

# Legislative Express

Session 2025 | Issue 11

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## Only Two Weeks to Go!

With Republican House and Senate leaders aiming to finalize the Tennessee state budget bill by the end of next week, it appears the General Assembly is on track to adjourn the 2025 legislative session shortly after that. For our members and stakeholders, this marks a critical point in what has been a highly active and closely watched legislative season.

Throughout this session, TAUD has worked diligently to keep our members informed and engaged through *The Legislative Express*, now in its eleventh issue. Each edition has tracked and summarized bills with potential impacts on utility districts and the broader water and wastewater industry, including legislation addressing disaster relief (e.g., Hurricane Helene funds), infrastructure planning, transparency in local government operations, and evolving requirements for utility board governance.

From the opening of session on January 14 through the surge in bill filings leading up to the February 6 deadline, we've highlighted key legislation such as:

- **SB6003/HB6003:** Establishing a disaster interest payment fund for local governments.
- **SB380/HB421:** Reducing continuing education requirements for utility district commissioners.
- **SB518/HB561:** Authorizing utilities to borrow funds in anticipation of revenue collections, under oversight.
- **HB542:** Mandating timely utility reviews of infrastructure development plans, with third-party recourse.

These and many other bills—nearly 100 out of 4,250 in filed—reflect a legislative session focused on increasing operational flexibility, enhancing public transparency, and strengthening infrastructure oversight across Tennessee's utilities.

This will be the last weekly edition of *The Legislative Express* for the 2025 legislative session. After all passed bills are signed into law by the Governor and assigned Public Chapter Numbers, the Final Legislative Express will be published early summer which will include summaries of new laws that impact your utility's operations, governance, or compliance requirements.

We encourage all members to review this issue carefully, stay informed as the sessions close nears, and look out for our comprehensive legislative summary this summer.

You can access all ten of the previous issues of *The Legislative Express* here:

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### [SB87/HB265](#)

Sponsors Sen. Jackson, Ed; Rep. Lafferty, Justin  
Category Government Organization  
Senate Status 03/03/25 - Signed by Senate speaker.  
House Status 02/28/25 - Signed by House speaker.  
Executive Status 03/21/25 - Enacted as Public Chapter 0033, effective March 14, 2025.  
Comment This bill extends the Tennessee board of utility regulation to June 30, 2029.

### [SB114/HB136](#)

Sponsors Sen. Harshbarger, Bobby; Rep. Atchley, Fred  
Category Public Finance  
Senate Status 03/05/25 - Signed by Senate speaker.  
House Status 03/06/25 - Signed by House speaker.  
Executive Status 03/12/25 - Enacted as Public Chapter 0017, effective March 12, 2025.  
Comment This bill broadens the financial disclosure obligations of state and local governmental entities to include the disclosure of bond covenant violations and credit rating downgrades to the comptroller of the treasury or the comptroller's designee.

### [SB162](#)

Sponsors Sen. Hensley, Joey  
Category Utilities  
Senate Status 01/27/25 - Referred to Senate Energy, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.  
Comment This bill prohibits public water systems from adding fluoride to their water systems.

### [SB178/HB22](#)

Sponsors Sen. Lowe, Adam; Rep. Davis, Elaine  
Category Public Employees  
Amendment Summary House amendment 1 (004529) limits the bill to a local governing body, which this amendment defines as the governing body of an incorporated city or town, county, metropolitan government, school district, regional authority, or other political subdivision of this state other than a state governmental agency or entity.  
Senate Status **03/18/25 - Failed in Senate State & Local Government Committee after adopting 1 (004529).**  
House Status 03/10/25 - House passed with amendment 1 (004529).  
Comment This bill requires a governing body subject to the open meetings act to reserve a period of public comment on any matter germane to the jurisdiction of the governing body regardless of whether the matter is listed on the agenda for the meeting. Under current law, public comment is limited to matters germane to items on the meeting's agenda.

**SB191/HB1338****Redefines local government to include a water, wastewater, or energy authority.**

Sponsors Sen. Taylor, Brent; Rep. Lamberth, William  
Category Public Finance  
Senate Status 03/17/25 - Senate passed.  
House Status 04/07/25 - House passed.  
Executive Status 04/07/25 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.

## Comment

This bill requires that any local government seeking to issue "heightened risk debt" to submit a request for approval to the Comptroller's Office. The Comptroller's Office has 15 business days to approve or disapprove the request. If the Comptroller does not respond to the request within 15 business days, the local government may proceed to issue the debt. Local government includes any incorporated city or town; metropolitan government; county; water, wastewater, or energy authority; or utility district. Heightened risk debt means any debt obligation containing: (1) a variable interest rate; (2) an interest rate reset provision which allows the interest rate to change at certain intervals during the life of the debt; or (3) a put option. The bill further defines local government for purposes of the issuance of balloon indebtedness to include any incorporated city or town; metropolitan government; county; water, wastewater, or energy authority; or utility district.

**SB212/HB885****Agendas for meetings of governing bodies.**

Sponsors Sen. Gardenhire, Todd; Rep. Todd, Chris  
Category Public Employees

Amendment  
Summary

House State & Local Government Committee amendment 1, Senate amendment 3 (006988) defines "local governmental body" as: (1) the legislative body of an incorporated city or town, a metropolitan government, or a county; (2) a regional or municipal planning commission; (3) a board of zoning appeals; (4) a public utility board; (5) an industrial development corporation board of directors; (6) a housing authority; (7) a regional or municipal airport authority; (8) A county election commission; and (9) the budget committee of a legislative body of an incorporated city or town, a metropolitan government, or a county.

Senate Status 04/07/25 - Senate passed with amendment 3 (06988).  
House Status 04/10/25 - Set for House Floor on 04/14/25.

