

# Legislative Outcomes

2020 | GLI Advocacy





**GREATER LOUISVILLE INC.**  
The Metro Chamber of Commerce



## 2020 Legislative Outcomes Report

# How commitment and adaptability led to wins for business in an unpredictable session

GLI entered into the 2020 legislative season with our most aggressive agenda to date, focused on policies to develop our workforce and improve our region's business competitiveness. In January and February, our Advocacy team worked directly with lawmakers to craft and advocate for pro-business legislation and testified in support of GLI priorities before eight different legislative committees. In early March, however, a cloud of uncertainty descended upon Frankfort as concerns over COVID-19 transformed into a global pandemic. Access to the Capital became restricted, the legislative calendar was shortened, and rumours of an early adjournment circulated.

Despite these extraordinary circumstances, GLI remained dedicated to pursuing the priorities of the greater Louisville business community. Our Advocacy team adapted by turning to "tele-lobbying" and digital advocacy to carry out our mission and benefited from a solid foundation for progress prepared earlier in the session.

Because of these efforts and our steadfast commitment to our members, GLI succeeded in securing important legislative victories in 2020 that will prove vital to the success of our regional community both as our economy restarts and as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 crisis.

Three initiatives that we are especially proud of are improvements to Kentucky's expungement laws, funding for public transportation, and a legislative measure that will allow employers to help workers struggling with substance use disorders. GLI had major successes on all these fronts by passing legislation that will address three systemic barriers to work within our community: criminal records, substance use disorders, and transportation.

GLI also championed passage of legislation to support the University of Louisville's acquisition of Jewish Hospital and related assets. A major win for our community, this legislation will help protect thousands of jobs and the University's R1 status.

Another win for businesses was passage of legislation to allow for the direct shipment of alcohol from producers to customers. GLI worked with other partners to pass a model bill that will allow Kentucky's signature Bourbon industry to continue growing and meeting the demands of its customers.

GLI achieved an important bi-state initiative of aligning Indiana and Kentucky law with a new federal law raising the minimum tobacco age to 21. Another bi-state initiative, GLI worked alongside One Southern Indiana to advance legislation in Indianapolis to outline reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers. Last year, GLI championed legislation in Kentucky to provide important guidance on this issue for employers and to support women in the workforce.

Our goal was to pass a similar bill in Indiana to create better alignment in state labor laws for regional employers. While pregnant workers legislation did not pass in Indiana this year, GLI succeeded in starting an important conversation with lawmakers that we look forward to continuing next year.

As the COVID-19 crisis began to take form in March, GLI pivoted to measures that could provide relief for businesses. One effort was to ensure funding for Kentucky's Small Business Development Center in what was one of the state's most austere budgets in recent memory. Another was passage of legislation that waived fees and fines for businesses and provided regulatory relief and flexibility for employers.

On top of all of these wins, GLI was also instrumental in blocking numerous bills that would have harmed our economy at a time when it is paramount that we do everything we can to support growth and provide relief for businesses. GLI blocked legislation that would have created misperceptions of our region as unwelcoming or would have rolled back key wins from past sessions.

As with any session, many pro-business priorities were left on the table in 2020. The Kentucky General Assembly unfortunately did not advance legislation on sports wagering, infrastructure funding, or tort reform. We were especially disappointed to see politics get in the way of what should have been a bi-partisan effort to reform local government taxation.

Just as legislative sessions are always colored by unpredictability, they are also always instructive. An important lesson we should take away from the 2020 sessions in Kentucky and Indiana is that even in times of upheaval and unprecedented uncertainty we can still accomplish great things. The key is to remain committed to a core mission while appropriately adapting to the circumstances at hand. For GLI, this meant remaining committed to pursuing the policy priorities of the greater Louisville business community, responding to the needs of employers in real-time, and utilizing every tool in our tool box to advocate for businesses. It was this can-do attitude that guided us through an unpredictable 2020 session, and it is this same attitude that we will need to guide us through the COVID-19 crisis and the forthcoming recovery.

“Legislative sessions are always colored by unpredictability but perhaps none more so than Kentucky's 2020 session. Despite this, GLI's commitment to its mission and willingness to adapt to changing circumstances resulted in several important legislative victories in 2020. These wins for business will be vital to rebuilding our economy and workforce in the months and years ahead.”

