Tennessee Association of Utility Districts
Vital for Tennessee's future

Legislative Express

Session 2026 | Issue 11

The General Assembly Has Adjourned

The General Assembly has adjourned its 2026 Legislative Session. This edition of the Legislative Express has the final actions the legislature has taken on bills filed in 2025 and 2026 of potential interest to TAUD members. After all passed bills have been signed by the Governor and had public chapter numbers assigned to them, TAUD will publish a final Legislative Express with summaries of bills which may affect our members.

Thank you for your calls, emails, texts, and other support for TAUD's legislative efforts this year.

Bills

SB564 (HB803) - Hearing before the board of certification for water and wastewater operators regarding a revocation.

State Website

M. Pody (R), R. Grills (R) | Government Regulation
SB564: Apr. 06, 2026 - Senate passed with amendment 10 (016094), which exempts Hamilton County.
HB803: Apr. 08, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.

Increases, from 60 to 65, the number of days that a party to a hearing before the board of certification for water and wastewater operators regarding a revocation or an appeal of an order or assessment of a civil penalty by the commissioner of environment and conservation has to appeal the order or assessment. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 7; Title 8; Title 9; Title 62, Chapter 2; Title 65; Title 68, Chapter 221 and Title 69, relative to utilities.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 06, 2026: Passed
House | Apr. 08, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor

AI Summary: The deadline for a specified action under Tennessee Code Annotated Section 68-221-914(b) is extended from sixty to sixty-five days. A proposed amendment would exempt counties with populations between 220,000 and 220,100, based on the 2020 or subsequent federal census, from the provisions of this part. These changes pertain to regulations involving utilities in Tennessee.

Amendment Summary: Senate amendment 10 (016094) exempts Hamilton County from the provisions of the bill requiring the developer of a subdivision or neighborhood that proposes to construct a treatment works to submit an application to the utility serving the area in which the system is located. House amendment 1 (015451) requires a subdivision or neighborhood developer which proposes to construct treatment works, and the design and construction of such has been approved by the Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), to submit an application to the relevant utility requesting that the utility either: (1) agree to assume operational responsibility and ownership of the treatment works in writing within 30 days of receipt of the application by the utility and approve the engineered plans for the treatment works within 90 days; or (2) refuse to own and operate the treatment works. Specifies that if the utility refuses to own and operate the treatment works, it must provide written notice to the developer within 30 days of receipt of the application. Any failure by a utility to respond within such timeline is considered a refusal to own or operate the treatment works. Additionally, requires the utility to provide written notice to the Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation (TBOUR) within seven business days of refusal, upon which the utility is released from any future operational responsibility and ownership of the treatment works, unless the utility subsequently chooses to assume such responsibilities and ownership rights pursuant to a future contract between the developer and utility. Prohibits the utility from restricting the availability of water services provided by the utility based upon such utility's refusal to own or operate the treatment works. Establishes that a refusal received from a utility authorizes the developer to contract with another utility for ownership and operation of the treatment works, subject to the rights of the utility to which the initial application for approval was submitted. Authorizes the initial, refusing utility to negotiate with the current owner and operator of the treatment works to allow it to assume operational responsibilities and ownership rights to the treatment works for up to two years after the date the initial utility received the application. Upon at least 50 percent of the units within a development being issued a certificate of use and occupancy, the local government for the area in which a treatment works is or will be installed must require the developer to file a reasonable performance bond for the first two years that the treatment works is in operation, in an amount determined by such local government when submitting the application to the utility; however, the amount of the bond must in an amount equal to 100 percent of the total replacement cost. Further, requires the operator of the treatment works to file a performance bond to be issued for the third through tenth years of operation, which much be equal to 50 percent of the total replacement cost. Establishes additional requirements upon developers and applicable utilities prior to the transfer of ownership or operation of a treatment works. Establishes that any approval of engineering reports, design documents, plans, and specifications approved by TDEC for sewage works construction projects and wastewater facilities requiring plan approvals associated with permits for decentralized systems using land application, expire 12 months from the date of issuance, unless (1) construction has commenced or (2) the owner obtained an extension, pursuant to this act. Authorizes TDEC to grant extensions in increments not to exceed 12 months, up to a cumulative maximum of 60 months, from the original approval date. Requires TDEC to maintain an electronic tracking system for approvals and extensions. Requires any construction of a decentralized wastewater system using land application to be completed within 60 months of the initial engineering plan approval, and if such timeline is not met, the owner is required to submit new plans, engineering reports, and specifications to TDEC for review and approval. Requires TDEC, no later than July 31, 2027, to promulgate rules applicable to the design and construction of decentralized wastewater treatment systems using land application, which must apply to permits issued pursuant to the Water Quality Control Act (Act), as well as plan approvals, as they relate to decentralized wastewater systems using land application. Requires a developer to demonstrate that the treatment works have the ability to meet or exceed the greater of the following at the time of permit approval: TDEC's published minimum treatment limit standards or the actual treatment limits being delivered by a similarly situated system in the same operating utility. This legislation will take effect July 1, 2026, and applies to conduct or construction occurring on or after such date.

