



# New Agenda

Great Ideas for Kentucky



# Kentucky is a national technology leader.



Dear Fellow Kentuckians:

Kentucky is a national technology leader. This is a grand statement that is neither a dream nor a slogan. Kentucky's national technology leadership position is a truth that has spread across the country and around the world as the ConnectKentucky partnership is held up as a model by a wide array of media, state and national policy-makers, industry leaders, unions and numerous government agencies and officials.

More impressive than the positive publicity generated by ConnectKentucky are the non-profit group's results that have sparked a technology and economic development turn-around for the Commonwealth. Kentuckians of all ages can pursue life-long learning, enjoy improved healthcare and a superior quality of life. Consider the magnitude of the following results that have occurred through the work of ConnectKentucky and its partners:

- 96% of Kentucky households can access broadband Internet, up from only 60% three years ago.
- The percentage of Kentuckians actually using broadband has increased by 100%, from 22% to 44%, and from one of the worst state use rates to one of the best.
- Computer ownership in Kentucky homes has grown by 24% while the national average grew only 4%.
- Every Kentucky county now has a web site to make local government more accessible.
- 18,400 new high-tech jobs have been created in Kentucky as Kentucky's growth rate of high tech jobs is now more than four times the national average. These new jobs are fueling a "brain drain" reversal as Kentucky graduates are remaining in Kentucky to launch their careers at a dramatically improved rate.

Though impressive results have been achieved to date, the work of ConnectKentucky has only now begun. Imagine the folly of the house builder who would celebrate the pouring of the foundation and consider his work done. ConnectKentucky is poised now to build on the technology foundation that has been established – working to seize the opportunities enabled when technology is applied to education, healthcare, community and economic development, small business growth, and government service delivery.

"The central question in assuring a brighter future for Kentucky is the wise investments in preparing its people to be capable and adaptable in a demanding technological age. This calls for wise and courageous leadership to recognize this fact." This statement was made by the late Dr. Thomas Clark in an open letter to the 2005 General Assembly. The words ring even truer today in light of the great opportunities that are now within our reach.

John R. Hall  
Chairman  
ConnectKentucky Steering Committee

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<b>Introduction</b> .....	2
<b>Task Force</b> .....	3

<b>5 Goals to Transform Kentucky</b> .....	4
<b>Kentucky in the Global Market</b> .....	6
<b>Improving Education Attainment</b> .....	6
<b>A National Leader in Energy</b> .....	7
<b>A Healthier Kentucky</b> .....	8
<b>Modernizing Government</b> .....	8

<b>100 Ideas</b> .....	9
<b>Agriculture</b> .....	10
<b>Alcoholic Beverages</b> .....	10
<b>Crime/Drug Abuse</b> .....	10
<b>Economic Development</b> .....	11
<b>Education—General</b> .....	12
<b>Education—Pre-K</b> .....	15
<b>Education—Elementary and Secondary</b> .....	15
<b>Education—Postsecondary</b> .....	17
<b>Education—Teachers</b> .....	19
<b>Energy</b> .....	20
<b>Entertainment/Recreation</b> .....	20
<b>Environment</b> .....	21
<b>Gambling</b> .....	22
<b>Health Care</b> .....	22
<b>Labor</b> .....	24
<b>Libraries</b> .....	26
<b>Miscellaneous</b> .....	27
<b>Quality of Life</b> .....	27
<b>Senior Citizens</b> .....	27
<b>Social Services</b> .....	28
<b>State and Local Government</b> .....	29
<b>Taxes</b> .....	31
<b>Telecommunications</b> .....	32
<b>Tourism</b> .....	33
<b>Transportation</b> .....	35
<b>Utilities</b> .....	37
<b>Contributors</b> .....	38



# A New Agenda for Kentucky

## Introduction



Craig Grant

The New Agenda for Kentucky initiative was designed to encourage Kentuckians to look at things in a different way and to think creatively about our challenges and opportunities. They responded with a host of innovative, exciting ideas.

The New Agenda contained in these pages came about through an open-source process that collected Kentuckians' ideas through a dedicated web site, [www.newagendaky.com](http://www.newagendaky.com); community meetings and "idea-raisers;" outreach to civic organizations and community groups; and interviews with experts and opinion leaders.

Launched in the spring of 2007 with the support of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, the project generated almost 400 ideas from contributors from all parts of the state. Kentuckians clearly welcomed this opportunity and took the assignment seriously as they followed the guidelines that the New Agenda Task Force developed for submitting ideas:

- **Be relevant to Kentuckians.** Every idea should speak to the concerns of Kentuckians and be relevant to their lives.
- **Focus on the future.** Each idea should be about the future and aimed at making Kentucky a better place to live and work.
- **Think beyond the government.** Although government's role is vital, ideas should focus not only on government action but also should consider the role of private enterprise and individuals in making Kentucky the best it can be.

The Task Force members, representing business executives and younger entrepreneurs from throughout Kentucky, reviewed the ideas and selected 100 of the most noteworthy to share with the state and its elected and policy leaders. In keeping with the citizen-directed nature of the effort, the Task Force served as a conveyor of Kentuckians' ideas and, from them, developed five goals to transform the state. Together, these constitute the New Agenda for Kentucky.

We believe that anyone interested in the future of Kentucky will find this New Agenda to be interesting reading. We also hope that it will be helpful to our Governor, legislators and other elected, civic and business leaders as they work to strengthen our state and its future.

*Craig Grant*

*Chair*

*New Agenda for Kentucky Task Force*

# New Agenda Task Force

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**Front Row (L to R):** Ann McBrayer, Marcia McMillen, Susan Weiss, Marilyn Cordova-Winchell, Daniel P. Murphy, Rick James, Brian Mefford. **Standing (L to R):** C. Edward Glasscock, Stephen A. Williams, Jeffrey A. McKenzie, Tricia Burke, Malcolm Bryant, Eric Mills, Joan A. Coleman, Sean O'Leary, Craig Grant, Shannon White, Mark Messer.  
**Not Pictured:** Kris Kimel, Steve Sexton, Chris Spalding, Phil Wilkins, Kristin Williams.



*The New Agenda for Kentucky was developed by a task force that was convened by the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce but operated independently of the Chamber's policy development process.*





## A New Agenda for Kentucky: Five Goals to Transform Our Future

The New Agenda for Kentucky project spent much of 2007 soliciting ideas from citizens throughout Kentucky – inviting participation through a web site and gathering suggestions at “idea-raisers” and through other activities.

The result was the submission of hundreds of ideas. Some of these were simple, such as a proposal to provide more directional signs on major highways. Others were more involved, such as creating a program that allows a student to work toward an associate degree while finishing high school. Whether the ideas addressed our economy, educational system, health care or taxes, all spoke to a common goal: making Kentucky a better place in which to live and work.

In crafting a New Agenda to reach this goal, the Task Force first selected the top 100 ideas from among the almost 400 that were submitted. The selection was made on the basis of five criteria:

- Viability
- Financial feasibility
- The time needed to implement
- Innovation and vision
- Impact

After selecting the top 100 ideas, the Task Force turned its attention to determining which of the ideas were truly transformational—with the potential to move Kentucky forward in a critical area. These transformational ideas make up the New Agenda.

For Kentucky to make real progress, the New Agenda must speak to policy areas that are in greatest need of improvement, but it must also address the core elements necessary to ensure future success. With this guiding principle in mind, the New Agenda for Kentucky addresses five fundamental elements:

1. Preparing Kentucky to successfully compete in the global marketplace
2. Improving the education attainment of Kentuckians at all levels
3. Expanding Kentucky’s role as an energy leader
4. Promoting wellness and healthy Kentuckians
5. Modernizing government at all levels





# 5

## Goals to Transform Kentucky

1. Preparing Kentucky to successfully compete in the global marketplace
2. Improving the education attainment of Kentuckians at all levels
3. Expanding Kentucky's role as an energy leader
4. Promoting wellness and healthy Kentuckians
5. Modernizing government at all levels

# 1. Kentucky in the Global Market

Just a few generations ago, America dominated the world economy. Most products were manufactured in the United States, and many of those produced in less-developed countries were considered inferior. With the rise of the global economy, fueled in part by the development of the Internet, quality products and services are now manufactured around the globe. The U.S. share of the global market has decreased to about 25%, and the nation now has an annual trade deficit of more than \$700 billion. Some complex products like computers and software, once exclusively American products, are now widely produced in China and India.

Given this profound economic shift, Kentucky's future prosperity rests on its preparation to compete in

the global marketplace. This means recognizing that our true economic competitors are no longer limited to Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee and other states, but now also include countries like China, Korea and India. It will also require adapting our educational system to this new international reality and making sure that state and local government policies are friendly to both foreign and domestic businesses.

Preparing Kentucky to compete in the global marketplace will require a number of action steps, which might include:

- Providing tax incentives to STEM companies (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) that are currently located in Kentucky or want to move here
- Radically altering Kentucky's income tax, by either abolishing it, or replacing it with a simple three-line tax form
- Teaching the metric system in public schools
- Teaching foreign languages, such as Chinese, to prepare students to participate in the global market
- Comparing Kentucky's economic/educational performance with other countries, instead of other states, since our real competition in the global economy is beyond our national borders
- Encouraging Kentucky cities to participate in the Sister Cities program, to strengthen foreign linkages and encourage foreign investment in Kentucky

# 2. Improving Education Attainment

Kentucky's economic future is directly related to the education and skills of its citizens. The business community requires a labor pool of well-prepared high school and college graduates to successfully compete in the global economy. Kentucky's 1990 reforms in elementary and secondary education, combined with new goals for postsecondary education enacted in 1997, have yielded important results:

- The percent of students scoring proficient or higher on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams in math, science and reading has increased substantially since the 1990s.
- Enrollment in Kentucky's

community colleges and technical schools has increased 67% over the past decade.

- The rate of high school graduates attending college in Kentucky has increased from below the national average to above the national average in the past ten years.

Despite these impressive gains, other states have been improving their educational performance as well, and many challenges remain for Kentucky:

- Only 65% of high school freshmen in Kentucky graduate in four years. Nationally, Kentucky ties for the 17th highest state dropout rate for grades 9-12.

- Only 12% of Kentucky ninth graders go on to complete either an associate's degree in three years or a bachelor's degree in six years compared with 18% nationally and 28% in the best-performing states.
- Of those students who make it to college, the Council on Postsecondary Education reports that 53% of incoming freshmen require remediation in one or more subjects.
- Families are being required to shoulder a larger share of the cost of attending college in Kentucky. The state auditor reports that public college tuition has increased by an average of 128% since 1998.





## 5 Goals

to Transform Kentucky

- Kentucky invests substantially less per student in education funds than surrounding states, and the percent of the state budget spent on education has declined in recent years.

