

**Kentucky Chamber**  
Uniting Business. Advancing Kentucky.

PIECING TOGETHER PROGRESS:

# Election results bring new opportunities

**OP-ED BY DAVE ADKISSON**  
*Kentucky Chamber President & CEO*

**AFTER MONTHS** of campaign ads, debates and mudslinging, the 2016 election cycle is finally over. Not only did the outcome determine who the next president will be, it also made a significant shift in the makeup of the Kentucky House of Representatives. For the first time in 95 years, there will be more Republicans than Democrats in that chamber. Kentucky has often been referred to as a “purple” state because of its split party legislature. But now, with a Republican Governor and Republican majorities in both the House and Senate, the Commonwealth is a definite shade of red.

A new majority in the state House presents an opportunity for success for many pro-business pieces of legislation that, even with broad support, have never been able to get enough traction to secure final passage. At the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, we are hopeful that under the leadership of Representative Jeff Hoover and his colleagues, the Commonwealth will finally be able to benefit from some commonsense, job-creating policies that focus on economic growth.

**Right to Work.** It’s time to make Kentucky a right-to-work state and allow employees to make a personal decision on whether to pay dues to a union. States with right-to-work laws report faster per capita income growth, faster growth in manufacturing and non-agricultural jobs, greater capital expenditures, lower unemployment and fewer work stoppages. As Kentucky has struggled to recruit and retain business, the absence of right-to-work legislation has resulted in the Commonwealth ceding competitive ground to other states. In fact, Kentucky is the only southern state not to have enacted right-to-work legislation. With Indiana, Michigan (that’s right, Michigan) and West Virginia’s new right-to-work laws, our state stands out as a conspicuous outlier in this much-needed area of reform.

**Prevailing Wage.** It is also time for Kentucky to repeal its prevailing wage law. A 2014 study by the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission—a nonpartisan research organization of the legislature—determined that the prevailing wage law inflated labor cost by 24 percent on average and increased total project costs by an



House GOP elected their leadership team which will be formalized when the Republicans become the majority on Jan. 3. From left to right: Majority Caucus Chair David Meade, Majority Whip Kevin Bratcher, House Speaker Jeff Hoover, Majority Floor Leader Jonathan Shell, and Speaker Pro Tem David Osborne. *Photo Courtesy of Chris Nolan, MML&K.*



Just days before the historic Kentucky election gave Republicans the super-majority in the House of Representatives, House Speaker Jeff Hoover spoke to the Kentucky Chamber’s board of directors.

average of 10 to 16 percent. Added spending on public works projects by Kentucky taxpayers means fewer public works projects are built or existing projects, such as schools, are scaled back. Further, spending on higher cost public works projects means less money to shore up

Kentucky’s ailing pension system, a problem that national credit agencies are watching closely, and less money for education and economic development programs.

**Charter Schools.** On the education front, Kentucky is one of only seven states that do not allow charter schools. We’ve advocated for charter schools for many years, in an effort to close achievements gaps, empower parents, and discover innovative ways to help students and teachers succeed in the classroom.

**Legal Reform.** Finally, the increasing cost of civil litigation, whether through legal fees, higher liability insurance premiums, defensive business practices or simply reduced investment opportunities, is a significant burden for Kentucky’s employers. These costs are hurting businesses, their employees, and consumers as they are passed on in the form of higher prices and fewer choices. Because of this, we have long advocated for the establishment of commonsense legal liability reform and are hopeful that the new House will lead to a balanced, efficient and fair legal system.

The 2016 election is over. Now it’s time to roll up our sleeves, put politics aside, and get to work making Kentucky the country’s most business-friendly state.

**See our full list of 2017 legislative priorities on page 2.**

## Chamber leaders tour state to discuss legislative priorities



**KENTUCKY CHAMBER** Chairman Bill Lear, chairman emeritus of Stoll Keenon Odgen (left), and Chamber President & CEO Dave Adkisson (right) have visited more than 18 local chambers of commerce since late October, outlining the Kentucky business community’s goals for the 2017 session of the Kentucky General Assembly (see page 2 for a full list). Lear, Adkisson and members of the Chamber’s public affairs team are also discussing the opportunities for progress Kentucky’s business community is facing in light of the state’s recent election results.