Priority: ●●●High Position: ●Oppose

Comments:

> Don Scholes, 1/29/2026, 11:06 AM: An amendment has been filed to this bill which will allow the developer of a new subdivision to construct a wastewater system for a new development in accordance with TDEC guidelines and give the existing wastewater utility the first right of refusal to take over and operate the system upon completion. The amendment allows the developer to completely bypass the utility. TAUD is opposed to this bill with this amendment. The bill amendment appears to address new subdivisions to be served with decentralized wastewater systems with drip irrigation.

SB795 (HB1173) - Purchasing of goods and services by local governments without bid or quotations.

State Website

P. Bailey (R), R. Williams (R) | Government Contracts
SB795: Feb. 02, 2026 - Senate passed.
HB1173: Mar. 27, 2025 - Sponsor(s) Added.

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.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 12, Chapter 3, relative to public purchases.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Referred to Subcommittee
House | Recommended By Full Committee

AI Summary: Definitions of "goods" are expanded to include improvements to real property, excluding the property itself, under Tennessee public purchasing laws. Local governments are authorized to purchase goods and services directly from federal General Services Administration (GSA) schedule contracts without bidding, provided prices do not exceed GSA contract prices and local terms may replace GSA terms. Restrictions on purchasing motor vehicles are specified, allowing exceptions only for special-purpose vehicles.

Comments:

> Don Scholes, 1/29/2026, 11:14 AM: Adds to current law that local government is not required to meet terms and conditions of GSA contract for goods, but can only pay no more than price in GSA contract to purchase goods without competitive bidding

HB898 (SB1142) - Certificate of analysis for any water sold by the utility system that contains fluoride.

State Website

C. Todd (R), R. Crowe (R) | Utilities
HB898: Apr. 15, 2026 - Taken off notice in House Finance, Ways & Means Subcommittee.
SB1142: Mar. 31, 2025 - Rcvd. from S., held on H. desk.

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.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 7, Chapter 36; Title 7, Chapter 82 and Title 68, Chapter 221, relative to fluoride in water.

Legislative Progress: House | Feb. 17, 2026: Recommended By Full Committee
Senate | Passed

AI Summary: Requirements are imposed on utility systems in Tennessee to obtain and publicly post a certificate of analysis and material safety data sheet for any fluoride in water sold. The information must be posted on the utility system's website or the board of utility regulation's website if the utility lacks its own site. The effective date for these provisions is set for July 1, 2026.

SB1566 (HB1500) - Humphreys County - Humphreys County Water Authority.

State Website

K. Roberts (R), J. Reedy (R) | Local Government
SB1566: Mar. 30, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
HB1500: Mar. 16, 2026 - House passed.

Local bill that creates the Humphreys County Water Authority.

