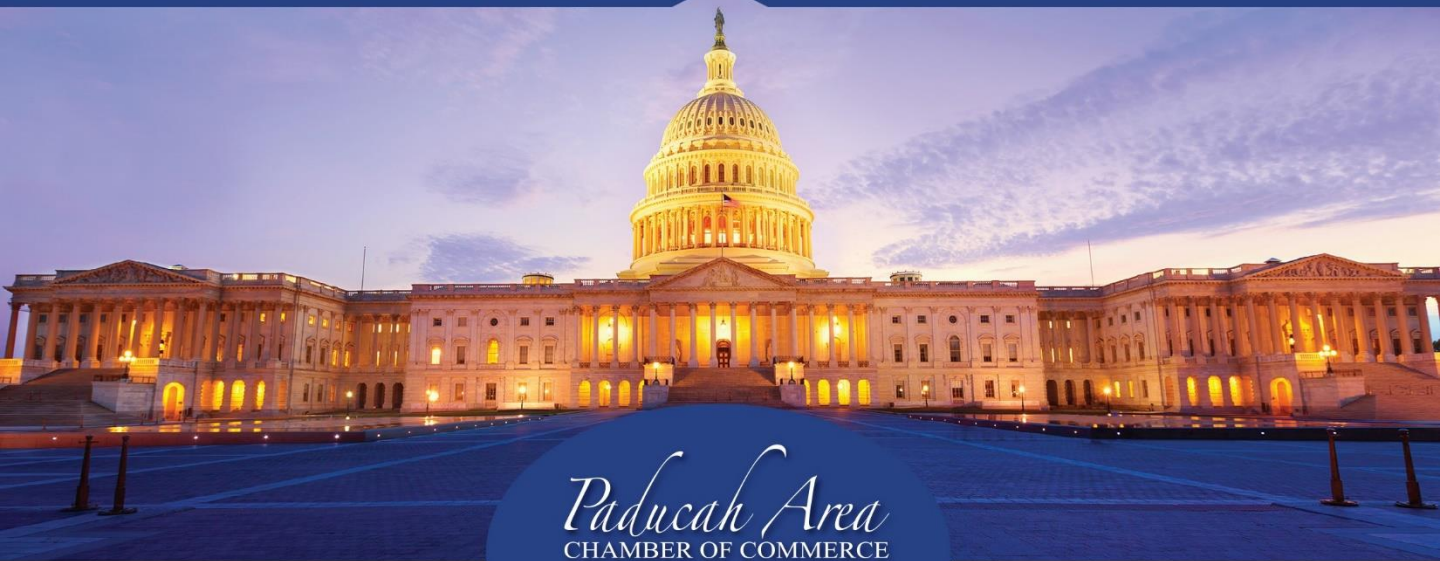


2020 FEDERAL PRIORITIES



Community Priorities

Barkley Regional Airport
Department of Energy
Infrastructure Investments

Other Positions

COVID-19 Recovery
Education
Travel and Tourism

The Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce is the region's largest business advocacy organization representing approximately 1,000 businesses and an estimated 30,000 employees. As an investor-driven organization, the Chamber serves as the VOICE of the business community and presents a united effort on our community's behalf.

2017



CHAMBER OF THE YEAR

*Presented by the Association of
Chamber of Commerce Executives*



KEY LOCAL PRIORITIES

Department of Transportation – Federal Aviation Admin.

New Terminal Project for Barkley Regional Airport:

After 20 years of planning, Barkley Regional Airport is moving forward with the construction of a new terminal building.

The Paducah Chamber *supports* continued Federal-level funding to assist with the completion of a new terminal building and requests FAA continuing to fund eligible portions at the 100% funding level for FY '20 -'21 and beyond.

The Paducah Chamber respectfully requests \$15.5 million in FY 2021 FAA funds and \$2.0 million in FY 2022 FAA funds, all at 100% FAA participation.

By continuing to fully fund the project, it benefits the airport, City of Paducah, McCracken County and surrounding region, all of which are facing a challenging economic picture post-pandemic. By providing the funding, the project will move in a timely manner and the region reaps the benefits of the completed project as soon as possible.

Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and CARES Act provisions: *Supports* continued Federal level support of Barkley Regional Airport, and especially the completion of a new terminal complex, through grants funded by the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). In particular, we ask that allowances made as part of the CARES Act continue, namely the funding of eligible projects at 100% for FY '20 -'21 and beyond.

Continuing to fund eligible portions at 100% allows for timely completion of the project, we believe is in everyone's best interest. It will also assist the region and the airport in their collective recovery from the impacts of the pandemic.