## Comment

This bill requires the governing body of any political subdivision of Tennessee: (1) to make available to the public at no charge the agenda for an upcoming regular meeting in a place accessible to the public at least 48 hours before the regular meeting; (2) to only deliberate or act upon items not listed in the agenda unless its bylaws or properly adopted rules permit such actions and complies with all other applicable state laws permitting such action; and (3); to not circumvent this requirement by withholding items from the agenda to avoid public disclosure of business to be considered. The bill further provides that publishing the agenda on the political subdivision's website is considered a place of public access. Currently, only the legislative bodies of cities, towns, counties, and metro governments must do the above.

**SB258/HB1139****Definition of public water system under the TN Safe Drinking Water Act - inclusion.**

Sponsors	Sen. Pody, Mark; Rep. Boyd, Clark
Category	Environment & Nature
Amendment Summary	House amendment 1 (006939) requires a building, complex, or house to monitor the influent and finished water for hardness, alkalinity, and pH on a quarterly basis as well as sodium on an annual basis if it falls under the definition of a public water system. Requires a report be sent to the department within 15 days of the end of the reporting period.
Senate Status	04/10/25 - Senate concurred in House amendment 1 (006939).
House Status	04/07/25 - House passed with amendment 1 (006939).
Executive Status	04/10/25 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
Comment	This bill seems to remove from the definition of public water system a treatment facility which is used solely for softening of water.

**SB307/HB1054****Construction project delivery methods.**

Sponsors	Sen. Briggs, Richard; Rep. McKenzie, Sam
Category	Local Government
Senate Status	02/12/25 - Referred to Senate State & Local Government Committee.
House Status	02/11/25 - Referred to House Cities & Counties Subcommittee.
Comment	This bill authorizes a local government having a population of 100,000 or more according to the 2020 census and having centralized purchasing with a full-time purchasing agent to use any of the following project delivery methods for the construction of local projects or additions to existing buildings: (1) construction manager at-risk; (2) design-bid-build; (3) design-build; or (4) design-build-finance-operate. While the definition of local government includes utility districts and authorities, these utilities may not be able to use these methods. The federal census does not include population information for utility districts and authorities. Having central purchasing and a full-time purchasing agent are concepts which only seem to apply to cities and counties not utility districts and authorities.

**SB369/HB742****Quotes required by local governments for purchases.**

Sponsors	Sen. Briggs, Richard; Rep. McKenzie, Sam
Category	Local Government
Senate Status	02/12/25 - Referred to Senate State & Local Government Committee.
House Status	<b>03/19/25 - Taken off notice in House Cities &amp; Counties Subcommittee.</b>
Comment	When a city or county increases its threshold for competitive bidding over \$10,000, it must do so by resolution or ordinance passed by the governing body. If a purchase falls between 40% of the new bid threshold or some lower amount as may be established by the governing body by resolution or ordinance, the purchase can be made in the open market without publishing a notice in a newspaper of general circulation, but the city or county must attempt to obtain at least three written price quotes to ensure competitive pricing.

**SB370/HB967**

Sponsors

Category

Senate Status

House Status

**Taxes and fees collected by merchants and sellers.**

Sen. Briggs, Richard; Rep. Hawk, David

Taxes General

02/12/25 - Referred to Senate Commerce &amp; Labor Committee.

02/11/25 - Referred to House Banking &amp; Consumer Affairs Subcommittee.

Comment

This bill provides that when the amount of a state or local tax or fee (including sales tax) is calculated as a percentage of an electronic payment transaction amount and is listed separately on the payment invoice or other demand for payment, this amount must be excluded from the interchange fee charged for that electronic payment transaction. The bill defines "interchange fee" as a fee established, charged, or received by a payment card network for the purpose of compensating the issuer for its involvement in an electronic payment transaction.

**SB377/HB548**

Sponsors

Category

**Tennessee Procurement Protection Act.**

Sen. Rose, Paul; Rep. Cochran, Mark

State Government

Amendment  
Summary

House State & Local Government Committee amendment 1 (006451) enacts the Tennessee Procurement Protection Act. Prohibits state agencies and political subdivisions from contracting with a foreign adversary company for final products or services, including technology devices and software. Requires the Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) within the Department of General Services (DGS), state agency, or political subdivision to require a person that contracts with the state to certify, at the time the bid is submitted, or the contract is entered into, renewed, or assigned, that the person or assignee is not a foreign adversary company. Establishes that a person or entity that fails to provide a certification or falsifies a certification is liable for a civil penalty in an amount that is equal to the greater of \$250,000 or twice the amount of the contract for which a bid or proposal was submitted, whichever is greater; and is prohibited from bidding on a state contract for 60 months. Requires the CPO, state agency, or political subdivision, upon receiving proof satisfactory that a person or entity is in violation of the required certification to: (1) forward the information to the Attorney General and Reporter (AG), who may file an action in a court of appropriate jurisdiction to recover such civil penalty; and (2) terminate the contract for cause. Authorizes a state agency or political subdivision to enter into a contract for final products or services produced by a foreign adversary company if: (1) there is no other reasonable option for procuring the final product or service; and (2) the contract is approved by the CPO, state agency, or political subdivision after a determination that not procuring the final product or service would pose a greater threat to the state than the threat associated with the final product or service itself. Does not apply to a company, including a third-party vendor, that is in compliance with the federal Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019.

Senate Status

**04/02/25 - Taken off notice in Senate State & Local Government Committee.**

House Status

**04/03/25 - Taken off notice in House Calendar & Rules Committee.**

Comment

This bill creates the Tennessee Procurement Protection Act (the Act). This Act prohibits the public procurement of final products or services from a foreign adversary company, whether those products or services are sold directly by the foreign adversary company or through a third-party vendor. This Act permits the public procurement of products and services from a company that has operations, affiliates, and subsidiaries in a foreign adversary so long as the company is not a foreign adversary company. This Act prohibits a foreign adversary company from bidding on or submitting a proposal for a contract with a state agency or political subdivision of this state for goods or services. The Act further mandates a state agency or political subdivision require a company that submits a bid or proposal for a contract for goods or services to certify that the company is not a foreign adversary company.