Improving education attainment at all levels will require multiple actions, such as:

- Fully funding all-day kindergarten, to give children a boost in performance when starting elementary school
- Updating teacher compensation by adopting differentiated pay for teachers that pays higher salaries for:
  - Teachers in hard to serve areas and subjects
  - Performance instead of seniority
- Establishing an education improvement tax credit for businesses in Kentucky that contribute to public and private schools (as in Pennsylvania, Florida and Arizona); contributions could go into a statewide fund and be distributed to schools based on need
- Improving education alignment by:
  - Ensuring universal transferability of credits from KCTCS institutions to four-year public institutions—all credit earned at any of the 16 KCTCS colleges should be transferable to any public university in Kentucky
- Improving teacher education/preparation to better prepare students for college

*“1. Improve education at all levels.*

*2. Continue to improve education at all levels.”*

*William Sturgill, Chairman,  
Central Rock Mineral Co., Lexington*

## 3. A National Leader in Energy

Kentucky enjoys an historic position as a national leader in energy production, ranking as one of the top three U.S. coal producers for the last 50 years. Our abundance of coal and an efficient system of power generation has also resulted in the lowest electric rates in the nation—a real plus for consumers, especially industries engaged in manufacturing.

To meet future energy demands, state regulators have estimated that we will need ten additional large power plants over the next 20 years. If we are to meet this growing demand while protecting the environment, as well as our position as an energy leader, we must expand the recently developed state energy plan to ensure that Kentucky has a comprehensive energy conservation/efficiency strategy involving public-private partnerships.

This strategy could include, but not be limited to:

- Alternative energy production/use (hybrid vehicles, turning waste into power, wind and solar power)
- Expansion of hydroelectric power generation
- Value-added energy production
- Taxes/incentives that encourage responsible energy use
- Clean coal technology

*Kentucky should “capitalize on becoming a key provider of alternative energy sources, create laws to lower the cost of civil litigation and medical malpractice liability, pass employee choice laws, continue efforts to substantially increased R&D efforts, and develop a new model for training and developing the workforce.”*

*William J. Jones, President, U.S. Bank, Paducah*

## 4. A Healthier Kentucky

A recent assessment of the health of Kentuckians prepared by the Institute of Medicine at the University of Kentucky revealed that we lead the nation in some grim statistics:

- Kentucky ranks No. 1 in the percent of adults who smoke. A full 29% of adult Kentuckians smoke, compared to 21% nationally.
- An estimated 25% of high school students also smoke, compared to 23% nationally.
- More than half of all smokers will die of a smoking-related illness (cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory illness) and 23% of all deaths in Kentucky are attributed to smoking.

- Kentucky ranks sixth in obesity, with 29% of adults considered obese, compared to a national average of 24%.
- Oral health is also a concern, with Kentucky ranking eighth in the number of adults who have lost at least one tooth to dental disease.

The UK study found that many of the health problems in the state are due to poor lifestyle choices, which lead to preventable diseases and premature deaths. Compounding these problems is the fact that more than 14% of Kentucky's population is not covered by public or private health insurance, and when the uninsured get sick, they tend to avoid seeking medical treatment or filling a prescription.

To promote wellness and healthy Kentuckians, we need to consider:

- Provide tax credits to companies that offer wellness programs to employees
- Encourage physical education in public schools
- Create anti-obesity programs/nutrition education in schools
- Provide dental hygiene education to public school students
- Expand access to affordable health care by working with the private sector to provide affordable health coverage and put Kentuckians on a plan that can be paid for on an individual or employer basis

## 5. Modernizing Government

The structure of state and local government in Kentucky is based largely on our 1891 state constitution. The method of organization of city and county government has remained virtually unchanged for over 115 years. The authority provided to cities to govern themselves (such as the form of local government, ability to raise revenue, and fire and police protection) varies by city class (from first class to sixth class cities), with smaller towns having less authority than larger cities. This antiquated system has left many local communities in Kentucky struggling with rising pension and benefit costs, with limited options for increasing revenue other than to reduce essential services.

During the past one hundred years there has also been a vast increase

in the size and scope of services offered by state government. With over 27,000 employees and annual expenditures of over \$22 billion, Kentucky state government provides a host of essential services, such as roads, education and social safety net programs. The state also operates one of the largest park systems in the country and engages in many activities that could be provided by the private sector with increased gains to the taxpayer. A case in point: the state lottery. A recent report in the *New York Times* found that some states were considering leasing their state lotteries to private operators, with estimates of the return to the state as high as \$37 billion in California.

Kentucky should modernize government and improve efficiency by considering such ideas as:

- Privatizing the Kentucky Lottery to increase the return to the state
- Creating a pilot project to privatize at least one state park and allow liquor sales as part of the pilot
- Creating incentives to reduce the number of counties in Kentucky
- Consolidating local offices such as constable, surveyors, magistrates, sheriffs, to improve efficiency
- Encouraging regional/consolidated service delivery with timelines for implementation
- Abolishing the classification system of Kentucky cities and give all communities the authority to govern themselves in as entrepreneurial spirit as possible, including the ability to levy sales and restaurant taxes



# 100 ideas



## Agriculture

1.

With the elimination of the tobacco price support and quota system, Kentucky's agricultural economy has experienced fundamental change in recent years. The USDA reports that net farm income in Kentucky declined more than \$400 million between 2005 and 2006. And the Kentucky State Data Center reports that the number of Kentuckians employed in farming decreased by almost 10% from 1990 to 2000. To bolster Kentucky farms, we should **promote alternative agriculture** by:

- Encouraging **organic farming**
- Providing incentives for the **production of industrial hemp** (that cannot be used to produce marijuana)
- Offering financial incentives for **ethanol production** and growing corn for ethanol production

2.

The University of Kentucky reports that more than 80,000 acres of Kentucky farmland were converted to other uses during the 1990s. Urban growth not only diminishes the rural character and beauty of the farm landscape, it also can create conflict between farmers and suburban dwellers who object to certain farming operations. Kentucky should **preserve farmland from urban development** by:

- Using Lexington's Urban Service Area as a model
- Simplifying the conservation easement process
- Funding the Kentucky Land Trust

## Alcoholic Beverages

3.

Kentucky has a long history of bourbon production. Today, more than 98% of all bourbon is made here. Overall sales of bourbon top \$1 billion and "The Bourbon Trail" has helped to make bourbon distilleries top tourist attractions. Nevertheless, it is illegal to buy bourbon or any other alcoholic beverage in all or part of more than 60% of Kentucky's 120 countries. Antiquated alcohol sales laws, which are confusing to tourists and sacrifice revenue, should be eliminated and **alcohol sales should be permitted statewide in Kentucky.**

*Kentucky's strengths include "the citizens' common sense (and) willingness to work hard to achieve their objectives." The state should "develop early intervention programs for the children most at risk to help assure they have as great a chance as possible in completing at least a high school education."*

*Mark Bailey, Executive Vice President,  
Big Rivers Electric Corp., Henderson*



## Crime/Drug Abuse

4.

According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), half of all police officers convicted in the nation as a result of FBI-led corruption cases between 1993 and 1997 were convicted for drug-related offenses. It is critical that appropriate checks and balances be put in place to ensure allegations of law enforcement corruption are properly investigated by independent authorities. To accomplish this, **allegations of police corruption should be investigated by outside, independent law enforcement agencies**, such as the Attorney General or state police from another area of the state.

5.

The average cost of incarcerating approximately 20,000 state inmates in Kentucky is about \$47 per day. Kentucky's county jails housed an additional 15,000 inmates at an annual cost of \$244 million in 2005 (at an average daily cost of \$36.25). To ensure offenders contribute something of value to the community, **inmates convicted of non-violent crimes should be required to work on community projects.**



*“Turn Louisville, Lexington, Bowling Green and Northern Kentucky and other areas of concentrated economic productivity loose to create their own future unburdened by those who are not interested in helping themselves.”*

*Bill Samuels Jr., President, Maker's Mark Distillery, Loretto*



## Economic Development

### 7.

According to the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, the United States ranked third worldwide in the number of science graduates 30 years ago. Today, the nation's international position has slipped to 17th. Kentucky's performance reflects this decline, as we currently rank:

- 47th in workforce education
- 47th in the number of scientists and engineers
- 45th in the number of patents issued
- 42nd in the number of high tech jobs
- 39th in industry investment in R & D
- 33rd in the number of fastest growing companies
- 41st in the number of science and engineering occupations
- 44th in the number of high tech businesses in the state

By **offering tax incentives to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) companies** who are currently located in Kentucky or want to move here, we can help to reverse this trend and increase the number of STEM jobs in the Commonwealth.

### 6.

Local prosecutors in Kentucky (County Attorneys and Commonwealth Attorneys) are independently elected by local voters and are not subject to direct supervision or control from a state agency. The Office of the Attorney General has no authority to hold a local prosecutor accountable for substandard performance.

**Accountability for local prosecutors should be encouraged** by the annual publication of data that would allow voters to compare the performance of their prosecutors with others in Kentucky in areas such as: number of disposed cases, number of convictions overturned on appeal and child support collections.

### 8.

The Kentucky State Data Center reports that Kentucky's population is growing at a much slower rate than the rest of the nation (projected at 9.5% growth vs. 19% growth by 2020). We need to **encourage people to move to Kentucky** to keep our population at levels necessary to compete economically. To do this, we should **encourage local communities to develop web sites that allow new residents to hook up utilities and arrange for other necessary services online.**

### 9.

Eight Fortune 1000 companies are currently headquartered in Kentucky: Ashland Inc., Brown-Forman, General Cable, Humana, Kindred Healthcare, Lexmark, Omnicare and Yum! Brands. In addition to creating jobs, a corporate headquarters is a magnet for attracting talent to Kentucky and encourages college graduates to remain in their home communities. To **bring more corporate headquarters to Kentucky**, Kentucky should offer a wide array of incentives, including full tax abatement for 10 years for all executives who move to Kentucky.





*“Educational access for all Kentuckians is essential for the future. Adequate financial resources are needed at all levels of education. ...Economic development efforts must become more innovative and tied to helping rural Kentucky compete in a global economy.”*

*Michael Carter, President, Campbellsville University*



## Education-General

### 11.

Last year, the United States imported \$763 billion more in goods and services than we exported. Experts have estimated that 25% to 35% of all work currently performed in the United States can be done outside of the country. Not only have many traditional jobs moved off shore, but the Internet also makes it possible for such professional work as engineering and medicine to be handled in other parts of the world. Actions that are required to **prepare Kentucky to compete in the global marketplace**, include:

- **Teaching the metric system** in public schools
- **Teaching foreign languages**, such as Chinese
- **Comparing Kentucky’s economic/educational performance with other countries**, instead of just other states

### 10.

From 1990 to 2000, the number of manufacturing jobs in Kentucky grew at a slower rate than most other sectors of our economy. As the growth in traditional manufacturing jobs declines, Kentucky **should create a task force to prepare incentive packages to attract “next generation” and emerging industries.**

### 12.

Employers interviewed by the Kentucky Economic Development Cabinet as part of a Target Industry Analysis reported dissatisfaction with the basic skill levels of job applicants. Employers also report substance abuse is a significant problem among job candidates. Research has shown that Life Skills training can have a positive impact on students, leading to a reduction in violence, risky behaviors and use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs. Such training also could help prepare high school students for the workplace. **Life Skills classes should be required for all students** and include:

- **Character education** to stress self-respect, respect for others, basic manners/etiquette and personal responsibility
- **Parenting skills/responsibilities**
- **Personal finance** to teach the basics of savings, checking, borrowing money, credit cards, buying a house, etc.
- **Business education/experience** that encourages entrepreneurial thinking, participation in Junior Achievement or similar programs and involves business representatives as volunteer mentors
- **Civic engagement/community service** to encourage students to volunteer for community projects
- **Cooperative jobs** to provide workplace experience



**13.**

The Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) formula was created in 1990 to allocate state education funds to school districts. Among the goals of SEEK is to provide a minimum level of funding per student regardless of the wealth of the district, require a minimum level of funding effort from each school district and equalize school spending across the state. A 2002 Legislative Research Commission review of SEEK found differing opinions among superintendents about the impact of SEEK. **The SEEK formula should be reviewed and revised** to ensure that it does not lead to more funding for some districts at the expense of others.

