

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the 2026 Interim

June 18, 2026

Call to Order and Roll Call

The first meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Economic Development and Workforce Investment was held on June 18, 2026 at 9:00 AM ET/8:00 AM CT in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Shelley Funke Frommeyer, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Shelley Funke Frommeyer, Co-Chair; Senators Gary Boswell, Gary Clemons, Jason Howell, Scott Madon, and Mike Wilson; and Representatives Adam Bowling, Josh Bray, Josh Calloway, Daniel Elliott, Al Gentry, Thomas Huff, Kim King, Nima Kulkarni, Matthew Lehman, Matt Lockett, J.T Payne, Scott Sharp, Ashley Tackett Laferty, and Timmy Truett.

Guests: Gene F. Price, Rear Admiral, Global Security; Will Metcalf, Associate Vice President of Research and Innovation, University of Louisville (UofL); Rich Horn, President, WireCrafters; and Nick Peak, Associate Vice President for Government Affairs, UofL.

LRC Staff: Janine Coy, Christian Deeter, Austin Johnson, and Samantha Gerhart.

Homeland Security

Representative Sharp and Gene F. Price, Rear Admiral, Global Security, expressed their concerns for homeland security within the Commonwealth. Representative Sharp discussed 2026 RS HJR 110 and HB 283 and the need to perform an economic stress test to determine how international conflicts could affect Kentucky's economy.

In response to Chair Funke Frommeyer, Representative Sharp stated HJR 110 and HB 283 passed the House but did not pass the Senate during the 2026 regular session.

In response to Representative Grossl, Representative Sharp and Rear Admiral Price explained that HJR 110 did not specifically address AI, but the resolution did provide the coordination needed to address these problems in the future.

In response to Senator Boswell, Representative Sharp explained that the resolution directed the Office of Homeland Security to conduct an economic stress test and did not request any additional funding.

In response to Chair Funke Frommeyer, Representative Sharp stated minor changes may be added to HJR 110 to include the Latin America region, and be refiled during the next session.

Kentucky Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Will Metcalf, Associate Vice President of Research and Innovation, UofL; Rich Horn, President, WireCrafters; and Nick Peak, Associate Vice President of Government Affairs, UofL, provided an update about the Kentucky Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP). Mr. Horn explained how the MEP has been a key asset for growth of WireCrafters by helping increase welding efficiency by 50% and reducing their turnover rate by 60%.

In response to Chair Funke Frommeyer, Mr. Metcalf stated there are no membership fees for individual companies and MEP works primarily with Kentucky-owned businesses.

In response to Senator Boswell, Mr. Metcalf explained how many of the services they provide would not otherwise be available to small and medium-sized manufacturers throughout the state.

In response to Representative Lehman, Mr. Metcalf explained how they received a total amount of \$1.3 million. While MEP provides services to larger manufacturers, these companies are not their primary target.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.