-Sarah Davasher-Wisdom  
President & CEO, GLI



**Sarah Davasher-Wisdom**  
President & CEO, Greater Louisville Inc.

# Wins for our community

Throughout the 2020 legislative session, GLI worked aggressively in Kentucky and Indiana to get results for the greater Louisville business community by successfully leading on legislation that will grow our economy, support workforce development, and position our region to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Recovery through Employment

GLI successfully advocated for an important new initiative to support employers seeking to assist workers struggling with substance use disorders. Lawmakers passed **SB 191** (Sen. Julie Raque Adams), which included language from **SB 173** (Sen. Matt Castlen), to create a legal and regulatory framework that employers may use as a guide to get their employees into treatment and keep them as part of their staff. This legislation will help address the substance use disorder crisis and support employee retention.

## Probation Credits

**HB 284** (Rep. Derek Lewis) will incentivize more workforce participation and preparation in Kentucky by creating a credit program for the Commonwealth's probation system. This program will encourage individuals on probation to work and seek out training and education opportunities.

## Flexibility for Distilleries

**SB 99** (Sen. John Schickel) updates several state regulations to support the growth and development of Kentucky's distilleries and other alcohol producers.

## University of Louisville

A major win for greater Louisville, **HB 99** (Speaker David Osborne) protects jobs, ensures access to quality health care at a critical time, and supports the University of Louisville by outlining the terms of a state loan to facilitate the University's purchase of Jewish Hospital and other assets. This legislation secures UofL's R1 status and protects nearly 2,000 jobs and more than \$300 million in annual direct economic activity in our region.

## Public Transportation

Under the budget bill, **HB 352** (Rep. Steven Rudy), greater Louisville's regional transportation provider, TARC, will receive state support to match a major federal grant totalling \$21 million. These funds, appropriated from Kentucky's share of the Volkswagen Settlement, will allow TARC to replace older buses in its fleet and to continue making major contributions to economic development and workforce participation throughout the region.

## Direct Shipment of Alcohol

**HB 415** (Rep. Adam Koenig) creates a model regulatory framework to allow alcohol producers in Kentucky to send their products directly to consumers. The bill will also allow Kentuckians to have alcohol shipped safely to their doorsteps from out-of-state producers as well. HB 415 will allow Kentucky's signature Bourbon industry and other alcohol producers to continue expanding and driving economic growth in the Commonwealth.

## Small Business Development Center

GLI worked aggressively to ensure full funding for Kentucky's Small Business Development Center in the state budget, **HB 352** (Rep. Steven Rudy). SBDC leverages state and federal dollars to provide vital services to small businesses and has been instrumental in helping employers access federal loan programs throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Annual reporting shows that SBDC business counseling in Kentucky leads to \$171 million in incremental sales gains and secured financing and close to 2000 new jobs.

## Public-Private Partnerships

Included in **HB 351** (Rep. Steven Rudy) was language that will ensure that Kentucky continues to have maximum flexibility to pursue public-private partnership projects with private businesses in regions like greater Louisville.

## Tobacco 21

Kentucky and Indiana both took important steps to improve the health of our regional workforce by passing legislation to align state law with new federal law raising the minimum purchase age for tobacco and other nicotine products to 21: **SB 56** in Kentucky (Senator Ralph Alvarado) and **SB 1** in Indiana (Senator Ed Charbonneau). Wins like these will help boost worker productivity, reduce strains on our health care system, and reduce health care costs for employers. Smoking costs employers about \$6,000 for each employee who smokes. Raising the tobacco age to 21 is expected to result in a 12 percent reduction in smoking prevalence.

## Expungement

A top GLI-priority, **HB 327** (Rep. Kevin Bratcher) will help remove a major barrier to work by making the expungement of acquitted and dismissed criminal charges automatic instead of requiring individuals to petition. This pro-workforce legislation helps solidify Kentucky's position at the forefront of criminal justice reform throughout the country, will help address workforce challenges in our region, and will drive up wages. One study found that individuals who succeeded in expunging their records saw an average wage increase of 25 percent.



I was proud to sponsor HB 327, which improves our criminal justice system and removes barriers to success for thousands of Kentuckians. GLI and its members were critical advocates and worked with me from start to finish to get this important legislation passed and signed into law."