*“Kentucky needs drastic improvement in accountability for K-12 educators. Teachers should be held responsible for their performance and results and should be rewarded accordingly.”*

*Craig Guess, President,  
Vanguard Contractors, Paducah*

**14.**

The University of Kentucky Center for Business and Economic Research reports that spending on education in Kentucky as a share of overall state spending has fallen in recent years. **Establishing an education improvement tax credit** for businesses in Kentucky that contribute to public and private schools (as in Pennsylvania, Florida and Arizona) could help increase funding for schools. Contributions could be made to a state fund for distribution to schools based on demonstrated need.

**15.**

A number of organizations have been working toward the production of low-cost laptop computers. Equipped with a wind-up power supply, the laptops will cost approximately \$100. As these low-cost laptops become available, Kentucky should **enhance education technology** by providing one for each student; the state also should reduce textbook costs by installing content on the laptops and by using other online instructional resources.

**16.**

Kentucky currently has 174 local public school districts within its 120 counties. Some observers believe that having so many districts leads to inefficiencies and duplication of effort. **Consolidating school districts** could improve efficiency and lower administrative costs, freeing up more dollars for instruction. State incentives should be developed to encourage the consolidation of school districts, and Kentucky counties should be encouraged to follow suit.





*“Kentucky needs to seize the opportunity to be a leader in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) and in energy research and development.”*

*Lee T. Todd, President,  
University of Kentucky*

## 17.

While most states base school funding on enrollment, a number of states, including Kentucky, base funding on average daily attendance (ADA). Proponents of enrollment-based funding argue that schools must be prepared to serve all students on any given day, regardless of whether they attend. States using ADA believe this approach boosts student attendance and decreases truancy. A third model ties funding, at least in part, to performance. **Kentucky should consider restructuring its school funding system to tie funding to improvements in the academic performance of students.** Consideration also should be given to restructuring high school funding by paying high schools for each student they graduate.

## 18.

A 2005 study by Standard and Poor’s of spending in school districts in nine states, including Kentucky, found that there was no significant relationship between student performance and the percent of spending allocated to instruction and administration. Since research suggests student performance will not be adversely affected, **school districts should be required to adopt a lean management model** to improve efficiency.

## 19.

Create a “Reverse-tuition” Public School System in which the tuition that students pay to attend a school other than their “home school,” is allocated to strengthen the home school to improve its performance and enhance its competitive position.

## 20.

A 2003 assessment found that 42% of adult Kentuckians have basic or below basic literacy levels. **Kentucky can help the adult learners** by establishing regional adult development training centers and requiring state universities to assist with GED programs.

## 21.

Currently, everyone seeking a GED in Kentucky is given the same test. However, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires the GED testing system to make accommodations for persons with learning disabilities and broadens the passage rate by looking at a pattern of relative strengths and weaknesses of the person. **GED assessments should be modified to accommodate adults with learning disabilities.**



## 22.

The California Secretary of Food and Agriculture, A.G. Kawamura, recently noted that “a garden teaches a child about the delicate balance between living and surviving through a hands-on relationship with another living organism. It teaches the child about the consequences of negligence... The forgotten lessons that a garden provides can set the stage for new paradigms in teaching, school lunch programs, community food security outreach, agricultural literacy, and community service learning.” To promote eco-literacy, **Kentucky should create a sustainability curriculum** in which students are educated about sustainable development as well as basic survival skills beginning in elementary school. This effort should include the establishment of school gardens.

## Education—Pre-K

### 23.

Research on the benefits of quality early childhood education show a high rate of return for the public dollars invested. The benefits of high-quality programs include: improvement in IQ, better test scores, a higher high school graduation rate, a lower arrest rate, lower use of social services, higher earnings and higher home-ownership rates. **Kentucky should expand the availability of quality early care and education by:**

- **Making high quality preschool available** in public schools to all 3- and 4-year-old children on a voluntary basis
- **Developing aggressive early childhood math programs** and teaching children in early grades about career opportunities available from a math and science education
- **Asking churches and community organizations** to participate in programs addressing the health and education of young children

## Education—Elementary and Secondary

### 24.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, public schoolchildren who attended kindergarten for a full day do better in reading than those enrolled in half-day programs. Kentucky currently mandates half-day kindergarten and funds it through the SEEK formula. About 70% of Kentucky’s 176 school districts provide at least one full-day kindergarten program, with the districts making up the costs not covered by state funds. In 2005, the cost to fund all-day kindergarten statewide was estimated at about \$111 million per year. **Kentucky should fully fund all-day kindergarten** to take advantage of its benefits.

*“For the past two years I have promoted a National Principals Academy to recruit and train principals for our education system. ...It would be similar to a Harvard Business School. ...We could be the first in the country to recruit and train principals (which would do more to upgrade education than anything else). Everything starts with strong leadership.”*

*Former Governor John Y. Brown Jr.,  
Lexington*





## 25.

The Alliance for Excellent Education estimates that more than 18,000 students did not graduate from Kentucky's high schools in 2004, costing the state more than \$4.8 billion over a lifetime in lost wages, taxes and productivity. High school dropouts each earn about \$9,200 less per year than high school graduates, and are more likely to end up either on public assistance or in prison. Nationally, Kentucky tied with New Hampshire and Vermont for the 17th highest state dropout rate for grades 9-12 during the most recent school year for which data is available for all 50 states. A new Columbia University study estimates that U.S. taxpayers could save \$45 billion a year if the number of high school dropouts was cut in half and \$18 billion a year if the number was cut by one-fifth. **Kentucky should invest in dropout prevention programs** to realize these savings and help students graduate from high school.

## 26.

Many states require that anyone under the age of 18 must be enrolled in school to obtain a driving permit. If a student drops out of school, his or her driving permit is revoked. Some automobile insurance companies grant a "good student discount" to high school students who maintain a B average or better. **Why not reward good grades as a matter of state law by requiring a certain GPA before a teenager can get a driver's permit?**



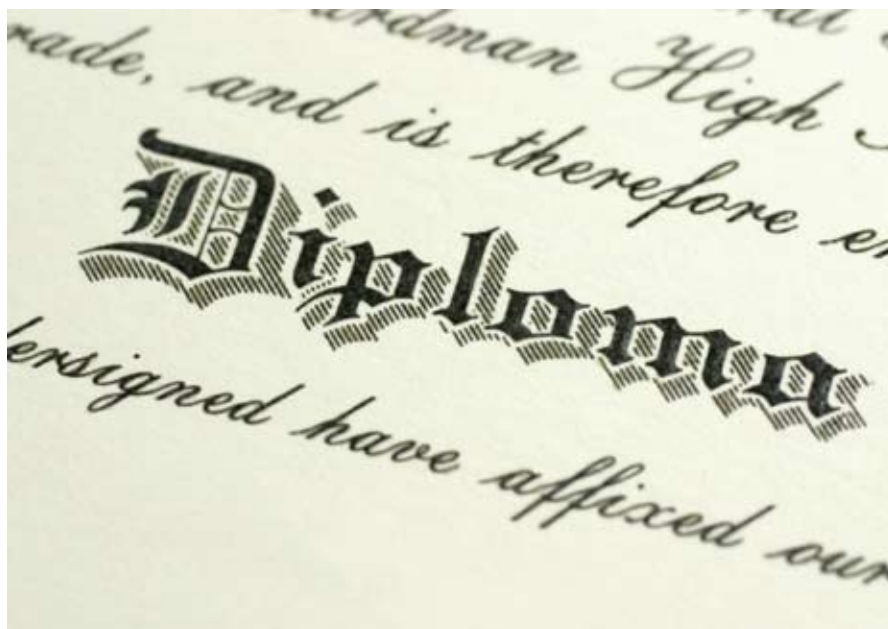
*Kentucky would benefit from more flexibility in adult education and making it more readily available at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The state also needs to maximize tourism, especially in the areas of historic, recreational and "green" tourism.*

*Wayne Martin, Regional Vice President, Gray Television, Inc., General Manager, WKYT-TV, Lexington*

## 27.

In *Tough Choices or Tough Times*, the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce reports that the globalization of the world's economy has resulted in the development of a low-skilled and low-cost labor force. If the United States wants to compete in the global market, it can lower wages and increase working hours, or concentrate on high-value-added products and services. To do the latter, Kentucky must make fundamental changes in our schools. To better compete in the global market, **Kentucky must transform its high schools to create a seamless transition to college by:**

- Creating a curriculum in which high school graduates could receive a two-year associate degree
- Increasing expectations in high school in science and math
- Offering an "early college" approach which introduces a college-level curriculum
- Letting students go to college when they are ready—even at age 16





## Education- Postsecondary

### 28.

In early 2007, the Kentucky Auditor of Public Accounts reported that between August 1998 and August 2006, in-state tuition at Kentucky's eight four-year public institutions increased by an average of 128%—more than five times the rate of inflation. **Kentucky should fully fund higher education** in exchange for an agreement from state colleges and universities that they will not raise tuition; fully fund need-based grant programs to cover all applicants in a given year; and increase maximum KEES awards to cover full tuition at state universities.

### 29.

A recent report by the Kentucky State Data Center found that people leaving Kentucky tend to be college educated and employed in professional or technical occupations. Keeping more college graduates in Kentucky would help ensure that our investments in education pay off. **To make college more affordable and provide incentives for graduates to stay in Kentucky, we should:**

- **Offer tuition/expense reimbursement** for college graduates who stay and work in Kentucky for a specified period of time
- **Expand the KEES program** to allow college students to earn KEES money for graduate degrees based on their GPA as undergraduates
- **Offer full scholarships** to students who maintain a B average in high school

### 30.

Data from the Council on Postsecondary Education reveals that 53% of college freshmen in Kentucky require some type of remedial courses in one or more subjects. This means that colleges and universities must spend substantial resources providing instruction that students should have received in high school and students have to pay for courses that do not earn college credit. To adequately prepare Kentucky high school graduates for college classes we should **improve educational alignment** by:

- **Strengthening the role and authority of P-16 Councils** to enhance alignment across the system
- **Improving teacher education/preparation**

*Kentucky should “continue to strive for improvements and funding for educational programming, support growth in the manufacturing sector of the economy and promote clean coal technology development to assure Kentucky’s coal usage.”*

*Tim Mosher, President/CEO, Kentucky Power, Frankfort*



### 31.

As Kentucky pursues its goal of achieving the national average of educational attainment, the relationship between the state's community and technical colleges and its universities is critically important. Students who earn credits at KCTCS schools should be confident that those credits will be recognized at any state university. To **provide students with a more seamless system of postsecondary education**, Kentucky should:

- **Ensure universal transferability of credits** from Kentucky Community and Technical College System institutions to four-year public institutions; all credit earned at any KCTCS institution should be transferable to any public university in Kentucky.

