



STRONGER ECONOMIES.
STRONGER COMMUNITIES.
STRONGER KENTUCKY.

Overview

You Decide, Kentucky! (YDK!) is a coalition of Kentuckians seeking to strengthen our Commonwealth's local communities to improve the quality of everyday life for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

We are focused on amending our state's constitution, enabling the state legislature to give cities and counties across the Commonwealth more revenue tools. Through a multi-year campaign, we aim to unlock the potential to fund more community-centered, local initiatives.

Our mission is to empower citizens and local governments to decide what revenue streams will improve the quality of life in their communities. We believe that by giving people a say in how their tax dollars are used, we can encourage growth, flexibility, and innovation, leading to empowered and transformed communities statewide.

Defining the Need

Kentucky, and her local communities, too often perform poorly in many measurements of economic activity, health, education, and quality of place. Our communities are stifled by state constitutional restrictions that severely limit local decision-making, constraining our communities' ability to invest in themselves and remain competitive for economic growth, talent attraction and retention, as well as quality of life.

Kentucky's current constitution limits local governments to only taxing workers, property, and some business, which results in a burdensome and unbalanced tax codes.

Instead of relying on the antiquated and onerous options in the constitution, YDK! believes in a flexible framework that gives local governments a greater degree of input over revenue generating options to help them grow, compete, and thrive. Individually tailored local tax codes balance communities' economic development priorities with their citizens' quality of life needs and create more diversified funding streams.

How We'll Get There

A revision to Section 181 of the Constitution of Kentucky would give the state legislature new authority to restructure the local tax code and provide all cities and counties with expanded and less burdensome options to generate revenue.

The legislature can propose a constitutional amendment during any legislative session, and the people of Kentucky can vote on the amendment during a November general election that falls on an even-numbered year. We are focused on passage during the 2024 legislative session, placing the measure on the November 2024 ballot.

Once the ballot initiative passes, the state legislature can then delegate new local revenue options to our cities and counties.

Forward Together

YDK! and our partners are on the front lines of Kentucky's history, working to educate and build a strong base of support to amend our outdated constitution so Kentucky's communities can take more ownership in their futures. Across the state, we have a strong consensus representing all backgrounds, rural and urban areas, progressive and conservative ideas, and private citizens and public officials.

We are organizing and educating Kentuckians on the need to modernize our constitution so we can better compete with other states and localities, nearly all of whom give their local communities the ability to have flexible revenue options and chart their own future. By familiarizing and equipping voters with information, the YDK! coalition will demonstrate how the passage of this amendment will strengthen our communities statewide.

During the 2022 legislative session, the Kentucky House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to amend Section 181 of the state constitution, and the momentum and commitment to the issue has only grown stronger since. YDK! partners are ensuring legislative strategy is in place come 2024 while our daily educational and support-building work expands. With the help of our partners, we will be ready to press 'go' the moment the measure is placed on the ballot.

Meanwhile, we are investing in assessing strategies for successful passage of a statewide referendum, including conducting sophisticated polling and message testing. This information will serve as foundational research to our work in addition to the statewide grassroots organizing that has already begun.

YDK! leadership is focused on raising funds for outreach and programming to educate Kentuckians and reach key communities. We are confident that every voter in Kentucky will be eager to vote 'yes' on this ballot issue, because they will know that we have the power to unlock our local opportunities so that we may thrive, grow, and decide our future.

With all components in-place – bipartisan support, a strong statewide coalition, and an educational organization – we are full steam ahead.

About Us

YDK! is a statewide nonprofit organization focused on engaging, educating, and galvanizing citizens and organizations on the need to amend Kentucky's constitution and promote local decision-making. YDK! is:

- A nonpartisan 501(c)3 organization, rooted in the conviction that all Kentuckians can benefit from modernizing our constitution to create more local revenue flexibility and diversification.
- Led by a growing statewide Board of Directors who are on the front lines of this effort.
- Partnership-centered, committed to collaborating with a variety of state and local organizations who believe local revenue reform can positively impact a diverse set of economic, nonprofit, educational, and civic needs.
- The only organization working every single day to build a strong base of support for this initiative and the ballot referendum leaders in Kentucky. We follow a well-set path of best practices to ensure success in November 2024.
- Interactive and multi-dimensional, engaging Kentuckians in a variety of settings to listen to and learn about their goals and foster a dialogue that helps our local and collection vision evolve.