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Chamber Supports Unified Government

Paducah, KY – The Paducah Area Chamber of Commerce announced today the results of a four-year long study of local government reorganization in Paducah-McCracken County. The Chamber Board recently supported the task force’s report and resolution endorsing the consolidation of local governments into one unified structure.

“The most compelling reason for a unified government is our children and having good jobs for them in the future,” said Mike Karnes, 2008 Chairman of the Board. “We miss out on a number of economic development projects due to our population size. Most search consultants do not look at communities with less than 50,000 people. With a unified government, our population would be over 65,000.”

The Chamber started the task force in 2004 to research the pros and cons of consolidating government services. The 12 member task force, under the leadership of Tom Garrett, established a mission statement and action plan; had presentations from every major government agency/department; did fundraising for a professional market research survey; and, conducted that survey to over 400 registered voters in McCracken County.

The Government Reorganization Report is over 50 pages long and documents the results of the various meetings and research conducted over the four-year long process. “This project took longer than we thought it was going to take,” said Tom Garrett. He continued, “It was important to the community that we do a thorough job.”

The Chamber resolution calls for the Paducah City Commission, the Lone Oak City Commission and the McCracken County Fiscal Court to adopt resolutions appointing a commission to study the consolidation of local governments under provisions of KRS Chapter 67.825—67.875 or under the provisions of KRS Chapter 67.900—67.940.

After the commission completes its work (two year long time limit), the unified structure of government would be presented to the voters of McCracken County. According to the market research, most voters in McCracken County would support a unified government if it did not increase their taxes. Several unified governments still have their volunteer fire departments and sheriff’s offices in place.

Other communities that have a unified government are: Louisville, KY; Lexington, KY; and, Nashville, TN. Communities also studying the issue are: Owensboro, KY; Evansville, IN; and, Bowling Green, KY.

For more information, contact the Paducah Chamber at (270) 443-1746 or info@paducahchamber.org