**SB378/HB549**

Sponsors

Category

Senate Status

House Status

**Tennessee Critical Infrastructure Act.**

Sen. Rose, Paul; Rep. Cochran, Mark

State Government

02/10/25 - Introduced in the Senate

02/05/25 - Referred to House Public Service Subcommittee.

Comment

This bill enacts the "Tennessee Critical Infrastructure Protection Act." This Act prohibits a governmental entity from entering into a contract or other agreement relating to critical infrastructure in this state with a company that is a foreign principal from a foreign adversary country if the agreement would allow such foreign principal to directly or remotely access or control critical infrastructure in this state. A governmental or non-governmental entity may enter into a contract or agreement relating to critical infrastructure with a foreign principal from a foreign adversary country or use products or services produced by such foreign principal if: (1) there is no other reasonable option for addressing the need relevant to state critical infrastructure; (2) the contract is pre-approved by the department of finance and administration; and (3) not entering into such a contract or agreement would pose a greater threat to the state than the threat associated with entering into the contract.

**SB380/HB421**

Sponsors

Category

Amendment

Summary

Senate Status

House Status

Executive Status

Position

**Continuing education for utility district commissioners.**

Sen. Walley, Page; Rep. Marsh, Pat

Public Employees

Senate amendment 1 (003624) removes the provisions lowering the minimum number of hours of initial training and continuing education from 12 to six and, instead, lowers the minimum number of hours of such training from 12 to six in each continuing education period following the initial 12 hours of initial training and continuing education.

04/01/25 - Signed by Senate speaker.

04/02/25 - Signed by House speaker.

04/02/25 - Sent to governor.

**Support**

Comment

This bill does two things. First, it reduces the number of required hours for continuing education for governing board members of utilities from 12 hours to 6 hours for each three-year continuing education period. Second, it permits a person who has become ineligible to serve as a utility district commissioner due to the failure to timely get the required initial training or continuing education to file a petition for reinstatement of the person's eligibility to serve as a utility district commissioner with the TBOUR.

**SB418/HB4****Actions brought against a local governmental entity under the TN Governmental Tort Liability Act - recovery amounts.**

Sponsors

Sen. Gardenhire, Todd; Rep. Bulso, Gino

Category

Tort Liability

Amendment  
Summary

House Insurance Committee amendment 1, Senate Judiciary Committee amendment 1 (004187) revises the present law by requiring such policies or contracts of insurance to provide increased minimum limits of not less than \$400,000 for bodily injury or death of any one person in any one accident, occurrence, or act, and not less than \$850,000 for bodily injury or death of all persons in any one accident, occurrence, or act, and \$150,000 for injury or destruction of property of others in any one accident, occurrence, or act. Stipulates that this applies to any action arising out of any action arising on or after July 1, 2025, but before July 1, 2027. For actions arising on or after July 1, 2027, requires policies or contracts of insurance to provide increased minimum limits of not less than \$500,000 for bodily injury or death of any one person in any one accident, occurrence, or act, and not less than \$1 million for bodily injury or death of all persons in any one accident, occurrence, or act, and \$200,000 for injury or destruction of property of others in any one accident, occurrence, or act.

Senate Status

**04/08/25 - Failed in Senate Judiciary Committee after adopting amendment 1 (004187).**

House Status

**04/09/25 - No action taken in House Judiciary Committee.**

Position

**Neutral**

Comment

This bill Increases the amount that a person may recover in an action brought against a local governmental entity under the Tennessee Governmental Tort Liability Act for claims brought on or after July 1, 2025, to \$750,000 for the bodily injury or death of one person in one accident, \$1,500,000 for the bodily injury or death of all persons in one accident, and \$250,000 for the injury or destruction of property of others in one accident. The current limits which were set in 2007 are \$300,000 for the bodily injury or death of one person in one accident, \$700,000 for the bodily injury or death of all persons in one accident, and \$100,000 for the injury or destruction of property of others in one accident.

**SB425/HB66****Confidential records - exceptions.**

Sponsors

Sen. Reeves, Shane; Rep. Sparks, Mike

Category

Local Government

Senate Status

04/07/25 - Senate passed.

House Status

03/31/25 - House passed.

Position

**Support**

Comment

This bill makes the residential information of local government employees such as street address, city, state and zip code confidential under the public records act. This is really not much a change since existing law already makes the "residential street address for any county, municipal or other public employee" confidential.

**SB518/HB561**

Sponsors  
Category  
Senate Status  
House Status  
Executive Status

**Authorizes certain utility systems to borrow money in anticipation of revenue collections.**

Sen. Reeves, Shane; Rep. Capley, Kip  
Local Government  
04/02/25 - Signed by Senate speaker.  
04/02/25 - Signed by House speaker.  
04/03/25 - Sent to governor.

Comment

This bill authorizes water and wastewater systems operated by municipalities and counties, municipal energy authorities, water and wastewater treatment authorities, and utility districts to borrow money in anticipation of revenue collections to provide emergency cash flow for such systems. The principal value of the notes during any 12-month period must not exceed 60% of the utility's cash flow for the same period and must be retired or paid in full before the end of the same period. These notes require approval by the Comptroller's Office which will develop a corrective action plan for the utility as part of the approval. If the Comptroller approves debt for emergency cash flow, the utility will be referred to the TBOUR which may order any remedial measures it deems necessary for the utility. This bill further authorizes the TBOUR to remove a member of a utility's governing body (other than an elected official) for any of the following: (1) failure to comply with Â§ 12-4-101; (i2) misconduct, whether or not the misconduct results in criminal charges; (3) Failure to exercise reasonable oversight; (4) actions or failures causing a utility system to display severe managerial incompetence as described in Â§ 7-82-704(a)(3); (5) failure to follow board directives, except for good cause shown; or (6) Any other reason provided by law.