- Representative Kevin Bratcher

# More wins for our community

## Disincentives for Vaping

**HB 351** (Rep. Steven Rudy) will improve public health and the health of our regional workforce by helping reduce youth access to vaping by placing a state excise tax on vapor products. This legislation adopted language from **HB 32** (Rep. Jerry Miller).

## Critical Infrastructure

**HB 44** (Rep. Jim Gooch) protects key critical infrastructure in Kentucky such as water treatment facilities, communications infrastructure, and pipelines that are critical to economic development and growth and the everyday operations of businesses in our region.

## Local Government Advertising

**HB195** (Rep. Jerry Miller) eases publication and advertising requirements for local governments and other public agencies in Kentucky, saving greater Louisville taxpayers money and helping reduce fiscal strains for cities, counties, and local public agencies.

## Collective Bargaining Clarification

**HB 374** (Rep. Jason Nemes) provides much-needed clarification for employers when it comes to breaks and rest periods in collective bargaining agreements.

## Highway Construction Funding

**HB 354** (Rep. Steven Rudy), the biennial highway construction bill, appropriated nearly \$300 million for the greater Louisville region throughout the next two fiscal years, paving the way for numerous key infrastructure projects. This sum represents approximately 14 percent of the total highway construction funds allocated for fiscal years 2021 and 2022.

## Covid-19 Relief

With strong support from GLI, lawmakers passed **SB 150** (Sen. Ralph Alvarado and Rep. Bart Rowland), which provided much-needed relief from COVID-19 for businesses and workers throughout Kentucky. The bill relaxed administrative regulations, fees, and other restrictions on businesses, delayed the state tax filing deadline, and created more flexibility for the Governor to respond to the crisis.



GLI VP of Government Affairs and Public Policy Iris Wilbur Glick testifying before the House Small Business Committee

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As a small business owner and employer in Kentucky, I have seen firsthand how addiction can destroy lives and how critical employment can be to helping someone get sober and into recovery. SB 173 was badly needed legislation in the Commonwealth, and GLI was a vital partner in developing this bill and ensuring its passage in the 2020 session.”

- Senator Matt Castlen

# Damaging Legislation Blocked by GLI

GLI does not only work to pass pro-growth legislation. We also block bills that would cause damage to our economy.

## Anti-Inclusive Legislation

For greater Louisville to attract top talent from around the country and the globe and to help businesses in our region grow and expand, it is vital that lawmakers reaffirm through public policy that Kentucky is welcoming and open to all. Several bills were filed in the 2020 session that would have sent the wrong message about Kentucky and, if passed, would have threatened economic growth. These bills touched on issues such as transgender athletes, access to bathrooms, and medical conscience decisions. Based on the experiences of other states, anti-inclusive bills like these could have resulted in up to \$60 million in lost economic activity for our region. GLI adamantly opposed these bills, which prevented them progressing forward in the 2020 session.

## Employer Mandates and Roll-Backs of Past Business Wins

Lawmakers filed a range of bills in the 2020 session that would have imposed new, costly mandates on employers or attempted to roll back major wins from past legislative sessions. Policies like these would harm current Kentucky businesses and stall business attraction efforts. These bills included tax increases, wage mandates, the repeal of charter school legislation, and the reimposition of prevailing wage laws. This legislation could have cost the greater Louisville region tens of thousands of jobs and millions of dollars for businesses.

# Priorities for Future Legislative Sessions

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, many pro-business priorities were left unaddressed in Kentucky's 2020 legislative session as the legislature was forced to reset its schedule and focus on the immediate needs of the crisis. In addition, Indiana left important bills on the table in its short 30-day session this year. GLI worked diligently to push forward the conversation around several key issues, preparing them for progress in future sessions.

## Legal Liability Reform

Kentucky's lawsuit climate continues to harm economic growth and drive up cost for businesses and consumers in the Commonwealth. Lawmakers proposed several bills that would have led to major improvements to Kentucky's legal liability environment: **SB 51** (Sen. Ralph Alvarado), **SB 100** (Sen. Stephen Meredith), **SB 178** (Sen. Ralph Alvarado), and **HB 481** (Rep. Kim Moser).

## Local Tax Reform

**HB 475** (Rep. Michael Meredith) proposed a constitutional amendment that would have authorized Kentucky lawmakers to reform the rules of local taxation in the Commonwealth and empower local governments to recreate their tax codes to support business growth and economic development. A major GLI priority in 2020, this legislation unfortunately failed to advance in the House after passing a legislative committee with strong bi-partisan support.