“Our agenda is a full one, and we know that additional issues will emerge as the session progresses,” said Adkisson. “As always, we look forward to the opportunity to represent the interests of Kentucky’s employers as we work together to build a stronger future for our Commonwealth.”

*Adkisson’s Photo Courtesy of Anna Taylor, Elizabethtown News-Enterprise*

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## We've charted a path toward prosperity.

In 2015, the Kentucky Chamber's strategic plan, *Four Pillars for Prosperity*, placed a new emphasis on issues that influence the state's economy and on the actions that will chart a path toward success. The Kentucky Chamber's 2017 Legislative Priorities builds upon the framework set by *Four Pillars for Prosperity* and outlines the business community's top legislative priorities for the 2017 session of the Kentucky General Assembly.



### A Healthy, Skilled Workforce

Create a globally competitive talent development system that produces a healthy and skilled workforce, benchmarked against the best education and workforce preparation systems in the world.



### Sustainable State Government

Create and sustain a state government that is financially stable and creates a competitive environment for economic growth.



### 21st Century Infrastructure

Create and maintain a modern infrastructure to capitalize on the state's strategic advantages and to advance its energy agenda.



### Aggressive Job Creation

Create and implement a customized economic development program that recognizes the potential of Kentucky's distinct regions and industry sectors and encourages and rewards entrepreneurship and innovation.

## Workforce

### Keep Academic Standards

Kentucky's constitution calls for the state to establish a system of common schools and standards as adopted by the Kentucky Board of Education and to provide an equal opportunity for all students to get a quality education. Kentucky's standards, developed by Kentuckians, set a high bar to prepare our students for success and strengthen our workforce.

### Enable Charter Schools

Charter schools allow more innovation and flexibility than public schools, in exchange for high accountability, knowing they can be closed if they are unsuccessful. The Chamber supports charter school legislation believing all children deserve the opportunity to go to a school that challenges them.

### Ensure Workforce Investment Accountability

Kentucky's Area Development Districts oversee the distribution of nearly \$175 million. Transparency and accountability are key to making sure these funds are used correctly and effectively. That's why the Kentucky Chamber urges more transparency and oversight relating to the expenditure of workforce development funds.

### Enact Smoke Free Workplace Law

Smoking-attributable health expenditures are estimated at more than \$1.5 billion annually in Kentucky, including over \$700 million Medicaid tax-payer dollars, while smoking-attributable economic productivity loss is estimated at more than \$2.3 billion each year. The Chamber supports enacting a comprehensive statewide smoking law that prohibits smoking in indoor workplaces and public places, including restaurants, bars and hotels.

## Infrastructure

### Create & Maintain a 21st Century Infrastructure

Kentucky must realize our global competitors are building infrastructure at an impressive rate. To take full advantage of Kentucky's favorable geographic location and improve the ability of Kentucky companies to compete, we must place greater emphasis on building and maintaining our state's infrastructure. Our focus must include energy, water, sewer, broadband and transportation systems.

### Protect Low Cost Energy

Kentucky's access to low-cost energy is one of the reasons we have grown such a productive manufacturing economy. Approximately 241,000 Kentuckians work in the manufacturing sector, and the sector's investment spurs many other indirect jobs. Kentucky must ensure low-cost energy by avoiding mandates for more costly types of energy, allowing utilities to consider all generating options such as nuclear, and encouraging investment in energy efficiency and alternative resources.

## Government

### Pension Transparency & Reform

As Kentucky's pension crisis worsens, it is important policymakers have the information they need to ensure the systems are operated efficiently. Transparency provisions may include increased reporting, standardizing processes and additional oversight.

### Tax Reform

Kentucky must make commonsense reforms to our tax code to make the Commonwealth more competitive in order to attract and retain businesses. Kentucky's code must be fair and transparent with a focus on generating revenue through growth of the economy.

### Repeal Prevailing Wage

The prevailing wage stifles investment in infrastructure by driving up the cost of important publicly funded projects. Repealing the prevailing wage mandate is the goal, but other changes such as exempting certain projects and ensuring the wage mandate is based on actual local wages would lessen the cost of the law thereby allowing more projects to be completed.