**SB564/HB803**

Sponsors  
Category  
Senate Status  
House Status  
Position

**Hearing before the board of certification for water and wastewater operators regarding a revocation.**

Sen. Pody, Mark; Rep. Grills, Rusty  
Government Regulation  
03/26/25 - Senate Energy, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee deferred to first calendar of 2026.  
03/26/25 - House Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee deferred to first calendar of next year.

**Neutral**

Comment

This is a caption bill. As written, this bill increases the period of time from 60 to 65 days that a party can appeal the decision of the Water and Wastewater Operator Certification Board regarding a revocation or an appeal of an order or assessment of a civil penalty against an operator or utility to the Davidson County Chancery Court.

**SB670/HB541****Classification of property as a wetland.**

Sponsors

Sen. Taylor, Brent; Rep. Vaughan, Kevin

Category

Environment &amp; Nature

Amendment  
Summary

Senate Energy Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee amendment 1 (006090) Requires anyone seeking to develop real property to request from the commissioner a determination on whether there are wetlands present, their extent, and their category by submitting a wetland resource inventory report that is prepared by a third party. Includes adjustments to the minimum acreage requirement. Allows for adjustments to "an artificial isolated wetland" of any size. Defines multiple terms as they are used in this bill. House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee amendment 1, Senate Finance Committee amendment 1 (006502) States that alteration of certain isolated wetlands is permitted without notice or mitigation if specific conditions are met. States that for specific sizes of low-quality and moderate-quality wetlands, general permits apply, and extra requirements regarding cumulative impacts or buffers are not needed. Clarifies that an individual permit is necessary for altering high-quality wetlands. Establishes that the criteria for wetland classifications will be established by the board. Establishes that a person wishing to develop real property can request a determination about wetland presence by submitting a third-party wetland report. States if the report meets specified requirements and is certified as correct, the determinations in the report are assumed to be accurate unless the commissioner raises concerns.

Senate Status

04/09/25 - Senate Finance, Ways & Means Committee recommended with amendment 1 (006502). Sent to Senate Calendar Committee.

House Status

04/10/25 - Set for House Finance, Ways & Means Subcommittee 04/14/25.

Comment

This bill prohibits TDEC from applying criteria that will result in the classification of real property as a wetland, or otherwise regulating real property as a wetland, unless the property is classified as a wetland under federal law.

**SB717/HB796****Infrastructure oversight and customer choice.**

Sponsors

Sen. Taylor, Brent; Rep. Vaughan, Kevin

Category

Utilities

Senate Status

02/12/25 - Referred to Senate State & Local Government Committee.

House Status

02/10/25 - Referred to House Business & Utilities Subcommittee.

Comment

This bill prohibits public utilities from requiring that utility infrastructure be constructed by the utility company and requires that customers be allowed to choose their own contractors for installation. Allows public utilities to establish reasonable construction and manufacturing specifications to ensure proper construction with appropriate materials. Prohibits public utilities from requiring that materials or services for utility infrastructure construction be sourced from a specific vendor or manufacturer. Allows public utilities to review and approve plans and designs for the installation of utility infrastructure. Defines "public utility" or "utility" as the water, wastewater, natural gas, or electric system of a county, metropolitan government, or municipality.

### SB730/HB903

Sponsors

Category

Senate Status

House Status

### Fee for viewing records.

Sen. Lowe, Adam; Rep. Vital, Greg

Media & Publishing

02/12/25 - Referred to Senate State & Local Government Committee.

02/10/25 - Referred to House Public Service Subcommittee.

Comment

This bill permits a public entity to require a requestor of public records to pay a fee to view records if the records requested reasonably require more than one hour of an employee's time to collect for viewing and inspection by the requestor. After the first hour, the public entity may charge a fee at an hourly rate that is in proportion to the rate of pay of the employee who is collecting the records. This is a change from current law which does not allow charging a requestor anything if the requestor only wants to view public records but not copy them.

### SB731/HB795

Sponsors

Category

Sen. Pody, Mark; Rep. Vaughan, Kevin

Local Government

House State & Local Government Committee amendment 1 (006453) clarifies that "nonessential infrastructure" means any infrastructure that is not necessary for the creation, ongoing maintenance, and growth of a development property; includes public roads, bridges, highways, traffic lights, toll roads, road signage, barricades, turn lanes, utility poles, electrical lines, internet cabling, public entrances that are not part of a development property, and property that is not contiguous or adjacent to the development property; does not include any infrastructure requested by the department of transportation that, based on the findings of a traffic impact study, is identified as necessary to maintain the level of service on any state routes in the vicinity of a development property. Senate State & Local Government Committee amendment 1 (006881) requires a local government to accept an application for the review of a development plan or a site inspection and issue an approval or a written report of deficiencies no later than 30 business days from the date the application is received by the county, municipal or other local government (local government). Requires a local government to make all efforts to consolidate any change requests pertaining to an application for the review of a development plan or a site inspection into a single deliverable document or set of documents. Prohibits a local government from issuing more than two written reports of deficiencies after receipt of an application of development site plans and requires a local government to provide written justification of any denial of any such application. Upon the issuance of a third or subsequent written report of deficiencies, the local government must remit to the applicant 50 percent of the total amount of aggregate fees the applicant paid to the local government during the application process. Upon execution of a contract between a local government and a developer, contractor, or subcontractor, prohibits the local government from making changes or additions to the terms of the contract unless the parties agree to the modification of one or more specific terms and, upon inspection by an independent party, if it is determined that the developer, contractor, or subcontractor has completed all work required under the contract, then the local government must release the developer or contractor from its required bond no later than 30 days after an independent third party, hired by the developer, contractor or subcontractor, adjudges that the contractor has met its contractual obligations. Specifies that a local government and developer, contractor, or subcontractor may enter into a contract for the funding, building, or development of nonessential infrastructure; provided; that a local government must: (1) not make changes or additions to the terms of the contract unless the parties agree to the modification of one or more specific contract terms, and (2) release the developer or contractor from its required bond no later than 30 days after any finding of completion by an inspection performed by an independent third-party. Prohibits a local government, in connection with a development property, from requiring a developer, contractor, or subcontractor to fund, develop, or contribute to the development of nonessential infrastructure, unless otherwise agreed upon by parties. Senate State & Local Government Committee amendment 1 (006881) requires a local government to accept an application for the review of a development plan or a site inspection and issue an approval or a written report of deficiencies no later than 30 business days from