### 32.

A 2001 survey of college-bound Kentucky high school students found that 35% said they will have to move out of Kentucky to be successful. We can **reduce brain drain** by establishing a program to recruit bright Kentucky students to return to Kentucky to work after completing college out of state.

### 33.

Many of the jobs in our economy over the next 20 years will not require a college degree but will require specific vocational and technical skills. To prepare our workforce for these new economic realities, Kentucky should **enhance vocational/technical education** by:

- **Broadening educational incentives** to make vocational and technical training as important as attending college/universities
- **Providing more funding to vocational/technical education**
- **Creating a knowledge exchange** to attract volunteer technical experts who don't have teaching degrees to relay "generational knowledge" to vocational students

*Kentucky should create an authority to monitor school and university performance; require top educational performance in schools and take whatever steps are needed to accomplish that goal; and develop a new road funding formula.*

*David Jones Sr., Co-founder, Humana Inc. and Director,  
The Glenview Trust Company*

### 34.

In the 1998 Partnership for Kentucky Schools report *Ready for Work: Essential Skills for Kentucky Jobs*, one Kentucky employer described how expectations of employees have changed: "In the 1950s we left a great deal of thinking to the supervisors, and we left the doing to the workers... Today, we have gone 180 degrees. We're saying to our employees in the workplace: 'Your job is to think. Your job is to problem-solve. We want you to come up with new ways of doing something.'" To recognize these new demands, Kentucky should **enhance workplace learning** by:

- **Developing enhanced training programs** for management and supervisory personnel
- **Creating world-class distance learning programs** to give workers access to educational resources via technology
- **Bringing more training programs into the workplace** or local communities
- **Expanding co-op opportunities** to give students more hands-on experience in their area of study
- **Identifying Kentucky companies that provide tuition assistance** for employees in a list on the Kentucky Chamber's web site



**35.**

The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) estimates that the cost of a four-year degree in Kentucky ranges from \$40,000 to \$120,000. KHEAA provides more than \$180 million a year in financial assistance through a number of state-sponsored financial aid programs, including Kentucky Education Excellence Scholarships (KEES), the College Access Program and the Kentucky Tuition Grant program. To better inform college-bound high school students and their families about available financial aid, **a computer-based training program on state financial aid for college should be created and made available to students and their parents.**

*“At a minimum,” Kentucky needs “tuition-free higher education opportunities at the community colleges,” pilot projects in cities for new energy sources that include mass transportation and greater attention to workforce development for new technologies and the health care industry.*

*Paula Gastenveld, President/CEO, Owensboro Community and Technical College*

**Education—Teachers****36.**

The merits of teacher tenure are routinely debated around the country. Under Kentucky law, teachers become eligible for tenure after being employed for four out of six years in the same school district. After reaching tenured status, a teacher’s contract is automatically renewed and a teacher may only be dismissed for cause. Kentucky should consider **reforming teacher tenure** by including a service component, related to a teacher’s area of academic expertise, to engage more teachers in community initiatives.

**37.**

A 2000 report by the Legislative Research Commission on teacher quality issues in Kentucky expressed concerns about whether veteran teachers have the content skills and knowledge needed for today’s curricula requirements. There is a clear need to bring teachers to the classroom with up-to-date skills and knowledge. Recognizing this, Kentucky provides for the alternative certification of teachers, which allows qualified candidates to become teachers without having to return to college. Kentucky should aggressively **encourage teaching as a second career** for professionals and retirees to bring their experience into the classroom.





*“Raise licensing standards for child care. Make the STARS for KIDS NOW ratings system mandatory. Fully fund university access to pre-kindergarten education.”*

*Terry Tolan, Executive Director,  
United Way of Kentucky*

### 38.

Teacher pay in Kentucky is generally based on length of service and level of education not on performance or extra work. That means that there is limited, if any, differentiation among teacher salaries regardless of the additional skill development or assignments taken on by individual teachers. To professionalize the compensation system, **Kentucky should increase teachers salaries statewide by adopting differentiated pay** that provides higher salaries for:

- Teachers in hard-to-serve areas and subjects
- Performance instead of seniority
- Additional skill development
- Additional duties or responsibilities

*Kentucky's strengths include its people, its landscape and its natural resources. It needs fewer counties, true, comprehensive tax reform and a total commitment to education.*

*Tim Kelly, Publisher, Lexington  
Herald-Leader*



## Energy

### 39.

As one of the top three U.S. coal producers for the last 50 years and with the lowest electricity costs in the country, Kentucky is a national leader in energy. Kentucky created an energy policy in 2005, with 54 recommendations on how to use our resources in sustainable ways while retaining our solid position in the energy sector. We need to build on these first steps to ensure that Kentucky has a **comprehensive energy conservation/efficiency strategy involving public-private partnerships** that includes, but is not limited to:

- **Alternative energy production/use** (hybrid vehicles, turning waste into power, wind and solar power)
- **Expansion of hydroelectric power generation**
- **Value-added energy production**
- **Taxes/incentives that encourage responsible energy use**
- **Clean coal technology**

## Entertainment/ Recreation

### 40.

Kentucky has a weight problem. An estimated 38% of Kentuckians are considered overweight or obese, giving Kentucky a sixth-place national ranking in this category. While exercise is clearly in order, Kentuckians need more places to get active. The Rails-to-Trails program converts abandoned railroad beds into trails that can be used for walking, bicycling, horseback riding and other forms of physical activity. However, with only 21 miles of rail-trails, Kentucky ranks 45th nationally in developing these healthful resources. **Kentucky needs to create more bicycle trails/paths** by vigorously supporting the Rails-to-Trails program and creating marked bike routes on existing roads.





*"I believe the root of our success in all economic, social and socioeconomic areas will involve generating awareness and changing attitudes about how we go about educating our people. While industrial and retail recruitment, development of quality of life components (including health), bettering race relations, and offering good housing are important, it is educating the people that will ultimately be the catalyst that progresses our communities in Kentucky."*

*Taylor Hayes, Publisher, Kentucky New Era, Hopkinsville*



## Environment

### 41.

Each year an estimated 50 million computers and 20 million televisions are thrown away in the United States. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that only about 10 percent of this electronic waste is recycled. And the lead, mercury and cadmium present in electronics makes this waste a particular concern. To reduce the presence of toxic electronic trash in our landfills and keep these materials in productive use, **Kentucky should create an "e-waste" recycling program for computers and electronics.** California and Maine have mandated e-waste recycling, and more than 25 states are considering e-waste laws.

### 42.

Sustainability has been defined as balancing the fulfillment of human needs with the protection of the natural environment so needs can be met into the indefinite future. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development, a CEO-led global association of 200 companies, believes that "sustainable development helps companies prosper and maintain their long-term license to operate, innovate and grow." Kentucky should follow suit and **embrace the concept of sustainability** by:

- **Creating a Task Force on Long Range Vision and Sustainability**
- **Encouraging environmental awareness education**
- **Becoming a leader in environmental thinking and technology**
- **Promoting sustainable practices in Kentucky cities**
- **Becoming a model for ecosystem planning and management**
- **Encouraging rooftop greenscapes in high-rise developments and covered parking lots**



### 43.

Kentucky state government annually contracts for more than \$1 billion in goods and services. As such a large customer, state government is in a unique position to encourage environmentally friendly practices by the firms with which it does business. Kentucky should **require contractor accountability for the environment** by requiring all potential state contractors to submit a scorecard showing how well they reduce/reuse/recycle; this information should become a factor in the awarding of state contracts.



## 44.

Kentucky has waste disposal problems. The Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center reports that as many as 7% of Kentucky households do not participate in garbage collection services and notes that “illegal dumps are the most visible evidence of nonparticipation.” An additional problem is the use of straight pipes to eliminate household waste directly into rivers and streams. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates the cost of eliminating straight pipes in eastern Kentucky at \$300 million. We need to **clean up Kentucky** by:

- Imposing **statewide mandatory garbage collection**
- Encouraging **countywide recycling**
- **Eliminating straight pipes** as a method of sewage disposal treatment
- **Enforcing the litter law** (including cigarette butts)
- **Designating disposal areas for hazardous and other wastes** such as used oil, fluorescent bulbs, solvents, paints, etc. to discourage improper disposal of these items



## Gambling

## 45.

The horse industry has an estimated impact of \$4 billion a year on Kentucky's economy, and horses are our leading agricultural product. However, economists estimate that Kentuckians spend over \$1 billion per year in out-of-state casinos. Half of this amount is spent in casinos in the border states of Illinois, Indiana and Missouri. **Kentucky should permit riverboat and/or casino gambling, with the proceeds going to education and the horse industry.** The additional state revenue generated from expanded gaming would help keep our equine industry competitive and provide needed funds for education.

## 46.

There are conflicting legal opinions on whether expanded gaming can be authorized in Kentucky simply by a bill passed by the General Assembly, or if the state constitution would have to be amended, which requires a vote of the people. The last two Attorneys General of Kentucky have come down on opposite sides of the question. To clear up any legal issues and to give the voters a voice on such a fundamentally important issue, **Kentuckians should be allowed to vote on a constitutional amendment allowing expanded gambling.**

*Kentucky should “find the best state model for mandating health insurance for all and try to copy it or create new strategies to improve it – especially for Medicare and children’s health programs.” The state also needs to “write a new constitution to address transparency, simplicity, flexibility, tax revision, funding of education and environmental protection.”*

*Al Smith, Former Host, Comment on Kentucky, Lexington*

## Health Care

## 47.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death. A recent report assessing the health status of Kentuckians prepared by the Kentucky Institute of Medicine found that Kentucky leads the nation in the percentage of adult smokers. A full 29% of adult Kentuckians smoke compared to 21% nationally. An estimated 25% of high school students also smoke, and more than half of all smokers will die of a smoking-related illness (cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory illness.) We clearly need to **reduce smoking in Kentucky** by adopting a statewide smoke-free policy in public buildings and/or encouraging local governments to adopt smoking bans.



**48.**

The American Medical Association reports that approximately two-thirds of physicians provide charity care to uninsured patients who do not have the means to pay for health services. Kentucky physicians annually provide an estimated \$58 million worth of charity care to the estimated 576,000 Kentuckians who are not covered by health insurance. Despite the considerable cost involved, physicians are not allowed to deduct the cost of providing charity care from their business taxes. To encourage physicians to continue the important practice of providing charity, **physicians should receive a tax deduction for charitable care** equal to one-half of the normal Medicare-approved rate for the service provided.