### Reform Criminal Justice Systems

Kentucky made important progress with the enactment of corrections reform legislation in 2011 and juvenile justice code reforms in 2014 to protect public safety while establishing a system to control spiraling corrections costs. The Chamber will continue its work moving forward as part of the newly formed Kentucky Smart on Crime, which focuses on reducing recidivism, making communities safer, increasing our workforce and saving taxpayer dollars.

## Jobs

### Enact Right to Work

We know Kentucky is eliminated by site selection committees for new companies because we are not a right-to-work state. Becoming a right-to-work state by prohibiting the joining of a union as a condition of employment will eliminate a reason Kentucky is missing out on new economic development opportunities.

### Improve Workers' Compensation System

The Chamber supports legislation and policies that ensure a balanced and equitable system of handling claims for workers who are injured while working, require objective medical findings, protect the exclusive remedy doctrine and minimize litigation. Moreover, the Chamber supports legislation and regulatory efforts to control rising medical and prescription drug costs and eradicate prescription drug abuse related to workers' compensation claims.

### Enact Legal Liability Reform

The high price of liability insurance and the lack of reasonable tort limitations in Kentucky have hindered the state's competitiveness. To curb this trend, the Chamber supports allowing voters to consider a constitutional amendment on tort reform.



## Chamber board meets; discusses legislative priorities

**IN LATE OCTOBER**, the Kentucky Chamber board of directors met for its regular quarterly meeting. At the event, Stoll Keenon Ogden's Chairman Emeritus Bill Lear (**photo 2**) assumed chairmanship from 2016 chairman Kevin Canafax of Fidelity Investments.

Board members also heard a report from Rep. Jeff Hoover, who just days after the board meeting was named Kentucky Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Pictured in **photo 1** is (right to left) Joe Craft, Alliance Resources, Kevin Smith, Beam Suntory, Harold Butler, Stites and Harbison, Dr. Jay Box, KCTCS, and John Gohmann, PNC Bank.

In addition, the chairs of each of the Chamber's 2016 policy councils discussed the legislative priorities for each council:

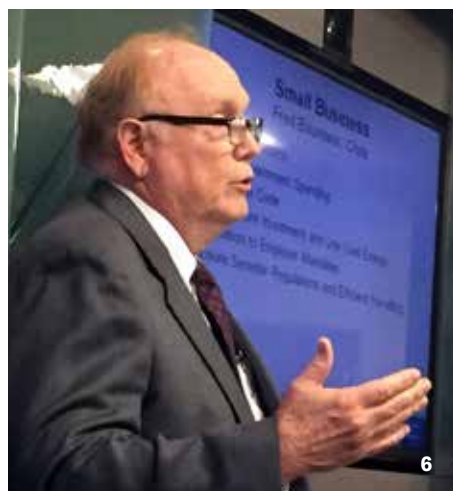
**Photo 3:** Brent Cooper, C-Forward, 2016 chair of the Education and Workforce Council.

**Photo 4:** Tierra Wayne, TKT and Associates, 2016 chair of the Kentucky Competitiveness Council.

**Photo 5:** John Muller, Carespring, chair of the Health and Wellness Council.

**Photo 6:** Fred Baumann, Baumann Paper Company, chair of the Small Business Council.

**Photo 7:** Jack Bender, Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP, 2016 chair of the Energy and Environment Council.



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# of Commerce Leadership























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William Jones Louisville	Bryan Fite Calvert City

Photos by Tim Webb Photography



## Chamber, Awesome, Inc. host Entrepreneur Hall of Fame induction event

**THE KENTUCKY ENTREPRENEUR** Hall of Fame honored four of the commonwealth's most accomplished entrepreneurs at a ceremony in partnership with the Kentucky Chamber.

2016 Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame inductees included:

- Colonel Sanders | Kentucky Fried Chicken
- Kent Oyler | High Speed Access Corp, OPM Services, Inc.
- Robert Trussell, Jr. | Tempur Sealy International, Inc.
- Carey Smith | Big Ass Solutions

The Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame celebrates the stories of Kentucky's most successful entrepreneurs, with a mission to raise awareness around the impact entrepreneurship has made in the Commonwealth, and to encourage others to pursue similar ambitious endeavors.

New this year, the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce partnered with Awesome Inc. and Sustainable Business Ventures on the Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame (KEHOF).

Kentucky Chamber President and CEO Dave Adkisson expressed the Chamber's excitement to be involved in the annual event which he said encourages and celebrates entrepreneurship in the state.

