it remains a cheap energy source,” Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.



DREW CURTIS

“I have great sympathy for coal workers but the fact of the matter is coal is not coming back. Even if it did, eventually we would be in this situation again – there is a finite amount of coal and we are reaching the end of it. I am open to suggestions on how to help coal companies diversify however – any and all ideas are welcome here. The problem with alternative energy sources is that they currently are more expensive than coal. Kentucky is not a prime area for solar or wind. Biomass energy seems interesting but is still nascent,” Curtis wrote in the Kentucky Chamber’s policy survey.





TORT REFORM

THE CHAMBER SUPPORTS COMMONSENSE LIABILITY REFORMS TO LIMIT THE DEVASTATING ECONOMIC IMPACT MERITLESS LAWSUITS HAVE ON KENTUCKY EMPLOYERS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.



MATT BEVIN

"We need common sense tort reform. Onerous and uncapped litigation costs are a deterrent to companies doing businesses or thinking of doing business in Kentucky," Bevin said in the policy survey.

JACK CONWAY



"Any reforms we make must also keep the courts open and accessible to Kentuckians. I support limited reform to make sure that Kentucky doesn't encourage volume litigation," Conway said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey.

DREW CURTIS

"I am very much against frivolous lawsuits as evidenced by my 2012 TED talk on How I Beat a Patent Troll. However sometimes lawsuits are legitimate. One effective strategy is to put some of the risk burden on plaintiffs - i.e. Fee Shifting. I'd be more than willing to explore ideas along those lines," Curtis said in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey.



SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACES

THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER SUPPORTS LEGISLATION TO MAKE KENTUCKY SMOKE-FREE BY PROHIBITING SMOKING IN ALL INDOOR WORKPLACES AND PUBLIC PLACES IN KENTUCKY. OF THE KENTUCKY CHAMBER'S MEMBERSHIP, 92 PERCENT OF BUSINESS OWNERS FAVOR A STATEWIDE SMOKE-FREE LAW.

Bevin said he believes smoke-free legislation should be left to local communities to decide.

Conway stated he supports smoke-free legislation in the Kentucky Chamber's policy survey.

Curtis said he supports smoke-free legislation as long as cigar bars and clubs that wish to allow smoking are exempt.



Bottom Line

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