Caption: AN ACT to create the Humphreys County Water Authority.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Mar. 18, 2026: Recommended By Full Committee
House | Jan. 12, 2026: Filed

AI Summary: Humphreys County Water Authority is created as a public governmental body with powers to plan, acquire, operate, and finance water and wastewater systems within Humphreys County and surrounding areas. A board of commissioners is established with specified appointment and residency requirements, and the Authority is granted powers to issue bonds, notes, and refunding bonds, enter contracts, set rates, and exercise eminent domain for system development. Exclusive service areas are designated upon system acquisition, and the Authority's operations are exempt from state regulation and taxation, with financial and operational oversight provisions included.

SB1575 - Published notice of public meeting.

State Website

A. Lowe (R) | Government Regulation
Feb. 05, 2026 - Withdrawn in Senate.

As introduced, authorizes a governmental entity to publish notices of public meetings on a secure website of the governmental body. Authorizes a person to request an electronic or hard copy of an e-newsletter or notice published by the governmental body if the governmental body provides such documents electronically.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 8, Chapter 44, Part 1, relative to public meetings.

Legislative Progress: Jan. 12, 2026: Filed

AI Summary: Adequate notice of public meetings may be provided by publishing on a governmental body's secure internet website instead of traditional newspaper publication. A mechanism must be established for individuals to sign up to receive meeting notices and e-newsletters electronically or by regular mail. These provisions amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 8, Chapter 44, Part 1, under Senate Bill 1575.

SB1595 (HB1673) - Continuing education requirements for members of utility governing bodies.

State Website

E. Jackson (R), R. Bricken (R) | Utilities
SB1595: Apr. 16, 2026 - Senate passed with amendment 1 (015992).
HB1673: Apr. 22, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.

As introduced, makes various changes to laws regarding utilities, including the procedure for consolidation of utilities and continuing education requirements for members of utility governing bodies.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 7, Chapter 34; Title 7, Chapter 82; Title 9, Chapter 21 and Title 68, Chapter 221, relative to utility regulation.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 16, 2026: Passed

House | Apr. 22, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor

AI Summary: Utility regulation is amended to revise procedures for utility district consolidations, allowing mergers with municipalities, counties, or utility authorities and specifying public hearing and approval processes by county mayors. Financial oversight is enhanced by requiring public access to audit results and clarifying board jurisdiction over wholesale-only utility systems. Provisions establish criteria for declaring utilities ailing and authorize board-ordered mergers to ensure financial stability and service continuity. Continuing education requirements are imposed on utility system governing body members, including minimum hours, reporting, and sanctions for noncompliance. A proposed amendment would modify consolidation definitions, procedures, and governance structures, clarify audit and financial distress provisions, and expand continuing education rules; this amendment has not yet been adopted. The act takes effect July 1, 2026.

Amendment Summary: House amendment 1 (013215) makes various changes to the Utility District Law of 1937 (Law), including or with regards to: (1) continuing education requirements applicable to board members governing certain utility systems; (2) sanctions and clawback provisions for certain utility systems to recover payments previously made to board members who fail to meet continuing education requirements; (3) ineligibility, petitions to sanctions, and reinstatement of board member eligibility; (4) Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation's (TBOUR) authority over government joint ventures which supply or treat water or wastewater for wholesale use only to other governments; (5) which utility systems must report to or gain approval from TBOUR with regards to a proposal to supply wholesale water service or to treat wastewater for wholesale; (6) TBOUR's authority to allow a utility system primarily serving as a wholesale provider to provide a minimal amount of retail service; (7) TBOUR's authority to conduct feasibility studies upon ailing utility systems, in certain instances, with regards to any merger with a surrounding utility system; (8) the criteria under which ailing utility systems remain in financial distress; and (9) the creation, consolidation, or merger of utility districts. Authorizes utility systems to make internal loans in accordance with procedures and guidelines established by the Comptroller of the Treasury (COT). House amendment 2 (014585) authorizes the Tellico Village Property Owners Association's (POA) water and wastewater utility services (Utility) to petition the respective county mayor for incorporation of the Utility as a utility district. Places the Utility under the jurisdiction of the TBOUR. Senate amendment 1 (015992) makes various changes to the Utility District Law of 1937 (Law), including or with regards to: (1) continuing education requirements applicable to board members governing certain utility systems; (2) sanctions and clawback provisions for certain utility systems to recover payments previously made to board members who fail to meet continuing education requirements; (3) ineligibility, petitions to sanctions, and reinstatement of board member eligibility; (4) Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation's (TBOUR) authority over government joint ventures which supply or treat water or wastewater for wholesale use only to other governments; (5) which utility systems must report to or gain approval from TBOUR with regards to a proposal to supply wholesale water service or to treat wastewater for wholesale; (6) TBOUR's authority to allow a utility system primarily serving as a wholesale provider to provide a minimal amount of retail service; (7) TBOUR's authority to conduct feasibility studies upon ailing utility systems, in certain instances, with regards to any merger with a surrounding utility system; (8) the criteria under which ailing utility systems remain in financial distress; and (9) the creation, consolidation, or mergers involving utility districts. Authorizes utility systems to make internal loans in accordance with procedures and guidelines established by the Comptroller of the Treasury (COT). Authorizes the Tellico Village Property Owners Association's (POA) water and wastewater utility services (Utility) to petition the respective county mayor for incorporation of the Utility as a utility district. Places the Utility under the jurisdiction of the TBOUR.