Essential Air Service (EAS) Funding: *Supports* full funding of the EAS program. This program has provided the population of far Western Kentucky an economically vital link to the National Air System (NAS) for over a decade. Before 2020, we were proudly home to one of the ten lowest subsidies in the program, a testament to its effectiveness and importance here. During the pandemic, it became more vital to us than ever before, by preventing the interruption of commercial air service from Paducah, which would have severed this essential connection.

We ask the Department of Transportation to continue to fully fund this critically important program, to facilitate regional recovery efforts, and in conjunction with the new terminal, provide Paducah and the region a stronger foundation for a successful future.

Department of Energy

To advance the cleanup of the Paducah (KY) DOE site, an increase in funding is requested of \$20 million for FY 2021.



Paducah site



This additional funding would allow for the continued disposition of the ozone-depleting refrigerant R-114. The removal of R-114 from the uranium enrichment buildings will prepare them for future demolition. Paducah is home of one of the world's largest concentrations of R-114. There are 8.5 million pounds at the Paducah site, causing it to be one of DOE's largest environmental risks. Additional money would be used to build on the progress made during FY 2020 to further the goal of eliminating this hazard and to advance cleanup.

In addition to eliminating the R-114 hazard, additional funding would also facilitate removal of miscellaneous buildings and structures. Several small buildings and structures will be ready for removal in fiscal year 2021, including but not limited to two massive switchyards, which will be sent to recycle by the Paducah Area Community Reuse Organization. This effort will advance cleanup while generating revenue for future economic development.

Overall, the completion of these projects will reduce the site inventory, reduce hazards and risks, show visible progress and position the site to clean up the buildings faster, all of

which will save the government money in the long-run by reducing the duration of the cleanup. Cleanup is now projected for 2065. Our community continues to strive for completion before this date.

The local community is appreciative of the work completed since the deactivation began in 2014. Our local community leaders have worked closely with our congressional delegation and DOE to ensure stable funding. We know Environmental Management (EM) is taking steps to get the best value out of every dollar. This modest additional investment for the Paducah site will allow for accelerated cleanup and reduction of input costs, thereby saving the taxpayers money in the long-run.

Agency Request: U.S. Department of Energy > Office of Science > Environmental Management > Uranium Enrichment Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund

Requested Amount: \$300 million for Paducah DOE site, located in McCracken County, an increase of approximately \$20 million above the President's request.

Infrastructure Investments

The Paducah Chamber *urges* long-term funding solutions to strengthen critical infrastructure for economic development, public safety and workforce development. Having dependable infrastructure including air, roads, bridges, railways, waterways, broadband and public transit systems, is critical to Kentucky's economic vitality. Maintaining adequate funding for transportation infrastructure remains an issue of concern at both the state and federal levels of government.

Inland Waterways

Inland waterways play a key role in international and domestic trade and in the economy of Paducah-McCracken County and the surrounding area. Full federal funding to support critical water infrastructure improvements is necessary to promote inland waterway commerce.

Water Infrastructure Bill: *Supports* bipartisan efforts in Congress to authorize \$17 billion in funding for water infrastructure projects. Our levees, dams, inland waterways, and ports protect hundreds of communities, support millions of American jobs, and generate trillions of dollars of economic activity. Passage of WRDA legislation is an important step in securing investments for these critical infrastructure systems.

Kentucky Lock: *Supports* FY 2021 designation of \$169.5 million for Kentucky Lock and Dam which will allow the award of the project's largest construction contract — the Downstream Lock Monoliths. This includes a provision, secured by Sen. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, requiring the Sec. of the Army to expedite a new authorization level of over \$1.1 billion for the Kentucky Lock project.

FY 2021 Energy and Water Appropriations: *Supports* appropriation of the full amount supportable by the diesel fuel tax receipts deposited into the Inland Waterways Trust Fund.

Additional Fees: *Opposes* additional taxation, tolling, lockage fees or other changes for the users of the inland waterways system; supports Operations and Maintenance of the Inland Waterways Transportation System remain a fully Federal responsibility.

Inland Waterways Transportation Fund (IWTF) Construction Projects: *Supports* conforming the cost-sharing for IWTF-financed construction projects to require 25% of the project cost to be derived from the IWTF and the remaining 75% from General Revenues--the same formula used for Deep Draft navigation projects. This adjustment could help accelerate the Kentucky Lock project by 1-3 years.

Asian Carp Prevention and Control Pilot Program: *Supports* legislation authorizing \$35 million for innovative projects and technologies that bolster the management, prevention, and eradication of Asian Carp. Moreover, the provision ensures that at least 5 of these projects are undertaken in reservoirs like Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley.