## Sports Wagering

**HB 137** (Rep. Adam Koenig) would have created new opportunities for business development and tourism in Kentucky by authorizing sports wagering. Almost every state surrounding Kentucky has taken the necessary steps to create a regulatory and taxation framework for sports wagering. GLI looks forward to seeing passage of a sports wagering bill in 2021.

## Scholarship Tax Credits

**SB 110** (Sen. Ralph Alvarado) and **HB 350** (Rep. Chad McCoy) would have created a scholarship tax credit program to help increase the educational options available to Kentucky families and close achievement gaps in areas like greater Louisville.

## Infrastructure Investment

Kentucky's need for infrastructure investment is well-established, with an estimated \$490 million shortfall in funds for necessary maintenance. The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will further reduce available resources for infrastructure in Kentucky. **HB 580** (Rep. Sal Santoro) would have modernized infrastructure funding in the Commonwealth and provided increased funding for future infrastructure projects to stimulate economic growth.

## Reasonable Accommodations for Pregnant Workers in Indiana

In Kentucky's 2019 session, GLI successfully championed legislation to outline reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers. Two bills filed in Indiana this year - **SB 342** (Sen. Ron Alting) and **HB 1294** (Rep. Karen Engleman) - would have established similar accommodations for Hoosier workers, thereby providing clarification for regional businesses operating on both sides of the Ohio River. Pregnant workers legislation is key for supporting women in the workplace and providing legal clarity for employers.

## More pro-business and pro-workforce bills

Other key GLI bills that did not pass in the 2020 session include:

- **HB 368** (Rep. James Tipton) - would have expanded educational opportunities for former felons
- **HB 193** (Rep. James Tipton) and **SB 95** (Sen. Chris McDaniel) - would have streamlined sales tax exemption rules for contractors and nonprofits
- **HB 424** (Rep. Ed Massey) - would have lowered incarceration rates by increasing the felony theft threshold
- **HB 510** (Rep. Nancy Tate) - would have established a new tax credit program to support employers who hire and train individuals with criminal histories or substance use disorders
- **HCR 52** (Rep. Josie Raymond) - would have established a task force to explore ways to expand access to childcare and preschool in Kentucky
- **SB 98** (Sen. John Schickel) - would have lowered health care costs for employers by removing smokers as a protected class
- **SB 145** (Sen. Morgan McGarvey) and **HB 181** (Rep. Al Gentry) - would have authorized casino gaming in Kentucky



GLI Director of Public Policy Development testifying before the House Judiciary Committee

