

# IMPACT

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group Kentucky Resources Council called it a “calculated effort to silence independent advocacy for residential customers.” The group often represents a coalition of nonprofits advocating for low-income ratepayers and for renewable energy and energy efficiency measures in commission cases.

When asked about the pushback, the bill’s sponsor, Sen. Brandon Smith, called it a “great question” and that he would address the issue when his bill is heard by the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee, which he chairs. That was scheduled for Wednesday.

Smith, R-Hazard, told reporters Tuesday afternoon his Senate Bill 8 was partly a response to the outcry of constituents over electricity bills in his Eastern Kentucky district.

“I do want it to be an effective bill, and I do want to send a signal to people at home that we 100% understand what’s happening to us and that it’s not an easy fix,” Smith said. “I will do everything within my power to try to fix this so we can get the smartest Public Service Commission we can.”

## A BARRIER TO INTERVENE

The commission weighs requests from utilities in quasi-judicial cases. Interested parties, ranging from industry to environmental groups to Republican Kentucky Attorney General Russell Coleman, can be granted permission by the regulator to provide testimony and evidence on a particular utility’s request.

The PSC has broad responsibilities, regulating the rates and services of more than 1,100 utilities that range from large investor-owned electric utilities like Louisville Gas and Electric and Kentucky Utilities to districts that provide drinking water to rural communities. The regulator also fields complaints from Kentuckians about service and rates and hears requests from utilities to retire or build new power generation.

SB 8 would require that an intervenor in a commission case have a “special and unique interest in the specific rates or service of the utility” and not just a “generalized assertion of an interest of specialized knowledge” in a case. The attorney general, through its Office of Rate Intervention, would also be designated in state law as “sole advocate for residential consumers.”

The Kentucky Resources Council, the environmental legal group that often intervenes on behalf of nonprofits, says consumers need representation beyond the AG, who has coordinated with “industrial ratepayers” whose interests “often diverge from, if not directly oppose, the interests of residential customers.” The attorney general has jointly filed briefs with the industry group Kentucky Industrial Utility Customers in PSC cases.

“That dynamic leaves everyday Kentuckians without a truly independent champion at the table,” the group said. “At a time when utility rates are rising, residential customers deserve dedicated, conflict-free representation in proceedings that directly determine their bills and financial stability.”

An email requesting comment on SB 8 sent to a spokesperson for the attorney general’s office was not returned Tuesday.

Gary in an email to the Lantern pointed to a legal brief filed by the attorney general’s office in 2019 that stated the attorney general had a duty to represent all customers, not just specifically residential ratepayers.

## EXPANDING THE COMMISSION

Kentucky Senate President Robert Stivers,

R-Manchester, had filed a similar bill last year to expand the commission’s membership and give appointment power to the state auditor. The Senate leader ultimately decided to table the bill and not advance it. Both Stivers’ and Smith’s bills would add new experience requirements for commissioners.

SB 8 would add two additional commissioners to the PSC, appointed by Republican Kentucky Auditor Allison Ball and confirmed by the GOP-controlled Kentucky Senate. The commission currently has three commissioners total, all appointed by Democratic Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear, also confirmed by the Senate.

The bill would also administratively attach the commission to the auditor’s office and make the commissioners employees of the office, detaching the regulator from the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet within the Beshear administration. The legislation also gives the regulator more independence in procurements and purchases.

Currently, commission members are prohibited from being a part of a political action committee, conducting business inconsistent with their

duties, receiving things of value from utilities and holding stocks and bonds of a utility. No more than two commission members can have the same occupation, and state law directs the governor to consider expertise in utility regulation and the interests of consumers and utility investors when making appointments.

Under SB 8, commissioners would also have to have specific experience to serve: At least one commissioner would have to be an active, licensed attorney for at least seven years; other commissioners would have to have at least five years of education or training in a number of topics including economics, engineering, utility regulation, operation and management.

If the three current commissioners, all appointed by Beshear, don’t meet the experience requirements in SB 8, their terms would be terminated. SB 8 has an emergency clause, meaning it would go into effect immediately upon becoming law. The bill does not state who or what determines whether current commissioners meet the designated experience requirements.

Scottie Ellis, a Beshear spokesperson, in a statement said SB 8 is a “partisan

move to remove both appointments and authority from a Democratic governor and send them to Republican office-holders.”

“The bill’s provisions likely violate the Kentucky Constitution and will result in less representation and transparency for Kentucky families that are worried about their power bills,” Ellis said.

Chandler, the former chair of the commission, said given that the commission deals with hundreds of cases each year, adding one or two members to the board “doesn’t do it.”