SB1600 - Requires certain data centers to register and report utility usage and rates to TPUC.

State Website

L. Lamar (D) | Utilities
Feb. 05, 2026 - Withdrawn in Senate.

As introduced, requires certain data centers to register with the Tennessee Public Utilities Commission; requires electric and water utilities that provide service to registered data centers to report usage and rates to the commission; requires the commission's executive director to compile and publish certain information based on reports received from utilities. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 10; Title 62; Title 65; Title 68 and Title 69, relative to data centers.

Legislative Progress: Jan. 12, 2026: Filed

AI Summary: Registration requirements are imposed on data centers in Tennessee with a power capacity exceeding 20 megawatts, mandating submission of operational and utility service information to the Tennessee Public Utility Commission starting January 1, 2027. Electric and water utilities are required to report monthly usage and service rates for these data centers, with the commission compiling and publishing this data publicly. Civil penalties and injunctive relief are authorized for noncompliance, and the commission is empowered to promulgate rules to implement these provisions under Senate Bill 1600.

Comments:

> Don Scholes, 1/29/2026, 11:33 AM: As written, this bill requires water utilities providing water service to a data center to report usage to TPUC. If it moves forward, TAUD may seek to amend to require reporting usage to Comptroller rather than TPUC.

SB1653 (HB1456) - Increases the state's liability limits for damages in tort claims.

State Website

T. Gardenhire (R), G. Bulso (R) | Tort Liability
SB1653: Apr. 20, 2026 - Senate Finance, Ways & Means deferred to 04/21/26.
HB1456: Apr. 15, 2026 - Taken off notice in House Finance, Ways & Means Subcommittee.

Increases the amount for which the state may be liable for damages in causes of action arising in tort from $300,000 per claimant to $500,000 per claimant and from $1 million per occurrence to $1.5 million per occurrence.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 9, Chapter 8 and Title 29, relative to damages.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Jan. 21, 2026: Referred to Committee

House | Jan. 14, 2026: Referred to House Civil Justice Subcommittee

AI Summary: Damage caps for claims under Tennessee Code Annotated Title 9, Chapter 8, Section 9-8-307(e) are increased from $300,000 to $500,000 for individual claims and from $1,000,000 to $1,500,000 for aggregate claims. The changes take effect on July 1, 2026.

SB1657 (HB1724) - Requires local approval of tipping fee for application of sludge from water treatment plants onto agricultural lands.

State Website

T. Gardenhire (R), R. Travis (R) | Local Government
SB1657: Feb. 11, 2026 - Taken off notice in Senate Energy, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.
HB1724: Jan. 22, 2026 - Referred to House Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee.