**49.**

A recent study of 10,000 teenagers across the U. S. found the use of tanning beds was increasing, especially among adolescent girls. There is evidence that people who use tanning beds may be exposing themselves to more than ultraviolet radiation. A 2002 Dartmouth Medical School study found that tanning device users had 2.5 times the risk of squamous cell carcinoma and 1.5 times the risk of basal cell carcinoma. Kentucky should **reduce the incidence of skin cancer** by regulating the tanning-bed industry.

**50.**

The Kentucky Health Insurance Research Project, a recent effort of the University of Kentucky, examined the uninsured population and found that cost was the major barrier to being insured. The 14.3% of Kentucky's population who are not covered by health insurance are more than three times as likely as people with insurance to report cost as the main reason they did not seek medical treatment when sick. Over half did not fill a prescription because of the cost. Kentucky needs to **expand access to affordable health care** by working with the private sector to provide affordable health coverage and put Kentuckians on a plan that can be paid for on an individual or employer basis.

**51.**

In the recently released Health Assessment of Kentucky, the Kentucky Institute of Medicine found that many of the health problems in the state are due to poor lifestyle choices, which lead to preventable diseases and premature deaths. Kentucky ranks first in the percent of adult smokers, sixth in obesity and eighth in the number of adults who have lost at least one tooth to dental disease. To **promote wellness and healthy Kentuckians**, we need to:

- Provide **tax credits to companies that offer wellness programs** to employees
- Encourage **physical education in public schools**
- Create **anti-obesity programs/nutrition education in schools**
- Provide **dental hygiene education to public school students**





## 52.

The 2005 Kentucky General Assembly enacted “e-health” legislation that establishes a process for the development of a secure electronic network for sharing health information. The use of electronic medical records and health information exchange can both lower costs by reducing paperwork and improve quality, by allowing health care providers to use technology to quickly exchange health information about a patient. Policymakers should **support full implementation of Kentucky’s e-health initiative.**

## 53.

Over 83% (100) of Kentucky’s 120 counties are considered medically underserved, where the ratio of physicians to residents is below the level considered adequate to have access to physician services. This means residents in these areas must often travel long distances to obtain care. **Kentucky should redouble its efforts to recruit physicians to medically underserved areas,** by providing financial incentives for physicians who practice in underserved areas, creating additional residency programs in rural areas, and recruiting medical school applicants from underserved areas.

## Labor

## 54.

When buying goods and services, Kentucky state government is required to accept the “lowest and best bid” to make sure citizens get the best deal for their tax dollars. However, Kentucky law requires government entities to pay the “prevailing wage” for the construction of a new building. A 2002 analysis by the Legislative Research Commission found that the prevailing wage requirement increased the cost of public construction projects by as much as 24% when compared to private construction projects. In a time when resources are tight, **Kentucky should eliminate the prevailing wage requirement for all public construction projects.**



## 55.

The labor market has experienced dramatic changes in the last decade. While some low-skilled jobs have moved off-shore, many new high-tech jobs demand a more highly skilled and trained labor force. Recognizing these changing requirements, a number of states have adapted their unemployment insurance systems to meet the needs of a modern workforce. To encourage employers to train workers, some of these states (including Delaware, Louisiana, Minnesota, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Tennessee) use a portion of the unemployment insurance tax (0.2%) to fund a grant program for companies to train existing workers. Kentucky should **create an existing employee training fund** with a small percentage of the unemployment tax.

*Consolidating counties and county and city governments, revamping education and the way it is funded and changing health plans for public employees to mirror private-sector plans would be ways to improve Kentucky.*

*Jean Hale, CEO, Community Trust Bank, Pikeville*





*Three ideas to improve Kentucky: 1) public forums to discuss the challenges facing the state; 2) the formation of an innovation trust to engage the state's best minds in creative problem solving; and 3) an education campaign to elevate the role of the arts as a resource for building communities.*

*Judith Jennings, Executive Director, Kentucky Foundation for Women, Louisville*



## 56.

According to the Kentucky State Data Center, the influx of racial and ethnic minorities into Kentucky is relatively small, but is occurring at rates that could double or triple the size of Kentucky's minority population in the next decade. At the same time, Kentucky's native population is growing at a much slower rate than the rest of the nation. If we are to have enough workers in the coming years, **Kentucky should embrace the immigrant population** to provide the future workers Kentucky will need to fill jobs due to a declining birth rate.

## 57.

A "Right to Work" law guarantees that no person can be compelled, as a condition of employment, to join or pay dues to a labor union. States with "Right to Work" or "Employee Choice" laws report faster per capita income growth, faster growth in manufacturing and nonagricultural jobs, greater capital expenditures, lower unemployment rates and fewer work stoppages. The 2005 *Forbes* magazine Best Places for Business and Careers survey found that eight of the nine top-ranking large metro areas and six of the nine top-ranking smaller metro areas are located in Right to Work states. Kentucky should **adopt Right to Work/employee choice legislation** and promote freedom in the workplace by giving workers the right to decide for themselves whether they want to join a union.



## 58.

The federal Drug Enforcement Administration reports that Kentucky is a major producer of marijuana and has a drug arrest rate of 1,046 per 100,000—approximately 50% higher than the national average of 700. In addition, the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy reports that several counties in Eastern Kentucky lead the nation in using prescription drugs for non-medical purposes. To help curb substance abuse, Kentucky should **require applicants for unemployment benefits to successfully pass a drug test** with periodic re-testing before an extension of benefits is approved.



## 59.

Recent census data suggest that as many as 24% of Kentuckians has some kind of disability—placing Kentucky in second place nationally for the proportion of disabled adults. The federal Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits employment discrimination against persons with disabilities. Despite the protection afforded by federal law, it is often difficult for persons with disabilities to obtain appropriate employment. Kentucky should increase **employment of persons with disabilities** by encouraging telecommuting, with state government taking the lead as an example of a best practice.

## 60.

The 2002 Governor's Task Force on the Economic Status of Kentucky's Women found that Kentucky ranked 47th among the states in measures of women's economic and social autonomy. Kentucky women with bachelor's degrees earn \$34,109 per year compared to \$48,580 earned by men. Overall, women in similar jobs as men earn 12% less in Kentucky. To improve the economic status of Kentucky women, and grow Kentucky's economy, **Kentucky should promote equal pay for equal work.**

## Libraries

## 61.

Kentucky has public library services in 118 counties with more than 23 million books and other media in circulation. Local public libraries are supported by a combination of state funds and local tax revenues. Legislation enacted by the 2002 legislature created the Public Library Facilities and Construction Fund and the Public Library Services Improvement and Equalization Fund, to help finance public library projects. A total of \$7 million was requested in the 2006 General Assembly to fund these two library funds, but the monies were not approved. To provide needed support to local libraries, Kentucky should **increase state funding for local public libraries** under these two funds.

## 62.

The Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives main building in Frankfort is the official state repository for official records and documents of state and local governments. The building has been at maximum storage capacity since June 2005 and is struggling to meet demand. Although the Capital Planning Advisory Board, which evaluates all capital requests from state agencies, approved an \$8 million funding request to expand the facility, the 2006 General Assembly did not include these construction funds in the budget. Kentucky should **expand the state Libraries and Archives building** to create needed space for official documents and historical records.



*More research into burning clean coal and an initiative on underachieving schools in the Appalachian region would help the state.*

*Burns Mercer, President/CEO, Meade County Rural Electric Cooperative, Brandenburg*



## Miscellaneous

### 63.

The American Humane Society estimates that 56% of dogs and 71% of cats that enter an animal shelter are euthanized. Only about 25% are adopted and far less are returned to owners. Kentucky's animal control laws, according to a former Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture, were written over 50 years ago largely to address the problem of stray dogs attacking livestock. Kentucky should **encourage humane treatment of animals** by modernizing animal control laws, educating the public on the need to spay/neuter pets and taking steps to avoid euthanizing adoptable animals.



## Quality of Life

### 64.

There is a growing consensus that current patterns of residential and commercial development, often referred to as “sprawl,” are not in the best interests of existing communities. A number of initiatives have developed in response to these concerns. The “smart growth” movement emphasizes restoring vitality to city centers and older suburbs. Similarly, the concept of “new urbanism” includes infill development in cities, development of mixed-use facilities (with both commercial and residential uses) and developing walkable, pedestrian-friendly communities. To reduce the loss of rural land and preserve existing communities, Kentucky should **promote responsible urban development** by

- **Embracing the concept of “new urbanism”**
- **Aggressively promoting “brownfield” redevelopment** (abandoned industrial sites)
- **Encouraging downtown redevelopment**
- **Creating community gardens** in vacant lots



## Senior Citizens

### 65.

With its central location, low housing costs and abundant natural resources, Kentucky is an ideal place to retire. In fact, communities in the western lakes region have been ranked as top retirement destinations in national surveys. We should **make Kentucky a retirement destination** by:

- **Creating a favorable tax environment** for retirees
- **Creating a health insurance structure** favorable to retirees
- **Promoting/developing recreational activities** attractive to retirees
- **Developing a marketing plan** that promotes Kentucky's attributes as a great place to retire
- **Creating lifelong learning opportunities** in our universities





*“Throw away the entire (tax) system and start with what the best thinkers/researchers (not the ideologues on any side) put forward as a good tax system – like we did with K-12 education and KERA. No tinkering – a reinvention.*

*Sheila Schuster, Executive Director, Kentucky Mental Health Coalition, Louisville*



## Social Services

### 66.

Kentucky Family Resource and Youth Services Centers were established as a component of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990. There are currently 820 centers serving 612,000 students in 1,166 schools where at least 20% of the student population is eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. The centers provide referrals to social and health services, employment counseling, job development, drug and alcohol abuse counseling and mental health programs. **Youth Services Centers should be expanded to every county** and provide services that also include nutrition, exercise, social and educational outreach programs.

### 67.

The Federal Communications Commission has designated the telephone number 2-1-1 for the purpose of community, volunteer and human service information and referral. It is an easily remembered number that, where available, connects people with important community services and volunteer opportunities. United Way of America is working to implement 2-1-1 numbers around the country. Kentucky should join the effort to **establish a 2-1-1 information number** that connects callers with essential services.

### 68.

Social workers are required to make life-changing decisions affecting children and families. The recent murder of a Western Kentucky social worker while paying a home visit underscores the danger that social workers sometimes face. There are also other problems as a recent state investigation found that some social workers were making inappropriate decisions to remove children from their homes to speed up the adoption process. Despite the gravity of the decisions social workers are called on to make, their starting salary is only \$31,010. Kentucky should **enhance social workers** by increasing pay, requiring appropriate education, improving training and providing increased accountability.



