

## **Policy on Affiliated Organizations Kentucky Conservation Committee**

The Kentucky Conservation Committee is a coalition of environmental organizations and individuals across Kentucky, working in concert to influence public environmental policy and legislation. The conceptual foundation of the KCC when it was founded in 1975 was to bring environmental groups together to form a collective voice on the environment to the Kentucky General Assembly and the Executive Branch. This document describes how KCC will strengthen the coalition by affiliating with other Kentucky environmental organizations.

### **Affiliate Membership**

The goal of KCC is to provide a voice for as wide a coalition of environmentally concerned groups and individuals as possible. Membership as an affiliate organization is available to all non-profit, non-governmental environmental organizations located within or having members in the Commonwealth. There are two categories of affiliates:

- Funding Affiliates
- Supporting Affiliates

Funding Affiliates contribute financial resources to cover KCC's operating costs of communications and employing a legislative agent, and they demonstrate their support of KCC in their organizational activities. There is no set fee. Funding Affiliates are asked to contribute amounts reflecting their budget and size, recognizing that many public environmental organizations have tight budgets.\*

Funding Affiliates will receive the following benefits from affiliating with KCC:

1. Copies of KCC's Legislative Alert mailed to all of the organization's officers
2. May nominate members to the KCC Board
3. Access to the KCC legislative agent to obtain information on specific bills
4. Waived fees to the KCC Annual meeting up to three individuals (1 person for donations less than \$200, 2 for donations from \$200 to \$500, and 3 for donations over \$500); Funding Affiliates will be listed as co-sponsors of the event
5. If the Funding Affiliate has a legislative agent, attendance at weekly meetings organized by the KCC legislative agent to coordinate lobbying efforts
6. Information on legislative activities that the organization may can relay to its membership
7. Link from the KCC website to the organization
8. E-mail contact via KCC's "Calls for Legislative Action" to support/oppose key state environmental legislation

Supporting Affiliates also demonstrate their support of KCC in their organizational activities but do not contribute financially to KCC. Supporting Affiliates will receive the following benefits from affiliating with KCC:

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\* KCC is a 501(c)(4) organization that lobbies legislators. While contributions from 501(c)(3) organizations to KCC are not prohibited, they should review IRS policy to identify any limitations they should observe.

1. A copy of KCC's Legislative Alert to a designated officer.
2. If the Supporting Affiliate has a legislative agent, the agent's attendance at weekly meetings organized by KCC's agent to coordinate lobbying efforts
3. Information on legislative activities that the organization may relay to their membership
4. Link from the KCC website to the organization
5. E-mail alerts via KCC's "Calls for Legislative Action" about key state environmental legislation

Both categories of Affiliates will be asked by KCC to:

1. Send out information at least once per year in a regular mailing to their membership about how individuals may join KCC, or provide mailing lists of their members at the request of KCC to allow KCC to contact their members about joining KCC as an individual member
2. If the affiliate has a website, provide a link on their website to the KCC website.
3. Publish articles provided by KCC in their newsletter at least annually. The articles may be about KCC, KCC membership, or its legislative priorities.
4. Provide input to KCC at its Annual Meeting about legislative priorities.

### **Improving Communication with Affiliates**

The KCC will convene weekly meetings during sessions of the General Assembly with the legislative agents of affiliated organizations to discuss upcoming legislative action for the week, assist in coordinating contacts with legislators to inform them of the positions of the environmental community, and to identify informational needs to establish positions and testimony on specific bills. The purpose of these meetings is information exchange. Affiliates may from time to time have different positions and perspectives on any bill; legislative agents would be expected to represent the position of their organization.

Members of KCC's board will be available at the request of affiliates to speak at their organization's meetings. The purposes would be to exchange information, articulate positions on legislation impacting the environment, and to acquaint their members with the purpose and mission of KCC. Requests for speakers will be handled on a case-by-case basis and KCC may not be able to provide speakers to all events depending on board member availability.

At the end of each Legislative Session, the KCC produces a report on the status of all environment-related legislation. The report will be contained within a "Legislative Alert" that will be sent to all affiliates.