

TOBACCO SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT FUND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes

July 10, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The third meeting of the Tobacco Settlement Agreement Fund Oversight Committee was held on July 10, 2025, at 11:00 AM in Room 129 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Jason Howell, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Jason Howell, Co-Chair; Senators Keturah Herron, Aaron Reed, Craig Richardson, and Robin L. Webb; and Representatives Myron Dossett, Daniel Fister, Kim King, Shawn McPherson, and Rachel Roarx.

Guests: Brandon Reed, Executive Director, Kentucky Office of Agricultural Policy (KOAP); and Bill McCloskey, Deputy Executive Director, KOAP.

LRC Staff: Stefan Kasacavage, Kayla Carroway, and Rachel Hartley.

Approval of minutes for the meeting of June 12, 2025

A motion to approve the June meeting minutes was made by Representative Fister and seconded by Representative McPherson. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

Report on the projects considered for funding by the Agricultural Development Board

Brandon Reed, Executive Director, KOAP, highlighted the recent celebration at the Kentucky Historical Society of 25 years since the passage of House Bill 611, which established the formula for allocating Kentucky's tobacco settlement funds and created what became the KOAP. The celebration included a special panel featuring past executive directors of KOAP who shared their experiences and insights.

In June 2025, the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board (KADB) approved \$3.3 million in funds, and the Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation approved \$5 million in funds.

Bill McCloskey, Deputy Executive Director, KOAP, highlighted the following projects approved by KADB:

- FoodChain, Inc. was approved for \$45,643 in county funds matched by state funds to open a neighborhood green grocery.
- Miller Rockbridge Farms, LLC was approved for \$52,402 in multi-county funds to build an educational barn.
- Thompson Family Farm, LLC was approved for \$13,840 in Mercer County funds to set up a sheep buying station.

Mr. Reed stated KOAP received its annual audit report from the Kentucky Auditor of Public Accounts and will share it with the committee.

In response to Representative King, Mr. Reed highlighted the importance of the comprehensive plans submitted by county agricultural development councils, which help ensure that funding aligns with local priorities.

In response to Senator Webb, Mr. McCloskey stated the comprehensive plans submitted by county councils serve as roadmaps for investments, with county agricultural development councils relying on extension offices for support. KOAP attends county council meetings to facilitate the planning process and ensure that new members are educated about the program's history and opportunities.

Mr. Reed stated KOAP's report of recommendations to improve the agricultural development program fund from a third-party consultant will be ready to disseminate next month.

Senator Webb stated she would like the committee to be informed about KOAP's report, and requested a summary of changes and recommendations. Senator Webb also emphasized the importance of focusing on eastern Kentucky and expressed concern that funding applications and board approvals in the region were lacking.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.