## State and Local Government

### 69.

The Von Allmen Center for Electronic Commerce at the University of Kentucky reports that in 2006, 70% of Kentuckians had access to the Internet with 80% regularly using e-mail; 54% purchasing products or services online; and 34% conducting banking transactions. Kentuckians are clearly online and comfortable using the Internet to transact business. Kentucky should put as many government services online and **promote e-government** by:

- **Putting unemployment insurance forms online** to speed processing
- **Transforming the automobile title process** to speed it up
- **Creating an e-budget web site** that would provide detailed issue-level state budget information and allow users to submit comments
- **Updating the e-MARS vendor system** in state government
- **Permitting banks to electronically bid on state business**, as in West Virginia, with state deposits awarded to the bank offering the highest interest rate
- **Using the web to improve access** to state and local government and promote transparency in government

### 70.

Kentucky has the third highest number of counties in the nation, behind Texas and Georgia, and the geographic area covered by some of Kentucky's counties is among the smallest in the U.S. That creates challenges for the efficient delivery of government services. Kentucky should **improve the efficiency of local government** by:

- **Reducing the number of counties**
- **Consolidating local offices** such as constable, surveyors, magistrates, sheriffs
- **Encouraging regional/consolidated service delivery** with timelines for implementation of regional programs

*"The greatest contribution the (Kentucky) Chamber can make is to form a committee of the most influential business leaders in Kentucky, study the educational system in Kentucky in great detail, including its financing, and make specific, practical and doable recommendations and then lead the struggle to get them adopted into law."*

*Former Governor Paul Patton, Pikeville*

### 71.

Pension plans for public employees in Kentucky are facing a crisis. With combined unfunded liabilities of more than \$28 billion, funding for these plans has not kept up with liabilities. Essential services are at risk as cities face escalating retirement contributions, and gains in state education funding are being erased by increasing retirement and health insurance costs. Kentucky should **reform public employee pensions and health care benefits** by:

- **Consolidating government pension funds into a new 403b plan** (like a 401K)
- **Discontinuing the practice of allowing the purchase of retirement years** that allows early retirement
- **Prohibiting so-called double dipping**, where a retired worker can return to full-time employment and continue to collect retirement payments
- **Instituting a more realistic age of retirement**
- **Structuring public pensions after private sector plans**
- **Reducing retiree health costs** by providing financial incentives that encourage state retirees who return to work to enroll in the state health care plan and decline coverage from the retirement system



**72.**

Kentucky, like other states, has seen growth in the purchase of goods and services from vendors outside state government. Recent state audits have revealed that from 2000 to 2004, the amount state government spent for commodities grew from \$77 million to over \$345 million. To boost the local and state economies, Kentucky state government should adopt the **strategy of buying Kentucky products and services** unless no qualified in-state source can be found.

**73.**

Sister cities or “town twinning” involves communities in the U.S. pairing with cities or towns in other countries to provide for cultural exchange, develop municipal partnerships and create an atmosphere in which economic and community development can be strengthened. At present, 16 Kentucky cities participate in the program through the organization Sister Cities International. **Kentucky cities should participate in the Sister Cities program** to strengthen foreign linkages and encourage foreign investment in Kentucky.

**74.**

Kentucky’s current constitution was adopted in 1891 and has long been the target of calls for reform. A 1987 Special Commission on Constitutional Review, created by the Kentucky General Assembly, recommended a number of sweeping changes, including: abolishing the office of Secretary of State, removing provisions calling for racially-segregated schools, removing provisions authorizing a poll tax, deleting the city classification system, and amendments that would make it easier for cities to borrow money. These and other provisions are out-of-date and often reflect our segregated past. We should **modernize Kentucky’s constitution** to eliminate antiquated or obsolete provisions and provide more flexibility to allow Kentucky to govern itself in a modern fashion.

**75.**

The Kentucky Constitution sets forth a classification system for Kentucky cities based on population:

- First Class: 100,000 or more
- Second Class: 20,000 to 99,999
- Third Class: 8,000 to 19,999
- Fourth Class: 3,000 to 7,999
- Fifth Class: 1,000 to 2,999
- Sixth Class: 999 or less

Under Kentucky law, the authority provided to cities to govern themselves (such as the form of local government, ability to raise revenue, and fire and police protection) varies by city class, with smaller towns having less authority than larger cities. Kentucky should **abolish the city classification system** and instead give all communities the authority to govern themselves in as entrepreneurial spirit as possible, including the ability to levy sales and restaurant taxes.

*“Regain the (funding) momentum of KERA, including repeal of House Bill 44, so ad valorem taxes for schools rise with inflation like everywhere else in the country.”*

*Sheryl Snyder, Attorney, Frost Brown Todd,  
Louisville*







## Taxes

### 76.

In 2005, the Kentucky General Assembly passed tax modernization legislation that reformed Kentucky's tax code. While corporate taxes were reduced and low-income Kentuckians were removed from the state tax rolls, taxes affecting some small business owners were increased by the alternative minimum tax and application of the corporate tax to limited liability companies. **Kentucky's state and local tax structure should be thoroughly reviewed and changed to make it more "business friendly"** by eliminating or reducing taxes such as:

- Payroll taxes
- Net profit taxes
- Occupational taxes
- Inventory taxes
- Vehicle property taxes

### 77.

Seven states have no personal income tax: Alaska, Florida, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Washington and Wyoming. Two others, New Hampshire and Tennessee, tax only dividend and interest income. Elimination of the state income tax would spur business growth, put more money in the hands of citizens and force government to operate more efficiently on less revenue. Kentucky should follow the lead of these nine states and **abolish the state income tax**. States that have done so have experienced growth and attracted retirees on fixed incomes. The *New York Times* reports that some states also anticipate high revenue returns by **leasing their state lotteries to private operators**.

### 78.

If Kentucky does not eliminate the individual income tax, it should reduce its administrative burden on filers and state government. We could do this for nearly all taxpayers by **simplifying the tax filing to three lines**:

1. What is your federal tax income (from your IRS 1040)?
2. Multiply line (1) by Kentucky tax rate.
3. Subtract from line (2) your KY income tax withholdings for tax due or refund.

Any amount of tax revenue can be raised by simply adjusting the tax rate. Nearly everyone wins in terms of time wasted on filling out forms and keeping records.

### 79.

The National Center for Education Statistics reports that the average private school tuition was over \$4,600 a year in 2000. U.S. Census data indicates that Kentucky has approximately 24,000 students attending private high schools. A small number of states provide **tax deductions for private school tuition**. Kentucky should join these states and provide a tax deduction for private school tuition to allow parents to deduct tuition costs for private schools.



*Kentucky needs a “total overhaul of state and local systems of taxation. ...a priority on civic literacy at the 12th grade level ... (and) a priority on healthy life-styles. ...”*

*Nancy Jo Kemper, Executive Director, Kentucky Council of Churches, Lexington*

## 80.

Research published by the University of Louisville concludes that a number of urban communities in Kentucky do not receive an adequate share of state expenditures based on the revenue they contribute to state government. To ensure equity in the distribution of tax revenues, Kentucky should **provide sales tax rebates** to local communities and counties to return part of the state sales tax to the county in which it originated.

## 81.

At least 14 states, including Missouri, Texas, Florida, the Carolinas and Tennessee, offer a “sales tax holiday” on the first weekend in August during which back-to-school items (clothing, computers, school supplies) are exempt from state sales taxes. The National Retail Federation reports that such holidays have a measurable impact on sales. Kentucky should **establish a back-to-school tax-free holiday** to give families a break, boost retail business and discourage shoppers from crossing state lines to take advantage of other states’ programs.

## 82.

Some critics argue that the current property tax works in reverse of the way it should. The tax increases as owners improve their property and decreases when buildings are abandoned and left to dilapidate. Proponents of higher tax rates for abandoned property argue that they create a strong incentive for owners to develop property instead of letting it sit idle while waiting for property values to rise. Kentucky could reduce the number of abandoned buildings by **creating a sliding scale property tax** with incremental increases the longer a building is unoccupied (after one or two years).



## Telecommunications

## 83.

KET’s digital capacities offer the Commonwealth a television channel devoted exclusively to Kentucky content. The Kentucky Channel would be an efficient and effective way to tell Kentucky stories from across the state. Community leaders, elected officials, business leaders and others could share the interesting, exciting and positive things happening in their communities. **KET should be encouraged in its efforts to make that possible with a dedicated digital channel.** This will continue Kentucky’s national leadership in public television programming and will inspire and encourage Kentuckians to recognize the benefits of living in and helping grow a better state.

**84.**

Kentucky ranks first in the nation for expanding broadband Internet service, and broadband use has increased 50% since 2004. However, a technology assessment study conducted by ConnectKentucky found that a quarter of Kentucky adults surveyed said they didn't need a broadband connection, and 26% of dial-up users said broadband is too expensive or unavailable. Kentucky needs to **improve awareness of broadband availability** in Kentucky and enhance computer literacy to increase the use of broadband services.

**Tourism****85.**

A destination resort is a resort with an inherent location and amenities that attract visitors regardless of the route needed to arrive or the area-wide features of interest. Examples include Walt Disney World in Florida and the Greenbrier in West Virginia. Such resorts can have a major economic impact. For example, the Greenbrier has 1,800 employees and is responsible for more than half of the economic impact that tourism has in its home county. To enhance our tourism economy, Kentucky should **create tourist destinations such as:**

- **Destination resorts** similar to West Virginia's Greenbrier, Georgia's new Reynolds Plantation, Indiana's French Lick and Alabama's Grand Hotel and Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail
- **National attractions** like the St. Louis arch, the Space Needle in Seattle or Mount Rushmore in South Dakota

**86.**

In 1998, the University of Kentucky analyzed the economic impact of art and found that 1.2 million Kentuckians attended events at performing arts centers; art activities contributed over \$77 million in earnings and another \$41 million in related economic activity. Kentucky should build on its thriving arts community and **promote arts/cultural travel by:**

- **Creating an arts and crafts industrial park** in which artisans and craftsman practice their skills with centralized support and sales services (an expanded version of the Kentucky Artisan Center in Berea)
- **Replicating the Manchester Craftsmen Guild** in Pittsburgh (an arts education center)
- **Supporting efforts such as the River Heritage Museum** in Paducah
- **Developing eco-tourism in Eastern Kentucky** that focuses on the mountains and Appalachian culture





## 87.

Kentucky has 17 state resort parks, each featuring lodging, a dining room and other amenities. While efforts have been undertaken to improve the food in state parks, recent reviewers on the popular travel web site Trip Advisor declared the food at one resort park in the western lakes area “quite average” while another compared it to a college cafeteria. Kentucky should **improve state resort park food quality**, especially from the standpoint of using local food products, and make staying and dining in our resort parks a wonderful experience.

## 88.

A number of nonprofit organizations, such as the Playhouse Square Center in New York City, use volunteers as greeters or for providing information and directions. Often called “Red Coats” because they are provided red jackets to wear, such volunteers are a staple in many hospitals and provide valuable patient care. The state park system should follow this well-established practice and **use local volunteers as hosts/hostesses in state resort parks** to make guests feel welcome and provide information about the surrounding area.

## 89.

The Kentucky State Parks system has 52 parks, 17 of which have full-service lodges. The park system operates at a deficit, estimated at \$25 million in 2005. Privatization is one possible solution. Several Canadian park systems have had success in privatizing parks, with improved reviews by visitors. The U.S. Park Service uses private vendors to provide services in our national parks, such as Yellowstone and Yosemite. The reservation system for 32 campgrounds in Kentucky parks have already been outsourced to a private contractor (ReserveAmerica). Kentucky should take the next step and **create a pilot project to privatize at least one state park** and allow liquor sales as part of the pilot; such sales are currently not allowed in state parks.