He said the commission, along with the attorney general’s office that intervenes before the PSC, needs more funding and resources to do their work to regulate utilities effectively. When he was commission chair, he testified to the legislature about the significant need for more staffing at the commission.

“If you have five commissioners, and one of them is all of a sudden an engineer, knows how to ask engineering questions, that’s great — but they can only do so much,” Chandler said. “They need to be talking to staff and asking where and how to probe in any particular case with their engineering expertise.”

# RANKS

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Micropolitans by number of projects — the second-most nationally — including Franklin, Glasgow, Richmond-Berea,

Campbellsville, Frankfort, Corbin, Danville, Henderson, Madisonville, Mayfield, Mount Sterling, Somerset and the Union City, Tennessee area, which includes Fulton County, Kentucky. Glasgow tied for ninth, marking its highest ranking in the community’s history,

according to the release.

Since 1988, Atlanta-based Site Selection has awarded the Governor’s Cup annually to the state with the most new and expanded corporate facilities tracked by the Conway Projects Database. The rankings are widely followed by corporate site

selection analysts and executives.

The 2025 recognition builds on what the release described as the best six-year period for economic growth in state history.

Since taking office, Beshear has announced more than 1,300 private-sector new-

location and expansion projects totaling over \$45 billion in announced investments and more than 68,000 jobs. The administration also secured the largest General Fund budget surplus and Rainy Day Fund in state history and credit rating upgrades from Fitch Ratings,

S&P Global Ratings and Moody’s Investors Service.

Beshear also announced a new initiative called New Kentucky Home aimed at increasing economic investment, attracting talent and boosting tourism across the state, according to the release.

# WINNER

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entry for the annual event.

Crenshaw was unable to be on hand for the court meeting, which included an awards presentation for the young winners of the Trash Sculpture Competition.

For her sculpture, the young girl fashioned a dress atop a mannequin.

“One of my favorite meetings every year is the trash sculpture contest winners,” noted Magistrate Mike Wright, who presided over Monday’s meeting in the absence of Trigg County Judge-Executive Stan Humphries. “It’s amazing to see the creativity of our young students.”

The youngsters debut their recycled trash creations each year for magistrates during one of

the fiscal court’s meetings.

Crawford announced the winners for the 2025 contest as follows: Ingram, first in the classroom and first in the county in the contest’s lower elementary division; Knight, first in classroom and first in the county for the upper elementary division; Cameron Crawford, first in the classroom and county in the middle school division; and Crenshaw, first in classroom and county in the high school division.

She noted that the students will now move on to area competition involving youth from Caldwell, Crittenden, Livingston and Lyon counties, in addition to the students in Trigg County.

The area competition will be in Livingston County, the agent said.

Monday’s fiscal court meeting also saw the magistrates approve an

interfund transfer of \$150,000 that was presented by Trigg County Treasurer Lucy Kyler.

Kyler said the funds were being moved from the county’s government projects into the road fund to help with road needs.

“This is a part of a solution to help with the road fund at this time since we’re not getting as much money in County Road Aid as we had anticipated,” she explained.

Kyler said the county is just not getting as much County Road Aid and is using some of its government projects money, leftover funds from the American Rescue Plan Act, that is being put in the road fund.

“We’re putting that into the road fund right now since we’re not getting as much money from the County Road Aid, state money that we expected to get,” she said.

Kyler said she doesn’t know if the transferred funds will need to be reimbursed or if the county will be allowed to make that adjustment to its budget.

Wright noted that Trigg County has seen some big expenses in the road fund, and he said more expenses will be coming.

“This is being creative (to) try to use our money the best we can,” he said.

Magistrates further approved a request from Barry Alexander of the Soil Conservation District to increase the committee’s budget by 10%, an amount that Alexander said reflects a \$6,600 increase from \$66,000 to \$72,600.

Alexander said the cost of property insurance, educational materials, maintenance and other supplies has increased for soil conservation.

“It looks like it’s going to strain the budget a little

more this year so we graciously request a 10% increase,” he told the magistrates earlier this week.

In other business:

\*Magistrate Alana Baker Dunn shared updates on the Kentucky Wellness Center that is planning to establish a facility in the local community, noting among other things that the facility has stringent requirements and won’t accept patients that are currently in crisis, have a prior felony or any sexual charges against them. Dunn said the facility has begun admissions and is accepting applicants.

\*The court approved a list of expenditures that totaled \$167,435.76.

\*Magistrates approved the appointment of Wright to the ham festival committee, with Wright abstaining from that vote.