As introduced, requires local approval of a tipping fee for application of sludge from water treatment plants onto agricultural lands, with proceeds earmarked for water treatment facilities, as a condition of such applications continuing in a locality. Places a moratorium on certain permits in jurisdictions that do not provide such local approval. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 1 - 3-105; Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 13, Chapter 7; Title 43; Title 68 and Title 69, relative to waste from waste water facilities.

Legislative Progress:
Senate | Jan. 21, 2026: Referred to Committee
House | Jan. 22, 2026: Referred to Subcommittee

AI Summary: Authority is granted to counties, municipalities, and metropolitan governments in Tennessee to approve the application of sludge from wastewater treatment facilities to agricultural land within their jurisdictions by adopting a two-thirds vote resolution establishing a tipping fee per ton of sludge applied. The collected fees must be used exclusively for constructing and maintaining wastewater treatment or processing facilities in the respective jurisdiction. Permits for sludge application to agricultural land will only be issued or renewed if the land is located in a jurisdiction that has authorized such application, effective July 1, 2026.

SB1679 (HB1672) - Allows local governments to issue grant anticipation notes.

State Website

R. Crowe (R), R. Jones (R) | Local Government
SB1679: Feb. 12, 2026 - Senate passed.
HB1672: Mar. 23, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.

As introduced, makes changes to the process by which local governments may issue and sell grant anticipation notes. Authorizes the comptroller to approve certain notes issued by a local government if the local government demonstrates that a natural disaster has caused economic distress.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 9, Chapter 13, Part 2 and Title 9, Chapter 21, Part 7, relative to local government debt.

Legislative Progress:
Senate | Feb. 12, 2026: Passed
House | Feb. 11, 2026: Recommended By Full Committee

AI Summary: Local governments in Tennessee are authorized to issue notes maturing beyond the fiscal year with approval from the comptroller and state funding board guarantees, including provisions for economic distress due to natural disasters. Interest-bearing grant anticipation notes for public works projects are permitted, secured by anticipated grant funds and optionally by general obligation or revenue pledges, with required comptroller approval prior to issuance. Provisions clarify that capital outlay or bond anticipation notes may be issued alongside grant anticipation notes, provided their proceeds do not pay off the grant anticipation notes (SB 1679).

SB1682 (HB2061) - Requires certain data centers to register and report utility usage and rates to the TPUC.

State Website

L. Lamar (D), J. Towns Jr (D) | Utilities
SB1682: Mar. 03, 2026 - Failed in Senate Commerce & Labor Committee.
HB2061: Mar. 04, 2026 - Set for House Business and Utilities Subcommittee on Mar 11, 2026.

As introduced, requires certain data centers to register with the Tennessee Public Utilities Commission. Requires electric and water utilities that provide service to registered data centers to report usage and rates to the commission. Requires the commission's executive director to compile and publish certain information based on reports received from utilities.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 10; Title 62; Title 65; Title 68 and Title 69, relative to data centers.

Legislative Progress:
Senate | Jan. 21, 2026: Referred to Committee
House | Feb. 04, 2026: Referred to House Business and Utilities Subcommittee

AI Summary: Data centers in Tennessee with power capacity over 20 MW are required to register with the Tennessee Public Utility Commission starting January 1, 2027, providing detailed operational and utility service information. Electric and water utilities must report monthly usage and service rates for registered data centers, with the commission publishing these reports publicly. Civil penalties and injunctive relief are authorized for noncompliance, and the commission is empowered to promulgate rules to implement these provisions under HB 2061/SB 1682.

SB1689 (HB1831) - Prohibits using or selling personal identifying information from government records for commercial purposes.

State Website

R. Briggs (R), L. Russell (R) | Media & Publishing
SB1689: Feb. 05, 2026 - Withdrawn in Senate.
HB1831: Mar. 11, 2026 - Taken off notice in House Public Service Subcommittee.