Amendment  
Summary

the date the application is received by the county, municipal or other local government (local government). Requires a local government to make all efforts to consolidate any change requests pertaining to an application for the review of a development plan or a site inspection into a single deliverable document or set of documents. Prohibits a local government from issuing more than two written reports of deficiencies after receipt of an application of development site plans and requires a local government to provide written justification of any denial of any such application. Upon the issuance of a third or subsequent written report of deficiencies, the local government must remit to the applicant 50 percent of the total amount of aggregate fees the applicant paid to the local government during the application process. Upon execution of a contract between a local government and a developer, contractor, or subcontractor, prohibits the local government from making changes or additions to the terms of the contract unless the parties agree to the modification of one or more specific terms and, upon inspection by an independent party, if it is determined that the developer, contractor, or subcontractor has completed all work required under the contract, then the local government must release the developer or contractor from its required bond no later than 30 days after an independent third party, hired by the developer, contractor or subcontractor, adjudges that the contractor has met its contractual obligations. Specifies that a local government and developer, contractor, or subcontractor may enter into a contract for the funding, building, or development of nonessential infrastructure; provided; that a local government must: (1) not make changes or additions to the terms of the contract unless the parties agree to the modification of one or more specific contract terms, and (2) release the developer or contractor from its required bond no later than 30 days after any finding of completion by an inspection performed by an independent third-party. Prohibits a local government, in connection with a development property, from requiring a developer, contractor, or subcontractor to fund, develop, or contribute to the development of nonessential infrastructure, unless otherwise agreed upon by parties.

Senate Status

**04/01/25 - Failed in Senate State & Local Government Committee after adopting amendment 1 (006881).**

House Status

**04/02/25 - Taken off notice in House State & Local Government Committee.**

Comment

This bill requires a local government to accept an application for the review of a development plan or site inspection and issue an approval of the application or issue a written report of deficiencies within 30 days of receipt of the application. If a written report of deficiencies is issued, the requested permit shall be issued upon receipt of documentation showing the deficiency has been satisfactorily cured. If the local government issues 3 or more written reports with deficiencies, it must reimburse the developer 50% of the fees paid during the application process. Local government means a county, municipality, or local governing body responsible for reviewing a development application, development plan, or a site inspection submitted by a developer. This bill further provides: (1) a local government and developer or contractor may enter into a contract for the funding, building, or development of nonessential infrastructure with nonessential infrastructure being defined to mean "any infrastructure that is not necessary for the creation, ongoing maintenance, and growth of a development; (2) once a local government enters into a development contract with a developer, no changes can be made unless mutually agreed upon the developer and the local government, including any changes to nonessential infrastructure.

**SB743/HB834**

Sponsors  
Category  
Senate Status  
House Status  
Position

**Authority of the board of water and wastewater operator certification.**

Sen. Yager, Ken; Rep. Keisling, Kelly  
Environment & Nature

**03/19/25 - Taken off notice in Senate Energy, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.**

**03/12/25 - Taken off notice in House Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee.**

**Oppose**

Comment

This bill prohibits the water and wastewater operator certification board from delegating to a third-party its authority to determine minimum operator competency or to prepare conduct, or grade examinations to applicants seeking operator certification. The bill requires the exam consist of the same questions for all applicants and include a minimum of 10% of the total questions for each classification on state regulatory questions germane to the specific operator classification.

**SB795/HB1173**

Sponsors  
Category  
Senate Status  
House Status

**Purchasing of goods and services by local governments without bid or quotations.**

Sen. Bailey, Paul; Rep. Williams, Ryan  
Government Contracts

**04/01/25 - Taken off notice in Senate State & Local Government Committee.**

03/27/25 - Held on House clerk's desk.

Comment

This bill authorizes local governments to purchase goods and services directly, without bid or quotations, from vendors awarded general services administration schedule contracts at prices equal to the vendor's current general services administration schedule price.

**SB825/HB1072**

Sponsors  
Category  
Senate Status  
House Status

**Classification of property as a wetland.**

Sen. Hensley, Joey; Rep. Warner, Todd  
Environment & Nature

**03/19/25 - Taken off notice in Senate Energy, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.**

**03/26/25 - Taken off notice in House Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee.**

Comment

this bill prohibits TDEC from applying criteria that will result in the classification of real property as a wetland if the property is prior converted cropland that is exempt from classification as a wetland under federal law.

### [SB880/HB896](#)

### [Regulatory action for a substance, mixture, or chemical related to drinking water, water pollution control.](#)

Sponsors	Sen. Reeves, Shane; Rep. Todd, Chris
Category	Government Regulation
Amendment Summary	Senate amendment 1 (004547) prohibits an agency from adopting a rule establishing criteria or limitations applicable to a contaminant, pollutant, hazardous substance, solid waste, or hazardous waste related to drinking water, water pollution control, hazardous substances, contaminated site remediation, air quality, or solid or hazardous waste handling, unless the information relied on to support the rule is based upon the best available science which establishes a direct link to manifest bodily harm in humans.
Senate Status	04/09/25 - Signed by Senate speaker.
House Status	04/10/25 - Signed by House speaker.
Executive Status	04/11/25 - Sent to governor.
Comment	This bill prohibits a state agency from disseminating, proposing, or finalizing any regulatory action for a substance, mixture, or chemical related to drinking water, water pollution control, hazardous substances, contaminated site remediation, air quality, or solid or hazardous waste handling unless the regulatory action is based upon the best available peer-reviewed scientific and technical information.