Also at the event, Lt. Governor Jenean Hampton announced Gov. Matt Bevin's proclamation designating November 16th "Entrepreneur Day" in the Commonwealth.



**Photo 1:** Several past inductees of the Kentucky Entrepreneur Hall of Fame include Billy Harper, John Williams and Jim Booth, former chairmen of the Kentucky Chamber's Board of Directors.

**Photo 2:** Former Gov. John Y. Brown made the acceptance speech for Col. Harlan Sanders who was posthumously inducted for creating Kentucky Fried Chicken, now an international brand.

**Photo 3:** Kent Oyler, now president of Greater Louisville, Inc., was inducted for founding several companies, including OPM services and High Speed Access Corp.

**Photo 4:** Robert Trussell, Jr., was inducted for his innovations with Tempur Sealy International.

**Photo 5:** Carey Smith, founder of Big Ass Solutions, a Kentucky Chamber Key Investor, was inducted at the Nov. 16 ceremony.



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\* The Economic and Health Impacts of Obesity, Institute on the Costs and Health Effects of Obesity, National Business Group on Health, February 2009. Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of Anthem Health Plans of Kentucky, Inc. Independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield names and symbols are registered marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

## PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS



Kentucky Chamber Board Members Warren Rogers, W. Rogers Company, and Nick Rowe, Kentucky American Water, spoke at the P3 conference about how the new law will impact Kentucky's private sector.

## P3 conference illustrates process, possibilities of law

A CONFERENCE hosted by the Kentucky Chamber focusing on the state's new public-private partnership (P3) law brought industry leaders from around the country together to hear about the opportunities P3 brings to the Commonwealth and how investors and the public sector can move forward with the process.

The Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with The National Council for Public-Private Partnerships (NCP3P), held The Kentucky P3: Public-Private Partnerships Conference in Lexington October 27-28.

Attendees heard from the sponsors of the public-private partnership legislation which passed in the 2016 session of the General Assembly, Rep. Leslie Combs (D-Pikeville) and Sen. Max Wise (R-Campbellville), who joined Vice President of Public Affairs Ashli Watts to explain what the new law entails.

Rep. Combs, the legislation's champion for many years, discussed the process of getting the bill passed and pointed to the national attention Kentucky has received for its P3 law because of the level of transparency it contains.

Both legislators stressed the important improvements P3 projects can bring to the state through new money and innovative ideas from the business community.

"P3 lets everyone benefit from having business do what business does best," Wise told the crowd.



Senator Max Wise and Rep. Leslie Combs, who sponsored the P3 legislation during the 2016 Kentucky General Assembly, explained the details of the law, stressing the impact the law will have on the Commonwealth.

Other sessions at the conference included detailed discussions of how the P3 law will work in Kentucky, first steps in the process, the framework for public-private partnerships and much more.

At the conference, it was announced that the Kentucky Chamber will be forming a

P3 workgroup to take a deeper dive into the issue and serve as a platform to help facilitate information and participation in these types of projects.

To learn more about the issue and how to get involved in the workgroup, contact the Kentucky Chamber. All Chamber members are welcome to participate.



## AN ACRONYM WORTH KNOWING:

# Federal education law, ESSA, offers opportunity for improvement

THERE IS ONE certainty about the world of education. It is extremely fond of acronyms – shorthand labels for almost everything that has anything to do with what happens in and around the nation's classrooms.

It can be easy to get bogged down by the jargon, sometimes to the point of frustration. But one recent addition to the lexicon is worth noting – and remembering. It is ESSA, short for the Every Student Succeeds Act, the main federal K-12 education law that aims to equalize opportunity for all students.

Kentucky is in the midst of creating a plan on how the state will comply with the new law, which shifts much of the responsibility for identifying measures of success for students and teachers back to states and local school districts.

This is a prime opportunity to build on Kentucky's



progress that has resulted in an upward climb on academic rankings from the nation's cellar to the middle tier of states.

Kentucky's strong academic standards provide a solid foundation on which to continue building a system that closes the achievement gaps that persist between groups of

students. Doing that is critical to providing each and every student with a high-quality education that will provide the bridges to opportunity that all need and deserve.