As introduced, creates an offense for using or selling an individual's personal identifying information obtained from a governmental entity for commercial use, punishable as a Class B misdemeanor with a fine of $500. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4; Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 10, Chapter 7, Part 5; Title 12; Title 37, Chapter 2, Part 4; Title 39; Title 47, Chapter 18, Part 33; Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 8; Title 55, Chapter 25; Title 62, Chapter 36; Ti tle 63, Chapter 10, Part 4; Title 66, Chapter 29, Part 1 and Title 68, Chapter 18, Part 2, relative to public records.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Jan. 21, 2026: Referred to Committee
House | Feb. 02, 2026: Referred to Committee

AI Summary: Use of personal identifying information obtained from Tennessee governmental entities is restricted to non-commercial purposes unless the individual expressly authorizes commercial use. Persons requesting such information must present valid identification and sign an affidavit affirming the information will not be used or sold commercially. Violations are classified as Class B misdemeanors with a $500 fine per offense.

SB1713 (HB1664) - Requires state and local entities to annually certify they have not used DEI preferences. State Website

J. Johnson (R), A. Maberry (R) | State Government
SB1713: Apr. 22, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
HB1664: Apr. 21, 2026 - House passed with amendment 2 (015709), which authorizes the attorney general and reporter to investigate any allegation that a state department, agency, or other unit of state government is acting in violation of any state law prohibiting the use of a discriminatory preference in an effort to increase diversity, equity, or inclusion.

As introduced, requires the executive head of each state department or agency, local government, and public institution of higher education to submit an annual attestation to the comptroller of the treasury that such entity has not implemented a discriminatory preference to increase diversity, equity, or inclusion. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4; Title 5; Title 6; Title 7 and Title 49, relative to discriminatory preferences.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 22, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor
House | Apr. 21, 2026: Passed

AI Summary: Annual attestations of compliance with prohibitions on discriminatory preferences are required to be submitted by the executive heads of state departments, county governments, municipal governments, metropolitan governments, and public institutions of higher education to the Tennessee comptroller of the treasury starting January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter. The scope of reporting includes all units of government and higher education campuses subject to the specified Tennessee Code sections. This requirement is established by amendments to Tennessee Code Annotated Titles 4, 5, 6, 7, and 49 under SB 1713/HB 1664.

Amendment Summary: Senate amendment 1 (014163) requires the executive head of each department, agency, or other unit of state government; the executive head of each county, municipal, metropolitan government; and the executive head or president of each public institution of higher education or the chief executive head of any of its campuses to submit an annual attestation of compliance with the prohibition on their use of discriminatory preferences to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion to the Comptroller of the Treasury (COT) by January 1, 2027 and by each January 1 thereafter. House amendment 2 (015709) authorizes the attorney general and reporter to investigate any allegation that a state department, agency, or other unit of state government is acting in violation of any state law prohibiting the use of a discriminatory preference in an effort to increase diversity, equity, or inclusion.

SB1720 (HB1659) - Confidentiality of addresses on nominating petitions for the office of judge, chancellor or district attorney general. State Website

F. Haile (R), J. Moon (R) | Media & Publishing
SB1720: Apr. 06, 2026 - Senate passed with amendment 1 (014365) and amendment 2 (016923). Senate amendment 1 (014365) removes the application materials submitted by an individual when seeking employment with the governmental entity exemption. Senate amendment 2 (016923) expands the public records exception to include the addresses on a nominating petition for the office of judge, chancellor, district attorney general, and public defender, unless requested by a candidate or law enforcement authority in anticipation of or as part of a contest of candidacy or contest of election. Requires a person requesting such information to certify on a form provided by the Coordinator of Elections the reason for the request under the penalty of perjury. .
HB1659: Apr. 14, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.

As introduced, makes the addresses on a nominating petition for the office of judge, chancellor, district attorney general, and public defender confidential; makes the application materials submitted by an individual when seeking employment with a governmental entity confidential.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2 and Title 10, Chapter 7, relative to public records.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 06, 2026: Passed
House | Apr. 14, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor

AI Summary: Addresses on nominating petitions for judicial, chancellor, district attorney general, and public defender offices are made confidential and exempt from public inspection under Tennessee law. Application materials submitted for government employment are also exempt from disclosure. A proposed amendment to SB1720 would allow disclosure of petition addresses to candidates or law enforcement involved in election contests, requiring a sworn certification of the request's purpose. These provisions amend Tennessee Code Annotated Title 2 and Title 10, Chapter 7, and take effect upon becoming law.