*Kentucky needs “greater investment in infrastructure (road, Internet connectivity, etc.), and an examination of potential tax code changes to lure greater business investment...”*

*Bob Albert, Dean, Morehead State University College of Business*



## 90.

In a story about new Maryland welcome signs, *The Baltimore Sun* recently reported that “welcome signs are a big deal to some people.” They let drivers know they are entering a new state, and often communicate a bit of its character. In Kentucky, tourism and travel contribute almost \$9 billion annually to the state’s economy, but our welcome signs change with every new administration. To create a better first impression for travelers, Kentucky should **create distinctive gateways to the state**, such as using native limestone to construct attractive and well-landscaped welcome signs.



## 91.

Kentucky is home to more than 700 annual festivals. Celebrating local products such as bourbon and barbeque, a number of our festivals have become nationally known, such as the Kentucky Derby Festival. Others, like Owensboro’s recently developed Mystery Writers Festival, cater to tourists with specific interests. Kentucky should increase efforts to **expand and promote festivals** to attract tourists to Kentucky.

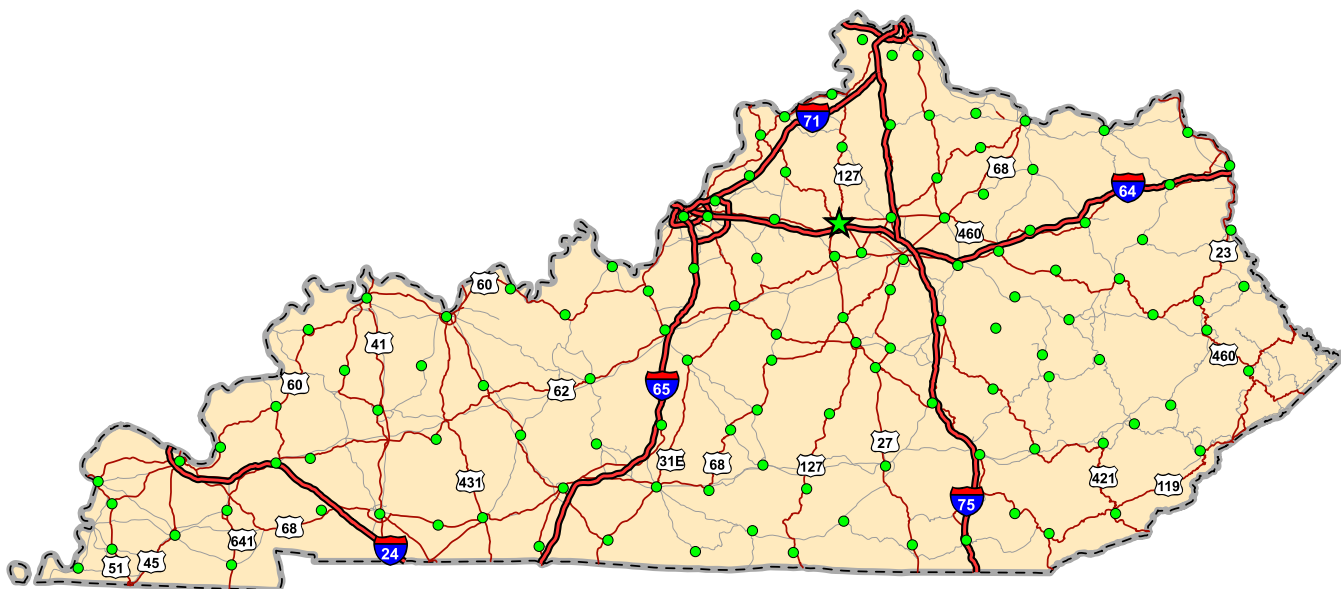
## 92.

The Ohio River runs more than 650 miles along the northern border of Kentucky and was the site of early developments in the state’s history. Towns began to develop along the river by the late 1700s, and Louisville was the nation’s 10th largest city by 1850. But the decline of the river as a major transportation artery contributed to the loss of prominence of many river communities. Efforts are now under way in several communities, and Kentucky should **promote efforts to improve and promote tourism and industry in our river cities**.

## Transportation

## 93.

Light rail service is different from regular train service in a number of ways. It operates on electricity, consists of few train cars and can run at ground level or on elevated platforms. Often called trams, streetcars and trolleys, light rail use is common in Europe. One of the main benefits of light rail is its ability to operate in mixed traffic settings, which results in lower construction and operating costs. To increase transportation options in Kentucky’s most populous regions, we should **develop light rail service/public transportation**, especially between Lexington and Louisville and in the Bluegrass Region of Central Kentucky.



## 94.

Funding for highway construction is not keeping pace with inflation in Kentucky. Kentucky's gasoline tax, one of the main funding sources for roads, is 21 cents per gallon and is not adjusted for inflation. Our six-year road plan is under-funded by \$1.8 billion. Kentucky should **create a sustainable transportation system** with adequate funding that is adjusted for inflation.

## 95.

All but three states require some or all motorcyclists to wear helmets. Kentucky first passed a mandatory helmet law in 1968 for all riders, but amended it in 1998 to apply only to persons under age 21. There is considerable evidence that helmet laws save lives. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that there was a 37% increase in motorcycle-crash injuries in the three years after Kentucky's law was changed. Kentucky should **revive the mandatory motorcycle helmet law for all riders** to save lives and reduce injuries.

## 96.

Available evidence suggests that Kentucky counties served by interstate highways have the highest level of economic activity. Per capita gross product for these counties is nearly three times that for counties that do not have good four-lane highways, and per capita income is 56% higher. Plans are currently in the works for two new interstate highways that will cross parts of Kentucky: I-69, in far Western Kentucky; and I-66, in Southern and Eastern Kentucky. Kentucky should **improve transportation by building I-66 and I-69** and promoting public/private partnerships, as in Indiana, to develop our transportation infrastructure.





**97.**

Official guide signs, those blue and brown signs on the interstate, inform motorists of cultural and tourist attractions, food, lodging and gas available at each interstate exit in Kentucky. Federal regulations limit the number of signs that may be placed at each exit. Given the popularity of these guide signs, Kentucky should **create a carefully mapped and planned signage program on major and minor highways** that lets tourists know what is available.

**98.**

In the wake of a recent crash that killed five teenagers, including the driver who was using a cell phone, the National Traffic Safety Board recently called for a prohibition on cell phone use by novice drivers. The Insurance Institute of Highway Safety says talking on a cell phone while driving can quadruple your chances of a crash that results in hospitalization. Kentucky should **prohibit the use of hand-held cell phones while driving** to prevent accidents and save lives.

*The state should support regional collaboration, needs analysis and delivery of services and support.*

*Allen Goben, President/CEO, Hazard Community and Technical College*

**99.**

The Government Accountability Office reports that many small communities face challenges in obtaining or retaining commercial airline service, and government assistance is often required. Kentucky has a limited number of community airports offering commercial passenger service. **Kentucky should provide state incentives for the local development of commercial air passenger service.**

**Utilities****100.**

Electric utilities are subject to a complex set of regulations related to power generation, transmission lines and rate structure. The Kentucky Public Service Commission, which regulates utilities in the Commonwealth, recently evaluated our electric infrastructure and assessed our future needs. It found that while we are well-positioned to meet the needs of consumers in our state, there are constraints relating to the ability to flow power through Kentucky and potential points of instability in the system. Kentucky should **simplify the regulation of electric utilities** to address capacity, infrastructure and transmission issues.





## New Agenda for Kentucky: Idea Contributors

The New Agenda for Kentucky Task Force selected the top 100 ideas from among those submitted to our website (newagendaky.com). The following individuals submitted the selected ideas. Similar submissions were combined, resulting in more than one person being identified as the contributor. In some instances, the task force contributed an idea or expanded on those submitted. In addition, some ideas were contributed by participants in the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce's Economic Summit. (The information below was provided by those making on-line submissions; in some instances, this included first names or e-mail names only.)

- 1. Promote alternative agriculture**  
Jim Embry, Lexington  
Donna Kunkler, Brandenburg  
Michael Morgan, Louisville  
Charles L. Witt, Winchester
- 2. Preserve farmland from urban development**  
Helm Roberts, Lexington  
Task Force contribution
- 3. Permit alcohol sales throughout Kentucky**  
Danville Homeowner  
Amanda Sauermann, Cadiz
- 4. Investigate corrupt police**  
Benjamin Thomas Wadkins, Ashland
- 5. Require inmates convicted of nonviolent crimes to work on community projects**  
Valerie Adams, Lexington  
Debbie Buchanan, Benton
- 6. Promote accountability for local prosecutors**  
Howard Hanks, Ashland  
Ruth Middleton, Warsaw  
Task Force contribution
- 7. Incentives for STEM jobs**  
Christopher Kulp, Richmond
- 8. Help people move to Kentucky**  
Lynn King, Paducah
- 9. Bring corporate headquarters to Kentucky**  
Mike Mountjoy, Louisville
- 10. Attract next generation/emerging industries**  
M. Green, Frankfort  
Task Force contribution
- 11. Prepare Kentucky for the global marketplace**  
Tom Williams, Louisville  
Kentucky Chamber Economic Summit Participants
- 12. Require life skills classes**  
Gary Berdeaux, Park City  
Janice Chittenden, La Center  
Character Counts, Somerset  
Lori Davis, Lexington  
Debbi Preston Howard, Salyersville  
Wynn Jefferson, Shepherdsville  
Fran Johnson, Paducah  
Money Matters, Somerset  
Conley Manning, Somerset  
Martha Rodgers, Kuttawa  
Mike, Nicholasville  
Economic Summit Participants
- 13. Review SEEK formula**  
Rodney Jackson, Lexington
- 14. Establish an education improvement tax credit**  
Joseph Atcher, Louisville  
Task Force contribution
- 15. Enhance education technology**  
Greg Drake, Lexington  
John Stephenson, Independence
- 16. Consolidate schools districts**  
Economic Summit Participants
- 17. Performance funding for education**  
Mike Baumgardner, Madisonville  
Ron Sanders, Madisonville  
Economic Summit Participants
- 18. Require school districts to adopt a lean management model**  
Economic Summit Participants
- 19. Create a "reverse-tuition" public school system**  
Jill Morzillo, Louisville
- 20. Adult education—helping the adult learner**  
Janice Baldon-Gutter, Louisville
- 21. GED assessments**  
Amanda Bishop, Horse Cave
- 22. Create a sustainability curriculum**  
Jim Embry, Lexington  
Trudi Kubik, Louisville
- 23. Expand early childhood education**  
Lana Barrett, Hartford  
Barclay McCoy, Madisonville  
Laura Miller, Mt. Sterling  
Robert Sexton, Lexington
- 24. Fully fund all-day kindergarten**  
Aimee Hiller, Lexington
- 25. Invest more in dropout prevention programs**  
Bob Gray, Frankfort
- 26. Reward good grades**  
Shari Fiveash, Lexington
- 27. Transform Kentucky high schools to create a seamless transition to college**  
Steven Fife, Morehead  
Robert Sexton, Lexington
- 28. Fully fund higher education in Kentucky**  
Dr. Joe L. McCormick, Fisherville
- 29. Make college more affordable & provide incentives for graduates to stay in Kentucky**  
Wesley Delk, Jeffersonville  
Jay Hutchins, Bardstown  
Ed Lane, Lexington  
Chamber Young Professionals, Owensboro
- 30. Improve alignment**  
Task Force contribution
- 31. Universal transferability of credits**  
Johnna Reeder, Covington
- 32. Reduce brain drain**  
Wesley Delk, Jeffersonville
- 33. Enhance vocational/technical education**  
Harrie R. Buswell, Ph.D., Cloverport  
Jill Morzillo, Louisville  
Jim Robinson, Lawrenceburg  
Economic Summit Participants
- 34. Enhance workplace learning/experience**  
Economic Summit Participants
- 35. Create computer-based training for students and parents**  
Linda McCarty, Bedford
- 36. Reform teacher tenure**  
Paul Ransdell, Berea