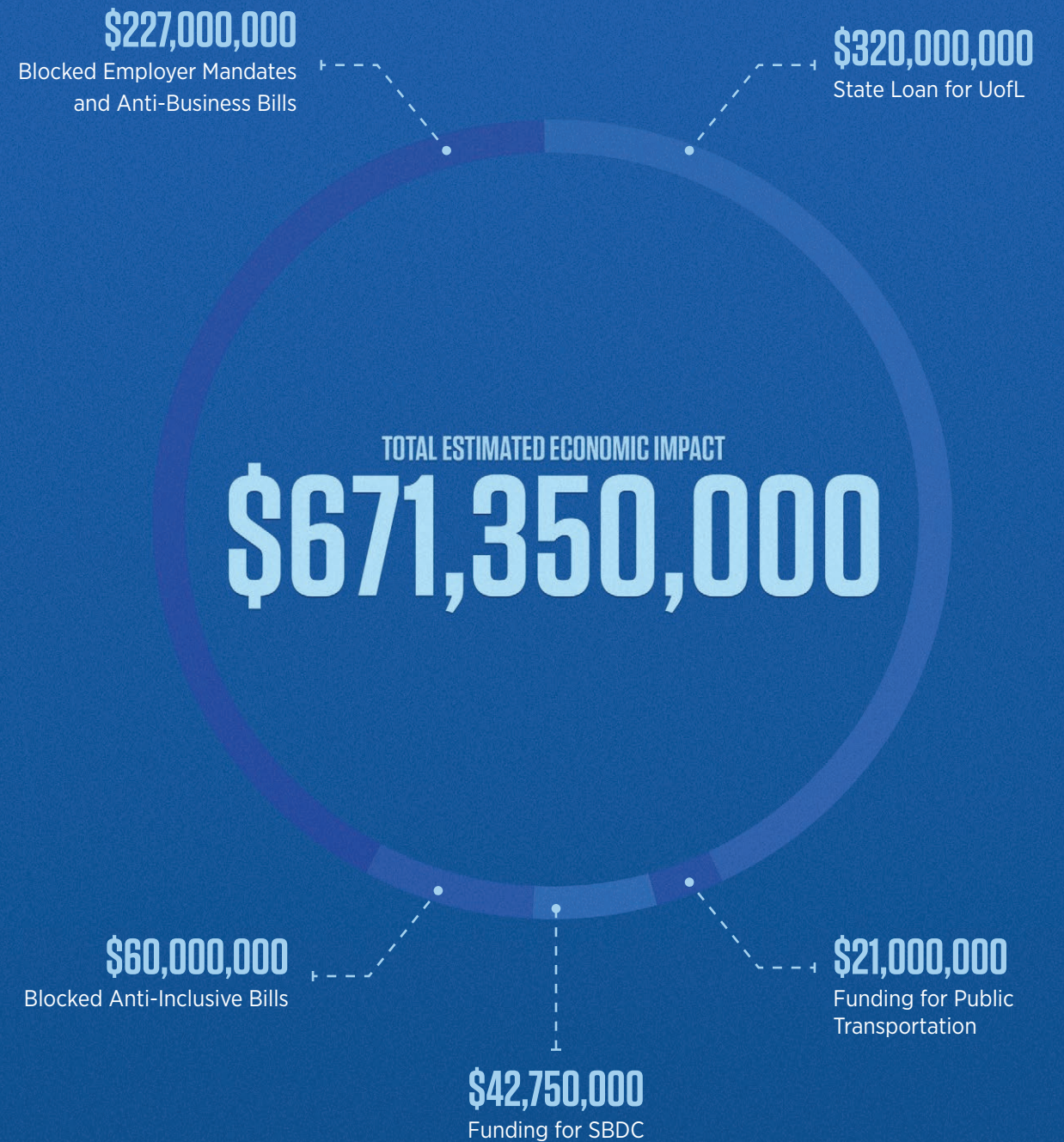
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GLI's steadfast support of the University of Louisville in securing passage of HB 99 is one of many examples of a deep and enduring partnership between our organizations. This legislation directly benefits the local business community as it meaningfully enhances the health care system in Louisville and secures the future of a premier metropolitan research university. We were thrilled to work so closely with the business community to secure its passage this year.

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- Neeli Bendapudi  
President, University of Louisville

# RETURN ON INVESTMENT



GLI advocates for policies that have real, tangible benefits for our investors and our regional business community. While not all the results of our wins from 2020 are readily quantifiable, some are and we can make reasonable estimates based on available data and resources.

# 2020 Most Valuable Policy Makers

GLI recognizes lawmakers from our region who support key legislative priorities of the greater Louisville business community. The lawmakers below voted in line with GLI priorities 90 percent of the time or more and, in some cases, sponsored major GLI priorities. Lawmakers like these are vital to improving our region's business competitiveness. See the next two pages to read more about the voting records of lawmakers from greater Louisville.



Senator Julie Raque Adams



Senator Ernie Harris



Senator Mike Nemes



Representative Kevin Bratcher



Representative Jim DuPlessis



Representative Samara Heavrin



Representative Chad McCoy



Representative Jerry Miller



Representative Jason Nemes



Speaker David Osborne



Representative Rob Rothenburger



Representative James Tipton



Representative Thomas Huff

# Legislative Voting Records

The votes in this record reveal how lawmakers from the greater Louisville region voted on some of the key bills that GLI supported during the 2020 General Assembly. The percentages represent how a legislator voted in relation to all bills GLI supported in 2020. [Click here](#) to see GLI's full voting record for lawmakers from greater Louisville.