### [SB952/HB978](#)

### [Discontinuation of service as it relates to the Utilities' Cut-Off Procedures Act. Broadly captioned.](#)

Sponsors	Sen. Powers, Bill; Rep. Burkhart, Jeff
Category	Utilities
Senate Status	<b>03/25/25 - Taken off notice in Senate State &amp; Local Government Committee.</b>
House Status	<b>03/19/25 - Taken off notice in House Business &amp; Utilities Subcommittee.</b>
Comment	This appears to be a caption bill. As written, it requires a utility governed by the Utilities' Cut-Off Procedures Act to publish its policy governing the discontinuation of service for nonpayment of service on the utility's website in a publicly accessible location.

**SB988/HB375****Fees assessed by local governments.**

Sponsors

Sen. Haile, Ferrell; Rep. Zachary, Jason

Category

Local Government

Amendment  
Summary

House amendment 1 (005088) rewrites this bill to require each department, agency, or official of a county, municipal government, or metropolitan government that assesses and collects a fee related to development in excess of \$250 to maintain documentation describing the justification and cost basis for such fee. The documentation is also required upon the adoption of a new fee or for a change in the amount of an existing fee that is related to development and in excess of \$250. An existing fee, new fee, or fee change must only be documented once. The documentation required for an existing fee, new fee, or fee change: (1) Must be maintained and kept on file by the department, agency, or official; (2) Is a public record and available for public inspection upon request; and (3) Is subject to an annual audit by the comptroller of the treasury. This bill defines "cost basis" to mean the rationale for charging a fee, particularly in regard to how a fee reasonably relates to cost incurred by the government. This bill specifies that county utilities are required to maintain and provide documentation of a connection cost according to present law, which generally requires a utility system to provide, upon a customer's request, the connection cost in writing along with a written itemized and detailed description of the costs that comprise the connection cost.

Senate Status

03/26/25 - Signed by Senate speaker.

House Status

03/26/25 - Signed by House speaker.

Executive Status

04/03/25 - Signed by governor.

Comment

This bill requires each department, agency, and official in every county, municipal government, or metropolitan government that assesses and collects a fee of \$500 to maintain documentation describing the justification and cost basis for such fee. The language is broad enough to apply to a tap fee, capacity fee, or other fee over \$500 of a county or municipal utility.

Sponsors

Sen. Taylor, Brent; Rep. Vaughan, Kevin

Category

Local Government

Amendment  
Summary

Senate Energy, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Committee amendment 1 (004175) Prohibits a city, town, utility district, or municipality that has operated a sewerage system outside of the corporate boundaries of the city or town for 25 years or more from ceasing the operation of such system outside the corporate boundaries so long as the system maintains sufficient capacity, as determined by a study presented to the Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation (TBOUR) to confirm the necessity of the closure. If a landowner has an existing gravity sewer line located on the landowner's property and requests such connection and service, the city, town, utility district, or municipality must provide the connection to the system. House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee amendment 1 (006361) Prohibits a city, town, utility district, or municipality that has operated a sewerage system outside of the corporate boundaries of the city or town for 25 years or more from ceasing the operation of such system outside the corporate boundaries so long as the system maintains sufficient capacity, as determined by a study presented to the Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation (TBOUR) to confirm the necessity of the closure. If a landowner has an existing gravity sewer line located on the landowner's property and requests such connection and service, the city, town, utility district, or municipality must provide the connection to the system. Requires the governing board of the wastewater utility system to act upon an appeal or complaint filed by an owner within 60 days of its submission. House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee amendment 2 (006658) requires city or town with a sewerage system that has been operating outside of its boundaries for 25 years must continue operating as long as it has enough capacity, based on evidence presented to the Tennessee board of utility regulation. Clarifies that this rule does not change rates in existing or future water or wastewater service agreements. Requires a utility district that has operated a sewerage system in unincorporated areas for 25 years must keep operating if it maintains sufficient capacity based on evidence to the Tennessee board of utility regulation. Requires a wastewater utility to connect to a property owner's sewer if an existing line is present and the owner requests it. States that if the utility refuses, the owner may file a complaint to the Tennessee board of utility regulation after appealing to the utility's governing board. Clarifies that existing rates in any agreements are not changed. Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committee amendment 1 (006658): Prohibits a city, town, or utility district that has operated a sewerage system outside of the corporate boundaries of the city or town for 25 years or more from ceasing the operation of such system outside the corporate boundaries so long as the system maintains sufficient capacity to continue to provide sewerage service outside of its corporate boundaries, as determined by a study, report, or other information and evidence presented to the Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation (TBOUR) in an informal hearing. Requires a utility system under the regulation of the TBOUR that provides wastewater service to provide a connection to the owner of real property for wastewater service when the utility system: (1) has an existing gravity sewer line located on the owner's property and; (2) the owner requests such connection and service. If the utility system refuses to provide wastewater services to the owner, the owner may submit a complaint to TBOUR for a review and hearing on the refusal to provide wastewater services; provided, the owner must first appeal or make complaint to the utility system's governing board regarding such refusal of service. Specifies, when the governing body of the utility system is the legislative body of the city, town, metropolitan government, or county providing wastewater service, the owner's appeal or complaint must be acted upon within 60 days of submission by the owner. If the governing body fails to act on such appeal or complaint within 60 days, the owner may proceed with submission of its complaint to TBOUR, which must conduct its review and hearing on the refusal of service without a decision from such governing board. Specifies that this act does not affect, impact, or interfere with the rates in existing or future water or wastewater services contractual arrangements, or renewals or extensions of such existing or future agreements.

Senate Status

04/09/25 - Senate Finance, Ways &amp; Means Committee recommended with amendment 1 (006658). Sent to Senate Calendar Committee.

House Status

04/10/25 - Set for House Finance, Ways &amp; Means Subcommittee 04/14/25.

Comment

This bill provides that a city or town that has operated a sewerage system outside of the corporate boundaries of the city or town for 25 years or more cannot cease operation of the sewerage system outside its corporate boundaries so long as the sewerage system maintains sufficient capacity as determined by a study conducted by TACIR. This bill provides that a utility district that has operated a sewerage system in the unincorporated area of a county for 25 years or more cannot cease operation of the sewerage system in the unincorporated area so long as the sewerage system maintains sufficient capacity as determined by a study conducted by TACIR.