- 37. Encourage teaching as a second career**  
Economic Summit Participants
- 38. Adopt differentiated pay for teachers**  
Joan Moore and Karla Gibbs, Shelbyville  
Economic Summit Participants
- 39. Create a comprehensive energy conservation/efficiency strategy**  
Rick Clewett, Lexington  
Bob Gray, Frankfort  
Gerald Guiling, Paducah  
Steve Hegge, Ft. Mitchell  
Earl G. Hemze, Boaz  
Gary Maier, Louisville  
Anne Mitchell, Covington  
Jare Schneider, Lexington  
Andrew F. Timperman, Edgewood  
Tim Vickers, Danville  
Shannon White, Louisville  
Beth, Lexington  
Kevin, Owensboro  
Nicole, Florence  
Task Force contribution
- 40. Create paved bicycle trails**  
Dr. Ed Ball, Frankfort  
Carol Marie Coffee, Flatwoods  
Jayne Cravens, Henderson  
Marsha Daniel, Eddyville  
Joyce & Rick Embry, Leitchfield  
Lee Emmons, Paducah  
Martha Emmons, Paducah  
J. Pearl Garland, Benton  
Elsie Pritchard, Morehead  
Joy Renfro, Paint Lick  
Dianna Ross, Ashland  
Helen Siewers, Bowling Green  
Mike, Nicholasville  
Rick, Paris
- 41. Create a recycling program for computers and electronics**  
Bob Gray, Frankfort
- 42. Embrace the concept of sustainability**  
Rick Clewett, Lexington  
Steve Martin, Owensboro  
Keyth Sokol, Lexington
- 43. Require contractor accountability for the environment**  
Beth, Lexington
- 44. Clean up Kentucky**  
M. Arnold, Corydon, IN  
Kevin Howard, Georgetown  
Ralph Kern, Mt. Sterling  
Mary N Smith MD, Lexington  
Sandi Thomasson, Edmonton  
Beth P., Lexington  
Rick, Paris  
Task Force contribution
- 45. Permit riverboat and/or casino gambling with the proceeds going to education and the horse industry**  
Adam Gross, Southgate  
Ian Kirkpatrick, Paducah  
Devon Mitchell, Louisville
- 46. Allow Kentuckians to vote on a constitutional amendment allowing expanded gambling**  
Ian Kirkpatrick, Paducah  
Task Force contribution
- 47. Reduce smoking in Kentucky**  
Lori Davis, Lexington  
Jim Embry, Lexington  
Darren, Louisville
- 48. Provide tax deductions for physicians for charitable care**  
J. Todd Inman, Owensboro
- 49. Reduce skin cancer by regulating tanning beds**  
Joseph P Bark, MD, Lexington
- 50. Expand access to affordable health care**  
Todd Kranpitz, Ashland  
Dan VanWinkle, Winchester  
Molly, Somerset
- 51. Promote wellness and healthy Kentuckians**  
Melanie Crupper, Shelbyville  
Lori Davis, Lexington  
Debbie Gibson, Pikeville  
Devon Mitchell, Louisville  
Task Force contribution
- 52. Support implementation of electronic medical records**  
Task Force contribution
- 53. Physician recruitment**  
Lynn King, Paducah  
Task Force contribution
- 54. Eliminate prevailing wage**  
Kevin Sell, Alexandria  
Task Force contribution
- 55. Fund worker training**  
Craig Grant, Louisville  
Michael B. Gritton, Louisville
- 56. Embrace the immigrant population**  
Economic Summit Participants
- 57. Adopt right-to-work legislation**  
Doug Alexander, Lexington
- 58. Require drug testing for unemployment benefits**  
Mary L. Hall, Lancaster
- 59. Increase employment of persons with disabilities**  
Wendy Wheeler-Mullins, Lexington
- 60. Promote equal pay for equal work**  
Task Force contribution
- 61. Increase state funding for local public libraries**  
Carol Baughman, Frankfort  
Chris Bischoff, Louisville  
Linda Kompanik, Hopkinsville  
Paige Sexton, Lexington  
Vivian Stamper  
Library Support, Lebanon  
Patricia Whiescarver, Russellville
- 62. Expand the state libraries and archives building**  
Alexandra Clemons, Lawrenceburg  
Susie Johnson, Frankfort  
Robin Pearce, Frankfort  
Barbara Schulte, Frankfort  
Jennifer Sexton, Frankfort  
Lisa Thompson, Frankfort
- 63. Encourage humane treatment of animals**  
Gloria Hollifield, Benton  
Lisa and Garth McLane, Cynthiana
- 64. Promote responsible urban development**  
Kate Munroe, Louisville  
Task Force contribution





- 65. Make Kentucky a retirement destination**  
Vivian DiLillo, Danville  
Terri Johnson, Richmond  
Church Saufley, Shelbyville  
Glenn Sparks, Nashville, TN  
Harry W. Walker, Owensboro  
Task Force contribution
- 66. Establish youth/teen centers in every county**  
Rachel Zimmerman, South Shore
- 67. Establish a 2-1-1 information number**  
Terry Tolan, Louisville
- 68. Enhance social workers**  
Task Force contribution
- 69. Promote e-government**  
Interested Citizen, Frankfort  
James Collins, Frankfort  
Bob Gray, Frankfort  
Bill Smith, London  
Damian Wirth, Franklin  
Task Force contribution
- 70. Improve the efficiency of local government**  
John Bird, Lexington  
Aimee Hiller, Lexington  
Emil Hochstrasser, Shelbyville  
Roy H. Hunt, Louisville  
Jonathan Zerhusen, Highland Heights  
Task Force contribution
- 71. Reform public employee pensions/health care**  
Austin Carroll, Hopkinsville  
Mary Ann Gray, Hopkinsville  
Michael J. Hoersting, CPA, Henderson  
Roy Hunt, Louisville
- 72. Adopt a strategy of buying Kentucky products**  
Beverly Bell, West Liberty  
Paul Ross, Lexington
- 73. Promote Sister Cities program**  
Economic Summit Participants
- 74. Modernize Kentucky's constitution**  
Stan Lampe, Fort Mitchell  
Economic Summit Participants
- 75. Abolish classification system of cities**  
Malcolm Bryant, Owensboro
- 76. Review Kentucky's state and local tax structure**  
Hal W. Burnett, Paducah  
J. Todd Inman, Owensboro  
Rich Gimmel, Louisville  
Diana Gioielli, Louisville  
Roy Hunt, Louisville  
A. May, Ashland  
Jack Miller, Crestview Hills  
Vickie Townsend, Bowling Green  
Charles M. Wright, Louisville  
Rose, Paducah
- 77. Abolish state income tax, privatize lottery**  
Craig Grant, Louisville  
Emil, Shelbyville
- 78. 3-Line Kentucky income tax**  
Paul Coomes, Louisville
- 79. Tax deduction for private school tuition**  
Tonya Matthews, Bowling Green
- 80. Provide sales tax rebates**  
Larry Jones, Ashland
- 81. Tax free holiday**  
Dave L., Bowling Green
- 82. Create a sliding scale property tax**  
Mike Moll, Louisville
- 83. KET digital channel**  
Mac Wall, Lexington
- 84. Improve awareness of broadband availability**  
John Bentley, II, Greenup  
Jean Gabbard, Brodhead  
Vivian, Stamper  
Task Force contribution
- 85. Create tourist destinations**  
Dave Adkisson, Lexington  
Brian Moore, Louisville
- 86. Promote arts/cultural travel**  
Ed Chisholm, Henderson  
Jim Embry, Lexington  
Bob, Winchester  
George, Lexington
- 87. Improve state resort parks' food quality**  
Janice Morgan, Murray  
Rona Roberts, Lexington
- 88. Use volunteer hosts/hostesses in state parks**  
Bonnie Borders, Calvert City
- 89. Create a park privatization pilot project**  
Task Force contribution
- 90. Highways and gateways**  
Kevin Atherton, Austin, TX
- 91. Expand festivals**  
Donna Howard, Owensboro
- 92. Utilize river cities better**  
Kerry Summers, Louisville
- 93. Develop light rail service/public transportation**  
Lori Davis, Lexington  
John Andrew Dixon, Danville  
Judy Flavell, Waco  
Ken Kurtz, Lexington  
Kirk Richardson, Bowling Green  
Rita Shepherd
- 94. Create a sustainable transportation system**  
Rondell W. Combs II, Beatyville  
Jack Fish, Louisville  
William F. Mc Creary, Louisville  
Michael A. Thorton, Florence
- 95. Mandatory motorcycle helmet laws**  
Rachel Frazier, Lexington  
James Pendley, Greenville
- 96. Improve transportation**  
Economic Summit Participants
- 97. Signage program**  
Nancy R. Smith, Ashland
- 98. Prohibit use of hand-held cell phones while driving**  
Steve Schneiderman, Murray
- 99. Provide State Incentive for Local Development of Commercial Air Service**  
Task Force contribution
- 100. Simplify regulation of utilities**  
Task Force contribution

**The New Agenda for Kentucky  
was made possible with the  
generous support of:**

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**PNC Bank**

**PNC Foundation**

**Public Life Foundation of Owensboro**

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**Thank You!**

# The Nation Is Taking Notice

## Kentucky is leading the nation in broadband deployment.

The word of ConnectKentucky's remarkable success is spreading. Together, we have accomplished much, but our work is far from over. Now we're increasing demand for broadband and implementing the necessary programs to ensure Kentucky remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family.

For more information, visit  
[www.connectkentucky.org](http://www.connectkentucky.org) or  
contact René True at  
[rtrue@connectky.org](mailto:rtrue@connectky.org).

States step in to close broadband gap  
Wall Street Journal

Kentucky may be leading the nation in technology  
eWeek.com

Connecting the nation starts in KY  
Apprising.com

Kentucky sees jump in high-tech job growth  
Cincinnati Business Journal

Wiring rural America  
The Economist

Kentucky effort on broadband hailed as model  
The Courier-Journal

The need for speed  
The Plain Dealer Cleveland.com

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Center for American Progress

Results validate CK as model for technology growth  
GlobeInvestor.com

