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Chris Kershner named next chamber president, CEO *Kershner to succeed Phil Parker, who will retire in July 2020*

DAYTON, Ohio – The Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce announced today that its Board of Trustees, which is comprised of top regional business leaders, has chosen Chris Kershner to assume the role of chamber president & CEO. Kershner, who currently holds the position of executive vice president of the chamber, will lead the organization following Phil Parker’s retirement on July 31, 2020.

“Chris is a steady, proven leader in the Dayton region, and has a vision for the chamber’s future that will further elevate the organization and the way it serves its members,” said Jennifer Harrison, 2020 Chair of the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Trustees. “During this difficult time for our member businesses and community, Chris will not only bring consistent leadership as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is no one better to guide the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce into the next era.”

“I congratulate our Board of Trustees on the outstanding decision to name Chris Kershner to lead our 113 year old chamber of commerce into the future,” said Phil Parker, current president & CEO of the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce.

Kershner has been working alongside his chamber colleagues during the COVID-19 pandemic, voicing the needs of Dayton’s businesses to policy makers in Columbus and Washington, DC. He is intimately familiar with the challenges faced by Dayton’s business community and has actualized business relief tools and resources through his advocacy.

Since joining the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce in 2005, Kershner has led the regional business association’s work in key public policy initiatives as the organization’s chief lobbyist. In this role, Kershner’s leadership expanded the chamber’s reputation as a powerful voice for business by creating innovative new programs and taking forward-looking positions on policies at the local, state, and federal levels.

“Chris has been a tireless public policy advocate for the Dayton region’s business community and has positioned the chamber as an influential representative that policy makers look to when making decisions. We know his skillset and passion for our Dayton region will take the chamber to new heights that will strengthen its membership and help the business community evolve,” said Harrison.

During his tenure at the chamber, Kershner led several key public policy efforts on behalf of the region’s business community, including partnering to secure approximately \$33 million in state funds for the Dayton region, landing federal and state transportation and infrastructure funding legislation, and passing the “Brunch Bill,” which allowed for earlier alcohol sales on Sunday mornings in the Oregon District. Kershner also led the chamber’s efforts in defeating a statewide



marijuana ballot issue and in supporting medical marijuana legislation that has since been passed. In addition, Kershner served as a statewide spokesperson for the metro chambers of commerce on collective bargaining reform and on the state transportation budget.

Kershner's work through the chamber has made its mark on the region's business community and beyond. As Executive Vice President, Kershner championed the creation of Empower, the chamber's executive leadership program for women, as well as the Dayton Area Logistics Association, which supports the region's growing logistics industry. When tragedy struck in the summer of 2019, Kershner led the chamber's role in fundraising for the Gem City Shine event; part of our community's healing process following Dayton's mass shooting.

As the next leader of the region's largest business association, Kershner envisions evolving the chamber's services and culture to reflect the innovative, inclusive, and ever-changing business community in the Dayton region.

"As the Dayton area business community evolves, the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce evolves. Dayton area employers sacrifice and dedicate their lives to their companies and their future. It has been an honor to support our business community since 2005 and I'm humbled to walk alongside all of our region's employers in this new position," Kershner said.

Internally, Kershner plans to focus on furthering a culture of workforce inclusiveness, respect, and independence.

"Organizational culture has been a passion, exemplified through empowering staff to have ownership over key functions, creating a collaborative work environment and investing in our team," Kershner said. "The world's best advocates for business are part of our Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce staff team."

In accordance with the chamber's bylaws, a search committee comprised of past chamber board chairs accepted and reviewed applications for the chamber's top position from across the country and beyond. Kershner was chosen and was approved by the chamber's Executive Committee and Board of Trustees, both made up of top-level representatives from Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce members.

Founded in 1907, the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce represents more than 2,200 businesses located throughout the nine county Dayton region.

About Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce

The Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce brings together more than 2,200 businesses and organizations in a 9 county area surrounding Dayton, Ohio. The Chamber strives to improve the region's business climate and overall standard of living through public policy advocacy, economic development initiatives and providing networking and training opportunities for its members. Nationally awarded with "5-Star Accreditation" from the United States Chamber of Commerce, the Dayton Chamber is widely recognized for its innovative programs and outstanding contribution to positive change in the region. Information about the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce is available at www.daytonchamber.org or 937-226-1444.

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