\*Wright said the county’s Ag Appreciation Dinner is slated for 6 p.m. March 24 at the Trigg County Recreation Complex, while the third anniversary of the 9 Eagles Memorial will take place at 10 a.m. on March 29 at the memorial site near the Vinson Cemetery in Cadiz.

# CITY

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The city wants to clean up dilapidated properties, according to Lingenfelter.

“It’s going to have to be a little bit more involved now,” he said of the board. “We’re going to have to change the nature of the beast a little bit.”

The city a few months ago took a renewed look at its nuisance ordinance, and Lingenfelter said he now needs to establish some parameters moving forward on how code enforcement will address those nuisance issues in the community.

In other business:  
\*The council members approved an \$8,000 bid from Watson for the demolition of a home on property at 67 Madison Street recently purchased by the city and the demolition of the Renaissance Stage across

from the Cadiz City Hall.

\*Officials had a first reading for a measure that will exempt vendors for the Trigg County Country Ham Festival from the restaurant tax. There was no vote, with a second reading to come later.

\*New local business 4Cs Custom Creation requested and was granted \$2,500 in economic incentives by the city council for renovations that owner Courtney Campbell has completed at her Main Street site, updating and replacing signs and refurbishing the store.

\*Cadiz Police Chief Tyler Thomas said the Cadiz Police Department investigated 11 cases in February, arrested eight people and responded to 490 calls for service.

\*Public Works Director Craig Oakley said the department’s water distribution crew is halfway finished with laying a 6-inch water main at the new

development on the Old Hopkinsville Road and

hopes to finish that project by next week.

**THE EVENT OF THE YEAR!**  
**THE ANNUAL GIGANTIC JACKSON PURCHASE FARM MACHINERY AUCTION**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH, AT 9:00 A.M.**  
**1004 W Housman - THE FAIRGROUNDS - MAYFIELD, KY**  
**1000'S OF ITEMS WILL BE IN THIS AUCTION**  
**WE NEVER KNOW WHAT WILL BE IN THIS AUCTION IF YOU NEED IT -- IT WILL PROBABLY BE HERE**  
**TRACTORS - All Sizes And Brands**  
**TRAILERS - TRUCKS**  
**IMPLEMENTS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION!!**  
**Hay - Planting - Tillage Equipment**  
**Hobby One Row Items Up To The Big Farmers!**  
**CONSIGN TO THE AUCTION THAT BRINGS THOUSANDS... TO MAYFIELD, KY**  
**DELIVER YOUR EQUIPMENT ON Wednesday, Thursday Or Friday**  
**MARCH 11th - 12th - 13th**  
**STAFF & LOADERS WILL BE AVAILABLE 8:00 A.M TO 6:00 P.M. EACH DAY... UNTIL THE LOT IS FULL...**  
**Rich In History For More Than 50 Years!**  
Only Farm Related Items Will Be Accepted!! Please No Worn Tires, Battered Tanks, Hand Tools. We Only Accept Items That In Our Discretion Are Saleable.  
**JAMES R. CASH AUCTION**  
**JAY CASH - THE AUCTIONEER**  
**FANCY FARM, KY - MURFREESBORO, TN**  
**270-623-8466**

**LEGAL NOTICE**  
**The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet**  
In accordance with KRS 176.051, Kentucky’s noxious weed law, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet will control noxious weeds on state-owned right of way at the request of the adjoining property owner. The noxious weeds named in this law are Johnson grass (Sorghum halepense), Canada thistle (Cirsium arvense), Cutleaf Teasel (Dipsacus laciniatus) Nodding thistle (Carduus nutans), Common teasel (Dipsacus fullonum), Poison hemlock (Conium maculatum), Marehail (Conyza canadensis), Amur Honeysuckle (Lonicera maackii), Multiflora Rose (Rose multiflora) Japanese knotweed, (Polygonum cuspidatum), Spotted Knapweed (Centaurea stoebe) and Kudzu (Pueraria montana).  
Persons who own property adjacent to state right of way and who are involved in eradication efforts on their property can submit a written application to the highway district office in their area. Contact information can be found at [transportation.ky.gov/DistrictPages](http://transportation.ky.gov/DistrictPages)

**CORRESPONDENTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS NEEDED**  
The Cadiz Record is seeking correspondents and photographers to help cover Trigg County. We are looking for people interested in the community and seeing it grow and prosper. Specific areas of coverage include city hall, the business community, tourism and Trigg County schools and sports. Pay is on a per article or photograph basis and varies depending on the complexity of the work. For more information, email Publisher Mike Alexieff at [malexieff@paxtonmedia.com](mailto:malexieff@paxtonmedia.com)  