Sponsors

Sen. Taylor, Brent; Rep. Vaughan, Kevin

Category

Local Government

Amendment  
Summary

Senate State & Local Government amendment 2, House Commerce Committee amendment 1 (006399) specifies that in instances in which: (1) a county, metropolitan government, or municipality-owned utility that provides water, wastewater, electric, natural gas, or stormwater management and drainage; or (2) an entity subject to the jurisdiction of the Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation (TBOUR); or (3) a nonprofit cooperative membership corporation (henceforth, collectively “utilities”) does not customarily prepare plans and designs for utility infrastructure within a plan of development and requires a customer or customer representative to prepare and submit such plans and designs, the utility must: (1) not charge a fee more than the fee established in a schedule of fees and charges adopted by the utility for review of the plans and designs; and (2) complete the review of the plans and designs within 60 business days of the date the plans and designs are submitted to the utility and are determined by the utility to be complete. Specifies that the 60-business-day timeline does not include the time spent by a state or federal regulatory body to provide any approvals that are required under applicable state or federal regulatory requirements. If any of the aforementioned utilities do not complete any such reviews within 60 business days, the person who submitted the plan is authorized to hire a third-party plans examiner to perform the review and must submit the appropriate fee, if such fee has not been submitted, and a stamped-and sealed copy of all plans that were examined to the utility, in addition to certain information pertaining to the development. Requires the respective utility to, within 10 days of receipt of the fee and plans, to: (1) approve the plans; (2) provide to the person, or the person's designee, a report of deficiencies; or (3) request additional information necessary to ensure compliance with applicable codes. If the utility fails to take any of the aforementioned actions within the 10-day timeframe, the utility must refund any associated plan review fees that were collected and the plans are deemed approved by the utility. If the plan of development is approved after review by a third-party plans examiner and the customer engages an approved contractor to install or construct utility infrastructure, the utility is required to inspect the installation and construction of the utility infrastructure in the development, and the customer or its approved contractor is responsible for the costs of correcting any deficiencies in the installation and construction. Authorizes a utility to charge a fee for such inspections in accordance with a schedule of fees or charges adopted by the utility. Specifies that this act does not apply to types of plans and designs of utility infrastructure that are customarily prepared by the utility for the customer in accordance with standard practice that is in effect at the utility as of July 1, 2025, or a policy that is subsequently adopted by the utility. Requires utilities to allow a customer of the utility or person submitting a plan of development to the utility the option to use an approved contractor or contractors of the customer's choosing for installation of the utility infrastructure. If the customer engages an approved contractor, the customer must provide certain information pertaining to the development and approved contractor. Within 10 business days of receipt of such information, the utility must: (1) confirm the contractor's status as an approved contractor and allow the contractor to proceed as an approved contractor; (2) provide to the customer a report of deficiencies; or (3) request additional information necessary to determine the eligibility of the contractor's status as an approved contractor. If the utility fails to take any of the aforementioned actions with 10 business days, the contractor may proceed as an approved contractor. Requires such utilities to provide a publicly-available list of approved contractors and the process for becoming an approved contractor. Requires the utility to perform inspections of the installation and construction of the utility infrastructure installed by the approved contractor in the development, and the utility may also inspect materials and test the utility infrastructure as part of such inspections. The approved contractor is responsible for correcting any deficiencies associated with its installation or construction, and the utility is not required to accept or commission the utility infrastructure until it determines that the installation and construction complies with all applicable requirements. Authorizes a utility to charge a reasonable fee for such inspection and testing in accordance with a schedule of fees or charges adopted by the utility and made publicly available. Authorizes a utility to require the direct installation or construction of specific utility infrastructure by the utility or by an approved contractor under the direct supervision of the utility where the requirement is necessary to ensure public safety or service reliability of the utility. Authorizes such utilities to provide reasonable construction and manufacturer's specifications for utility infrastructure to any persons, with which a customer has contracted, and if provided, also provide such persons with a schedule of all approved materials for utility infrastructure with specifications for such materials. Prohibits such utilities from requiring that materials or services for

the construction of the utility infrastructure be provided by a specific vendor or manufacturer unless using the materials or services by a specific vendor or manufacturer is deemed necessary by the utility for the quality and integrity of the utility's system. Specifies, in the event that an act of God, fire, flood, storm, accident, or similar event constituting force majeure causes a utility to require more time to meet applicable review requirements proposed by this legislation, the timelines set forth must be suspended so long as the utility's operations are impacted by one or more such events. Senate State & Local Government Committee amendment 1 (004176) allows a utility to provide reasonable construction and manufacturer's specifications for utility infrastructure to ensure that the infrastructure is constructed properly and with appropriate materials. Requires a utility that chooses to provide such specifications to provide persons with a schedule of all approved materials for utility infrastructure with specifications for such materials. Prohibits a utility from requiring that materials or services for the construction of the utility infrastructure be provided by a specific vendor or manufacturer. Allows a utility to review the plans and designs of the utility infrastructure to be installed for approval. Requires a utility that performs or requires such review to: 1) not charge a fee of more than \$1,000 for the review plans and designs; 2) complete the review within 30 days of the date the plans and designs are submitted to the utility. Allows the person who submitted the plan or design to hire a third-party plans examiner to review the plans and designs for compliance with all applicable codes if the utility does not complete the review within 30 days. Requires a person who engages a third-party plans examiner to submit the appropriate fee and a stamped and sealed copy of all plans that were examined to the utility and provide all the other required documents. Requires the utility to perform inspections of the installation and construction of the water, wastewater, electric, natural gas, or storm water management infrastructure of the development if the plan of development is approved after review by a third-party plans examiner. Allows the utility to charge a fee for such inspections that must not exceed 2% of the total cost of the development. Defines utility as: 1) an entity subject to the jurisdiction of the board of utility regulation; 2) a cooperative; 3) a county-owned, metropolitan government-owned, or municipal-owned utility that provides water, wastewater, electric, natural gas, or stormwater management and drainage to the public.

