



Weekly Legislative Update

112th Tennessee General Assembly Adjourn Sine Die



Source: Marissa Roberts Photography

The 112th Tennessee General Assembly adjourned sine die last week ending a two-year legislative term, which convened a total of five times to address issues pertaining to education and COVID-19, among a number of other hot button issues. This session was filled with many unprecedented happenings from a federal investigation, which resulted in a guilty plea and resignation from a State House member, to the first of its kind vote to remove a sitting Senator in the Senate.

Despite the abnormal amount of controversy that surrounded the legislature this session, there was a significant amount of work done, and bills passed, by Tennessee lawmakers. The state passed a budget that Republican leadership hail as one of the most fiscally sound and conservative budgets in the nation. At \$52.8 billion the new budget provides funding for a number of hot-ticket items including: \$500 million for a new NFL Stadium in Nashville, \$300 million in tax cuts, which include a one-month tax holiday on groceries, and \$250 million allocated towards infrastructure improvement at Tennessee State University.

Perhaps one of the more notable items to pass this year, is the complete overhaul of education formula. Education Commissioner, Penny Schwinn, along with Governor Bill Lee, presented a brand-new formula that would become known as the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA). A \$9 billion plan that would essentially replace the 30-year-old education formula known as the Basic Education Program (BEP). Some highlights of the TISA plan include: a base funding of \$6,860 per pupil, \$100 million in outcome-based funding that would reward bonuses based on benchmarks reached and \$500 million for every student in grades K-3 through a \$376 million direct allocation to name a few.

Another piece of legislation that received a considerable amount of attention this year was carried by House Speaker Cameron Sexton and was known as the Truth-In-Sentencing bill. While the Lee Administration and Republican Leadership were at odds on the issue, the bill was successfully passed. Essentially, it sought to mandate that people who are convicted of certain violent felonies, spanning from aggravated assault to vehicular homicide, are mandated to serve 100% - 85% of their sentence. Furthermore, it would also no longer allow good time credits to count towards one's parole. Governor Lee declined to sign the bill into law last week. The legislation will become law without his signature.

Sine Die continued...

The array of legislation that passed in 2022 included a bill widely regarded as the Anti-Shackling bill, carried by Senator Akbari (D-Memphis) and Representative Camper (D-Memphis). After having passed in both the House and Senate, the bill is now expected to be signed into law by the Governor. Essentially, it would make it illegal to shackle pregnant women who have been detained. Twenty other states have passed similar statutes, and in 2018 the First Step Act prohibited the practice of shackling incarcerated pregnant inmates on the federal level.

In an effort to positively impact the workforce shortage, the "Professional Licensure Bill", a bill carried by Senator Shane Reeves (R-Murfreesboro) and Representative Bob Freeman (D-Nashville), was signed into law by Governor Lee in late April. The bill, which will create access to professional licenses for thousands of Tennesseans, attracted some media attention following its passage. Immigrants who are authorized to work in the United States will now be able to contribute to the professional workforce in Tennessee. Upon receiving the same education and training as their peers, they will be eligible to obtain licenses to work in fields such as nursing, accounting, bartending, and more.

Nearly two dozen lawmakers announce not seeking re-election

The 113th General Assembly is assuredly set to bring a lot of new faces to the Tennessee legislature.

The list of those not seeking re-election includes:

House

Eddie Mannis (R-Knoxville), Mark Hall (R-Cleveland), Robin Smith (R-Hixon) (already replaced), Kent Calfee (R-Kingston), Jerry Sexton (R-Bean Station), Mike Stewart (D-Nashville), Jason Potts (D-Nashville), Brandon Ogles (R-Franklin), Glen Casada (R-Franklin), Michael Curcio (R-Dickson), Bruce Griffey (R-Paris), Curtis Halford (R-Dyer), Jason Hodges (D-Clarksville)

Senate

Mike Bell (R-Riceville), Brian Kelsey (R-Germantown), Brenda Gilmore (D-Nashville), Katrina Robinson (D-Memphis) (already replaced)

Primary and Midterm Elections

The county primary election took place on Tuesday, May 3rd. Polling locations were open 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

The statewide primary elections will take place on August 4th, and the General Election is November 8th. Voters must be registered 30 days prior to the date of the election. If you are not yet registered to vote, you may register [here](#).



Contact Us:
Office: 615-258-5566
618 Church St. Suite 305
Nashville, TN 37219
Email: info@C5strategies.com