ESSA, implemented the right way in Kentucky, can help ensure that these bridges are wide enough, accessible enough and strong enough to enable students to gain the skills and knowledge they need to succeed beyond high school.

The Kentucky Chamber will continue to be engaged with state education and policy leaders on the creation of the state's plan and encourages community and business leaders to follow the developments and make your voices heard about the importance of educational excellence for all Kentuckians. Read more online at: [http://education.ky.gov/comm/Pages/Every-Student-Succeeds-Act-\(ESSA\).aspx](http://education.ky.gov/comm/Pages/Every-Student-Succeeds-Act-(ESSA).aspx).

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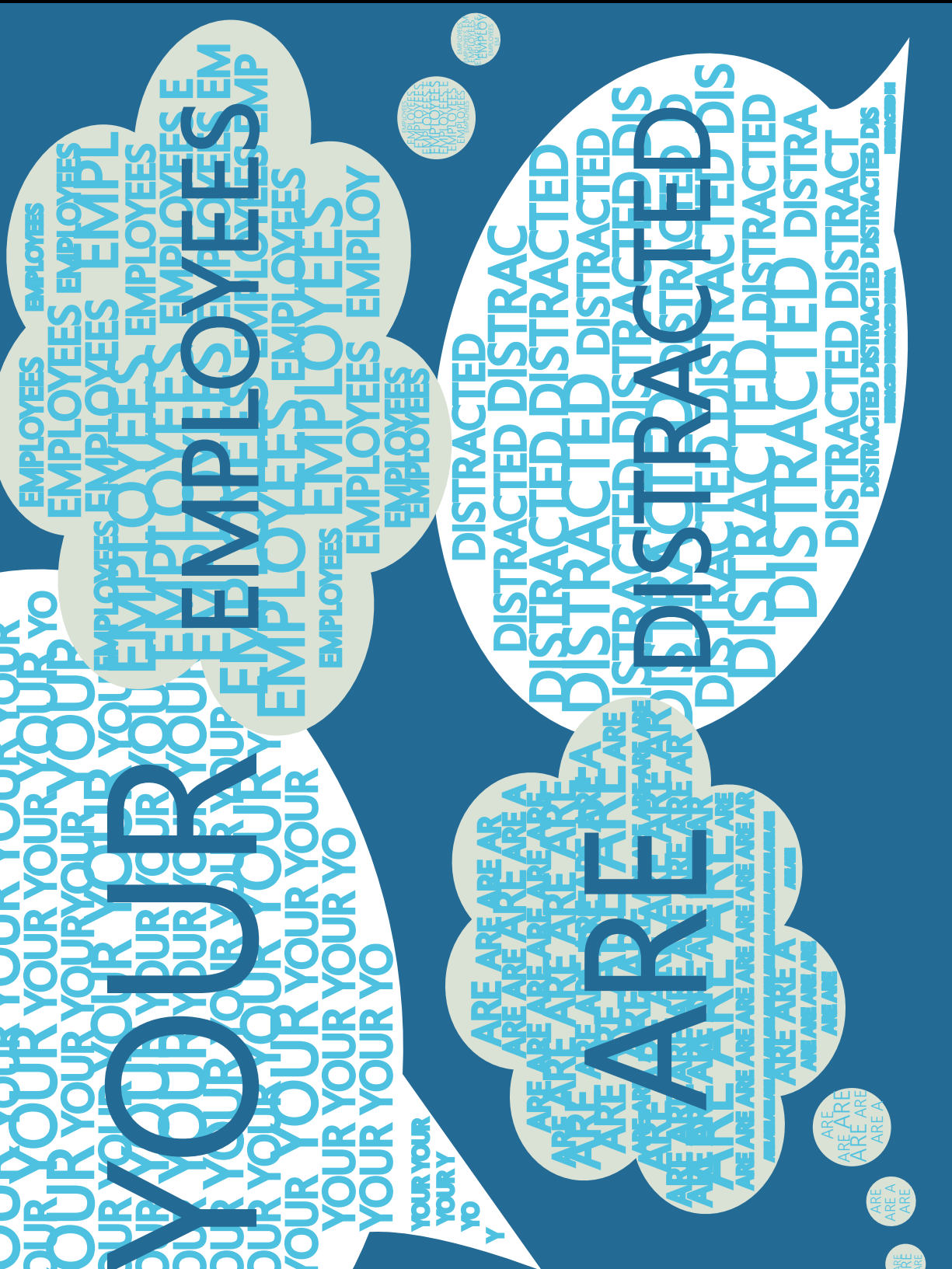
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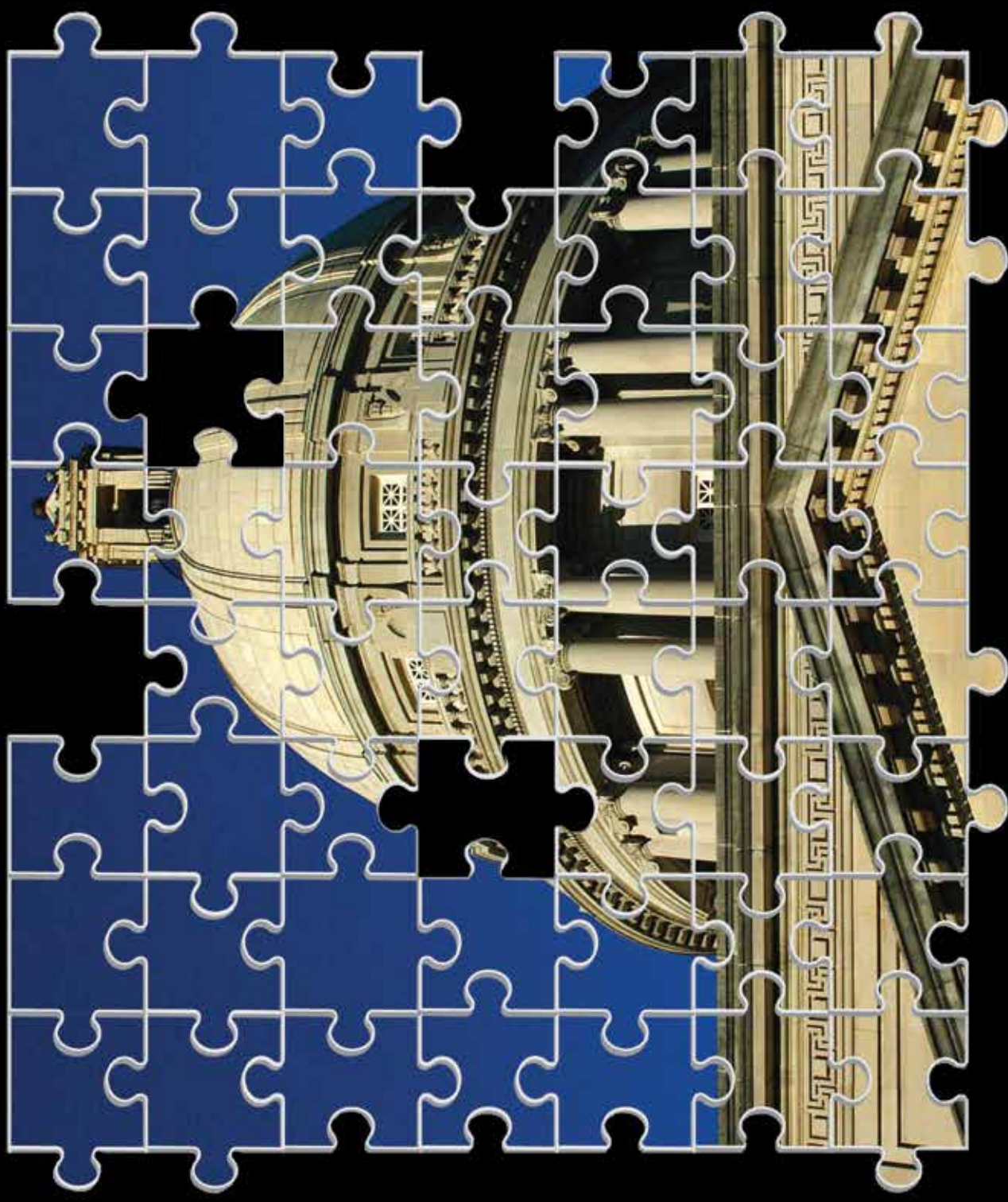


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DECEMBER 2016

# NEWS

Kentucky Chamber



**Election brings new opportunities to piece together progress**