Infrastructure Investments *(continued)*

Railroad

Supports increased federal funding for maintaining and improving the safety of railroad infrastructure. Dedicated resources for short line tracks and regional railroads are critical for the sustainability and improvement of multi-modal freight transportation in the greater Paducah area.

Supports short line railroads by making the “45G” short line tax credit permanent. The credit incentivizes railroads to increase their investments, rehabilitate their tracks, and expand capacity, which ultimately allows short lines to safely and efficiently serve their customers.



Public Transit

Encourages the Department of Transportation to reconsider the 20% match required by local and state agencies on all capital projects. With the state having exhausted all of its Toll Credits that have previously been used for the matching funds, this will put a greater burden on local agencies to match any future Federal Capital grant requests.

Broadband

Supports tax exemptions to incentivize expanding and upgrading the nation’s wireless and wired broadband networks, and/or broadband buildout grants to aid the private sector in deploying last mile service to unserved areas, or both. In a 21st century global economy, our telecommunications infrastructure is crucial for both business and education industries.

BUILD grants

Supports the continuation of the BUILD grant program. Paducah received a \$10.4 billion BUILD grant in 2019 to redevelop its riverfront and expand its port. The continuation of this program is very important to provide funding for infrastructure projects.

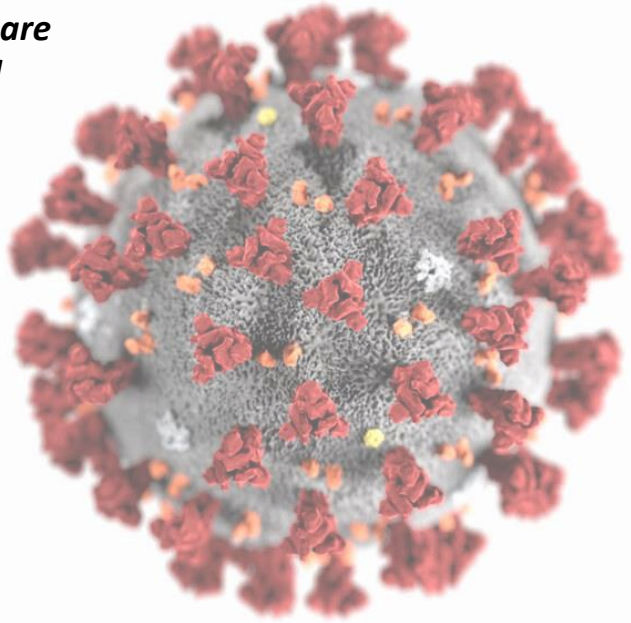
DOE Funding through Infrastructure Investments

Urges Congress that if there is an increase in infrastructure funding, a portion of the funding go to the Department of Energy sites, including Paducah’s site. The Paducah Chamber joins the City of Paducah, McCracken County, Greater Paducah Economic Development and Paducah Area Community Reuse Organization (PACRO) in asking for this one-time economic boost for the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) program.

COVID-19 Recovery Recommendations

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are many issues that federal policymakers will need to address to support the growth of businesses, especially small businesses, through America's economic recovery.

While there were many challenges, we appreciate Sen. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and the Kentucky Congressional delegation for their leadership thus far, including the implementation of the CARES Act and flexibility of the Paycheck Protection Program.



Health Care: Supports dedicating increased federal resources to protect public health, including access to testing for COVID-19 and other viruses, vaccines, therapeutics, and other treatment strategies; and for supplying ample Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect our regional health care workforce.

Liability Protections for Businesses: Supports legislation to protect businesses from unnecessary and frivolous lawsuits related to the pandemic. This legislation should create a presumption that a business has met the standard of care with respect to protection of its employees, visitors, and patrons if it has complied with the recommendations of the CDC and/or state and local executive orders.

State and Local Government Funding: Encourages congressional leaders to explore and pursue legislative solutions to support state and local governments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Telehealth: Supports the use of telehealth as a tool for providing access to health care services in accordance with applicable state and federal guidance and regulations. Urges Congress to continue efforts to ensure patients' continued access to health care in a telehealth environment provided that protections to ensure patients' personal safety and health information are in place and that services provided are appropriate for delivery through virtual means.

Small Business Recovery Loan and Grant Flexibility: Continue to support funding small business loan and grant programs as needed by businesses. Continue to give businesses more flexibility in how loans can be utilized and forgiven.

Displaced Workers: Continue to support policies aimed at strengthening programs for workers displaced by the COVID-19 pandemic by increasing federal resources for upskilling and retraining.