## Senate Voting Record

Louisville Metro Caucus Member	County	%	SB56 T-21	SB150 Covid-19	SB191 Recovery	HB99 UofL	HB284 Probation	HB327 Expungement	HB415 Direct Shipment	HB475 Tax Reform
Sen. Julie Raque Adams	Jefferson	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖
Sen. Perry Clark	Jefferson	N/A	✗	⊖	⊖	✓	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖
Sen. Denise Harper Angel	Jefferson	70.59%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖
Sen. Ernie Harris	Jefferson, Oldham	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖
Sen. Jimmy Higdon	Jefferson, Nelson, Spencer	76.47%	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	⊖
Sen. Paul Hornback	Henry, Jefferson, Shelby, Trimble	88.24%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	⊖
Sen. Morgan McGarvey	Jefferson	75.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖
Sen. Stephen Meredith	Meade	70.59%	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	⊖
Sen. Gerald Neal	Jefferson	75.00%	✓	✓	⊖	✓	✓	⊖	✓	⊖
Sen. Dennis Parrett	Hardin, Jefferson	81.25%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖
Sen. Mike Nemes	Bullitt, Jefferson	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖

✓ Yes | ✗ No | ⊖ No Vote

Please note that the legislation referenced in this abbreviated voting record is based on the final version of the bill receiving a vote. This may include concurrence votes. Vote modifications are included. Only counties within the Greater Louisville region are listed. Legislators may represent counties beyond those listed here. Voting scores were not given for lawmakers who did not cast votes for more than 50 percent of the bills listed.

## House Voting Record

Louisville Metro Caucus Member	County	%	SB56 T-21	SB150 Covid-19	SB191 Recovery	HB99 UofL	HB284 Probation	HB327 Expungement	HB415 Direct Shipment	HB475 Tax Reform
Rep. Tina Bojanowski	Jefferson	84.21%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Rep. Charles Booker	Jefferson	53.33%	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖	⊖	⊖	*
Rep. Kevin Bratcher	Jefferson	94.74%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. Tom Burch	Jefferson	80.00%	⊖	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖	⊖	*
Rep. McKenzie Cantrell	Jefferson	78.95%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	*
Rep. Jeff Donohue	Jefferson	40.00%	⊖	⊖	✗	✓	⊖	✓	⊖	*
Rep. Jim DuPlessis	Hardin	92.86%	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖	✓	✓	*
Rep. Al Gentry	Jefferson	63.16%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	*
Rep. Samara Heavrin	Hardin	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. Thomas Huff	Bullitt	94.12%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. Joni Jenkins	Jefferson	73.68%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	*
Rep. Nima Kulkarni	Jefferson	84.21%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Rep. Mary Lou Marzian	Jefferson	N/A	⊖	⊖	⊖	✓	⊖	⊖	⊖	*
Rep. Chad McCoy	Nelson	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. Reginald Meeks	Jefferson	56.25%	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖	✓	⊖	✗
Rep. Charles Miller	Jefferson	N/A	⊖	⊖	⊖	✓	⊖	⊖	⊖	*
Rep. Jerry Miller	Jefferson, Oldham	94.74%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. Jason Nemes	Jefferson, Oldham	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Speaker David Osborne	Oldham	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. Rick Rand	Henry, Trimble	N/A	⊖	⊖	⊖	✓	⊖	⊖	✗	✗
Rep. Josie Raymond	Jefferson	80.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	⊖	⊖	✓	*
Rep. Rob Rothenburger	Shelby	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. Bart Rowland	Hardin	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. Dean Schamore	Hardin	66.67%	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Rep. Attica Scott	Jefferson	47.06%	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	*
Rep. Maria Sorolis	Jefferson, Oldham	81.25%	✓	✓	⊖	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Rep. Nancy Tate	Hardin, Meade	84.21%	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. James Tipton	Bullitt, Spencer	100.00%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep. Russell Webber	Bullitt, Hardin	83.33%	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Rep. Lisa Willner	Jefferson	75.00%	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	*

✓ Yes | ✗ No | ⊖ No Vote

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An \* indicates that the House member was present but chose not to vote for the bill. For the purposes of this scorecard, we are considering that a No vote.



# GLI Advocacy

GLI relies on hundreds of volunteers from the greater Louisville business community to develop legislative priorities and set positions on key public policy issues that affect economic growth and workforce development. GLI's Public Policy Council leads GLI's public policy effort with the assistance of six Issue Advisory Committees:

- Bi-State Issues
- Business Competitiveness
- Education and Workforce Development
- Energy and Environment
- Health Care
- Transportation and Infrastructure

The dedicated volunteers that lead the Public Policy Council and GLI's Issue Advisory Committees and the hundreds of members who give their time are the key to GLI's success in advocating for the business community's priorities.

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## GLI Public Policy & Government Affairs Team

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