Senate Status	04/10/25 - Set for Senate Finance, Ways & Means Committee 04/15/25.
House Status	04/10/25 - Set for House Finance, Ways & Means Subcommittee 04/14/25.
Position	<b>Neutral</b>

Comment	<p>This bill requires a county-owned or municipal-owned water utility to review plans of development for compliance with water, electric, and natural gas infrastructure codes within 30 days of the plan's submission. If the utility does not complete the review within 30 days, the developer or person who submitted the plan may hire a third-party examiner to examine the plan. No later than 10 business days after the third-party examiner submits the documents required, the utility must: (1) approve the plans; (2) provide the third-party examiner a report of deficiencies; or (3) request additional information to ensure compliance with applicable codes. Failure to take any of these three actions within 10 business days will result in the plans being deemed approved. The bill further caps any fees for the inspection of the installation and construction of water, electric, and natural gas infrastructure to 2% of the total cost of the development. The bill defines "third-party plans examiner" to mean an engineer with expertise in water, electric, or natural gas infrastructure.</p>
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<a href="#"><u>SB1141/HB897</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Threshold for the presence of fluoride in a public water system.</u></a>
Sponsors	Sen. Crowe, Rusty; Rep. Todd, Chris
Category	Environment & Nature
Senate Status	<b>03/19/25 - Failed in Senate Energy, Agriculture &amp; Natural Resources Committee.</b>
House Status	03/26/25 - House Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee deferred to first calendar of next year.
Position	<b>Neutral</b>
Comment	This bill: (1) decreases from 1.5 milligrams per liter to 0.4 milligrams per liter the threshold for the presence of fluoride in a public water system that requires an increase in the frequency of fluoride-level testing from quarterly to monthly; and (2) requires public water systems to cease adding fluoride to drinking water supplies by July 31, 2025, and provide written notice of cessation of fluoridation to customers.
<a href="#"><u>SB1142/HB898</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Certificate of analysis for any water sold by the utility system that contains fluoride.</u></a>
Sponsors	Sen. Crowe, Rusty; Rep. Todd, Chris
Category	Utilities
Senate Status	03/27/25 - Senate passed.
House Status	02/12/25 - House sponsor changed from T. Darby to C. Todd.
Position	<b>Neutral</b>
Comment	This bill requires each utility system to obtain a certificate of analysis for any water sold by the utility system that contains fluoride, and to post the certificate and the material safety data sheet for fluoride online.
<a href="#"><u>SB1263/HB1122</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Grundy County - exception to the state regulation of biosolids.</u></a>
Sponsors	Sen. Bowling, Janice; Rep. Bricken, Rush
Category	Environment & Nature
Amendment Summary	House Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee amendment 1 (003382) creates an exception to current state law, effectively authorizing Grundy County to prohibit or regulate biosolids, in lieu of state regulation.
Senate Status	03/26/25 - Senate Energy, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee recommended. Sent to Senate Calendar Committee.
House Status	03/26/25 - House Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee deferred to first calendar of next year.
<a href="#"><u>SB1383/HB476</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Bond amount required for every insurance agency doing workers' compensation business.</u></a>
Sponsors	Sen. Watson, Bo; Rep. Vaughan, Kevin
Category	Insurance General
Senate Status	<b>03/25/25 - Taken off notice in Senate Commerce &amp; Labor Committee.</b>
House Status	03/25/25 - House Insurance Subcommittee deferred to the first calendar of 2026.

**SB1404/HB365****Action of a municipality that affects tax obligations for property owners who are located outside the municipality's corporate boundary.**

Sponsors Sen. Hensley, Joey; Rep. Fritts, Monty  
Category Local Government  
Senate Status 02/12/25 - Referred to Senate State & Local Government Committee.  
House Status **03/19/25 - Failed in House Cities & Counties Subcommittee.**

Comment This bill prohibits a municipality, or an instrumentality of a municipality, from taking an action that affects or has the potential to affect the tax obligations, fees, or other costs for real property owners whose property is located outside of a municipality's corporate boundary, unless the action is approved by the county legislative body in which such property is located. This bill may be broad enough to prohibit a municipal utility from charging a higher tap fee or other fee charged to a real property owner to get service outside the municipality's boundary than inside the boundary.

**SB6003/HB6003****Creates Hurricane Helene interest payment fund.**

Sponsors Sen. Johnson, Jack; Rep. Lamberth, William  
Category Public Finance  
Senate Status 02/10/25 - Signed by Senate speaker.  
House Status 02/11/25 - Signed by House speaker.  
Executive Status 02/12/25 - Enacted as Public Chapter 0002.

Comment This bill (1) creates a Hurricane Helene interest payment fund which can be used to pay local governments' interest costs for up to three years on money borrowed to pay eligible disaster recovery costs related to Hurricane Helene; and (2) a governor's response and recovery fund which can be used of the fund is to respond to, or recover from, an declared emergency, including agricultural recovery efforts related to an emergency, unemployment assistance related to an emergency, and business recovery assistance related to an emergency.

**SB6004/HB6002****TEMA assisting a political subdivision or local emergency management agency with recovery from disasters and emergencies on public property.**

Sponsors Sen. Johnson, Jack; Rep. Lamberth, William  
Category Veterans & Military Affairs  
Senate Status 02/10/25 - Signed by Senate speaker.  
House Status 02/11/25 - Signed by House speaker.  
Executive Status 02/12/25 - Enacted as Public Chapter 0003.

Comment Upon the declaration of an emergency, this bill (1) authorizes TEMA to assist a political subdivision or local emergency management agency with recovery from disasters and emergencies on public property at the request of the political subdivision or agency; and suspends certain eligibility requirements for unemployment benefits for eligible claimants who reside or work in counties for which this state has requested a major disaster declaration.