Education and Workforce

Center of Excellence Designation for West Kentucky Community and Technical College:

Supports a Center of Excellence designation at West Kentucky Community and Technical College (WKCTC) through the NDAA Section 3507. This authorization allows the Secretary of Transportation to designate as a Center of Excellence for domestic maritime workforce training and education, a covered training entity located in a state that borders the Mississippi River System. WKCTC meets all eligibility requirements under the statute and offers academic degrees and training in Marine Technology through its Inland Logistics and Marine Institute and Workforce Solutions. To have this important designation is a vital addition to Paducah's long history as a leader in the marine industry and will have significant impact on our community.

Higher Education Act: *Supports* federal legislation, including reauthorization of the Higher Education Act to:

- Maintain funding levels and modernize Pell Grants to better serve today's non-traditional, low income students and incentivize completion.
- Improve college access and affordability for all students.
- Increase accountability and transparency over federal financial aid and student loan programs.

Postsecondary Education: *Supports* higher education funding for research and development grants, and funding that promotes access for more students, regardless of socio-economic background, to attain a high-quality four-year degree.

STEM/STEAM Funding: *Supports* preparing the next generation to enter a globalized workforce that has an increased focus on science, technology, engineering, and math, together with art, that are critical to connecting businesses with qualified workers. Education and workforce programs are vital to filling open positions.

Workforce Development Programs:

Supports continued investments in workforce development and reform efforts aimed at improving alignment, flexibility and collaboration among public and private sector leaders to meet employer needs, including support for the Department of Labor's proposal to create an industry-led apprenticeship program and provide more flexibility and support to employers for skills training.

Financial Aid and Student Debt: *Urges* reforms to financial aid programs to improve access by simplifying the FAFSA process and increase affordability while incentivizing outcomes. Congress must act to mitigate the negative impact of rising student debt on economic growth and entrepreneurship by ensuring borrowers have adequate flexibility to repay loans and by supporting business-led efforts to reduce educational debt. Policymakers should support employers seeking to help employees pay off student debt and develop continuing education and tuition compensation programs.

Arts, Travel & Tourism

As one of nine UNESCO Creative Cities in the U.S., Paducah offers a vibrant arts and entertainment scene, which generates \$39.9 million in local economic activity. Paducah's Historic Downtown and Lower Town Arts District attract an excess of 500,000 patrons annually. The non-profit arts and culture industry supports 819 full-time equivalent jobs, generates \$17.7 million in household income to local residents, and delivers \$3.6 million in local and state government revenue.

Creative Entrepreneurs: S. 650 / H. R. 1519 CREATE Act (Comprehensive Resources for Entrepreneurs in the Arts to Transform the Economy): *Supports* this legislation to more thoroughly serve the people, places and programs that make our nation's creative economy prosper in all its cultural, social, and commercial forms. Through minor adjustments to federal programs and funding, the CREATE Act takes steps to better invest in our country's workforce and creative industries, while empowering the entrepreneurial spirit of artists and supporting their role as contributors to the small business sector.

Arts Funding: *Supports* the continuation of grants funding that provides assistance to local cultural organizations. Grants in our community from the National Endowment for the Arts have been awarded to West Kentucky Community & Technical College – School of Art and Design, the City of Paducah, Yeiser Art Center and the Market House Theatre. These grants help our community to increase local support for community projects.

International Travel: *Supports* promoting more secure and efficient travel process for international visitors and business travelers, including increasing the use of the Trusted Traveler and Visa Waiver Programs, improving visa processing, and encouraging visa reform. Because of the International Quilt Shows hosted by the American Quilter's Society in Paducah, the recent acquiring of a local paper mill by a Chinese firm and other internationally-owned companies in our area, it is very important that international travel to our country and our community be an easy process.

Small Business

Reduce Barriers to Utilization of SBA 7 (a)

Loan Program: *Supports* reviewing changes made to the SBA 7 (a) loan program that made it more difficult for small businesses to utilize this loan program; eliminating the standardization of criteria—the “one size fits all” policy; and allowing local-decision making by the financial institution.

Business & Commerce

International Trade: *Supports* fair and free trade policies that open markets abroad to Kentucky businesses and remove barriers that shut U.S. exports out of foreign markets.

Opportunity Zones and Similar Investment: *Supports* making permanent and expanding the New Markets Tax Credit and finding ways to incentivize and encourage businesses already existing within Opportunity Zones to expand and invest additional capital in those areas.



In past years the Annual DC Fly In, coordinated by the Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce, has involved approximately 50 local citizens from several West Kentucky counties traveling to D.C.

This year more than 100 are involved with our virtual format.

Our philosophy is: “We never want it to be said in our state or national capitol that we are only noticed by our absence. We will be noted for our presence.”



www.paducahchamber.org

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