

Heartland Parkway Foundation hosts U.S. Rep. Ed Whitfield

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By **Linda Waggener**

CAMPBELLSVILLE, KY - United States Representative Ed Whitfield, first district of Kentucky, attended the Heartland Parkway Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors meeting Thursday, February 21, 2013, in Lebanon, KY. Whitfield gave a brief update from Washington and said he was there to learn more.

The Heartland Parkway Foundation board's mission is to educate and gather support in the Commonwealth and in Washington on the importance of the construction of a four-lane highway along the Kentucky 555/55 corridor starting at the Martha Layne Collins Bluegrass Parkway north of Springfield, KY, to the Louie B. Nunn Cumberland Parkway at Columbia, Ky. The four counties in the coalition are Washington, Marion, Taylor and Adair.

The major road project will provide relief to both I-65 and I-75, serve as a connector to I-64 to the north, and will also connect with the future I-66 route along the Louie B. Nunn Cumberland Parkway, greatly facilitating economic development and tourism.

Heartland Parkway Foundation chairman John Chowning, Campbellsville University's vice president for church and external relations and executive assistant to the president, has served in a position of leadership since its inception.

Chowning said that this meeting was being held to keep hope alive and to increase awareness of the need for greater activity by all citizens in the region. Under discussion was establishment of a Political Action Committee (PAC), either in each county or by all four counties of the Heartland Parkway, acting together for strength in numbers. One long time political veteran in attendance at the meeting advised a regional PAC so that state and federal governments hear one voice speaking for one large population block as opposed to a single county at a time.

Organization of a regional legislative caucus in the Kentucky General Assembly is also under study. According to Chowning, at a recent meeting of the officers of the Heartland Parkway Foundation board, and then again at the more recent meeting of the entire Board of Directors, discussions centered on encouraging formation of a regional caucus in the state legislature so that this part of Kentucky can speak with one voice.

Both the idea for a regional PAC and the idea for development of a regional legislative caucus, are parts of a series of strategies and initiatives under consideration to help facilitate the overall forward progress of this area of Kentucky - in diverse areas of education, healthcare, transportation and infrastructure, economic development and tourism to name a few.

Whitfield said the bottom line is that there are a lot of bridges and road projects in America that many in Washington are looking at alternative mechanisms to bring money to the Heartland Parkway, instead of state appropriations. He recommended looking at bonds as possible best options. Whitfield said, "I look forward to working with all of you and looking at all possible ideas to move this forward."

Both Chowning and Ron McMahan, director of Team Taylor County, called for letters to be written from citizens, across party lines, across regional lines, to work together and write letters encouraging Legislators to put the Heartland Parkway at the top of the agenda.

Officers of the board of directors of the Heartland Parkway Foundation are John Chowning, Chairman; John Settles, Vice Chairman, Washington County J/E; Mark Harris, Secretary, Mayor of Columbia; and John Thomas, Treasurer, City Administrator, Lebanon.

Contact: Heartland Parkway board chairman John Chowning at his Campbellsville University office at (270) 789-5520 or jchowning@campbellsville.edu. - *Linda Waggener, Campbellsville University*

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Marion County group at Heartland Parkway Foundation meeting



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Marion County: United States Representative Ed Whitfield was a guest at the recent Heartland Parkway Foundation Board of Directors meeting Thursday, Feb. 21 in Lebanon. Pictured are, from left: Gary Crenshaw, Mayor of Lebanon; Whitfield; Jim Brown Lake Cumberland Area Development District; John Thomas, Lebanon City Manager and Foundation treasurer; and Brandon Booth and Mike Skaggs from Lincoln Trail Area Development District. (Photo by Linda Waggener)

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Taylor County group at Heartland Parkway Foundation meeting



2013-03-14 - Campbellsville, KY - Photo by Linda Waggener.

Taylor County: United States Representative Ed Whitfield, was a guest at the recent Heartland Parkway Foundation Board of Directors meeting Thursday, February 21, 2013 in Lebanon. Also in the meeting were, from left: John Chowning, Campbellsville Mayor Tony Young, Whitfield, John Thomas, Lebanon City Manager and Foundation treasurer; Ron McMahan, Team Taylor County Director; and Garin Hash with Murakami Manufacturing US (MMUS). - Linda Waggener

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Adair Countians in Heartland Parkway Foundation meeting



2013-03-14 - Lebanon, Marion Co., KY - Photo photo by John Chowning.

Adair County: United States Representative Ed Whitfield, *left*, was a guest at the recent Heartland Parkway Foundation Board of Directors meeting Thursday, February 21, 2013 in Lebanon. Also in the meeting were, *from left*: Linda Waggener, Columbia, KY. City Council member; John Thomas, Foundation treasurer; and Columbia Ky. Mayor Mark Harris, Foundation secretary.

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