Amendment Summary: Senate amendment 1 (014365) removes the application materials submitted by an individual when seeking employment with the governmental entity exemption. Senate amendment 2 (016923) expands the public records exception to include the addresses on a nominating petition for the office of judge, chancellor, district attorney general, and public defender, unless requested by a candidate or law enforcement authority in anticipation of or as part of a contest of candidacy or contest of election. Requires a person requesting such information to certify on a form provided by the Coordinator of Elections the reason for the request under the penalty of perjury.

SB1769 (HB1843) - Prohibits utility rate increases for customers aged 65 and older with an age verification process established by the Tennessee Public Utilities Commission. State Website

L. Lamar (D), L. Miller (D) | Utilities
SB1769: Mar. 24, 2026 - Taken off notice in Senate State & Local Government.
HB1843: Mar. 18, 2026 - House Business & Utilities Subcommittee deferred to summer study after adopting amendment 1 (013164).

As introduced, prohibits a utility that provides electric, water, wastewater, or natural gas services from increasing the rate charged to customers who are 65 years of age or older upon notice that the customer qualifies for such rate cap pursuant to an age verification process established by the Tennessee

public utilities commission by rule. Requires notification to customers of the rate cap program within 90 days of a final rule. Authorizes TPUC to promulgate a rule to develop an age verification and notification process. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4; Title 7; Title 47, Chapter 18; Title 64; Title 65; Title 67 and Title 68, relative to utilities.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Jan. 22, 2026: Referred to Committee

House | Mar. 18, 2026: Recommended By Full Committee

AI Summary: A rate cap is imposed on electric, water, wastewater, and natural gas services for senior citizen customers aged 65 or older, effective January 1, 2027, provided they notify their utility through an age verification process established by the Tennessee Public Utilities Commission. Utilities must notify all customers about the availability of this rate cap within 90 days of the commission's rule adoption, and noncompliance may result in sanctions and civil penalties payable to the commission. The commission is authorized to promulgate rules and enforce these provisions under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act.

SB1771 (HB1720) - Allows certain counties to restrict municipal or regional zoning authority beyond municipal boundaries. State Website

A. Lowe (R), T. Hicks (R) | Local Government
SB1771: Apr. 21, 2026 - Senate passed with amendment 1 (015729).
HB1720: Apr. 22, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.

As introduced, authorizes certain counties to adopt a resolution prohibiting a municipality or regional zoning commission from exercising zoning authority outside of the boundaries of the municipality. Specifies that bill is applicable to counties with a population of less than 341,500 according to the 2020 or a subsequent federal census. Also specifies that bill is not applicable to a county with a metropolitan form of government.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 5; Title 6; Title 7 and Title 13, relative to zoning outside of municipal boundaries.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 21, 2026: Passed

House | Apr. 22, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor

AI Summary: Zoning authority outside municipal boundaries is restricted by prohibiting municipalities and regional planning commissions from adopting zoning plans or ordinances beyond their limits. Counties with populations under 341,500, excluding those with metropolitan governments, may nullify existing extraterritorial zoning by majority vote, allowing interlocal agreements to manage ongoing development obligations. A proposed amendment has not yet been adopted. This law takes effect immediately upon enactment.

Amendment Summary: Senate amendment 1 (015729) authorizes a county legislative body, upon adoption of a resolution, to prohibit a municipality from adopting a zoning plan, ordinance, rule, or regional zoning ordinance exercising jurisdiction over zoning, including development, infrastructure, or land use, outside the boundaries of the municipality. Applies to counties with a population less than 341,500, according to the 2020 or a subsequent federal census; however, this act does not apply to any county with a metropolitan form of government. Upon adoption of a resolution, any existing zoning plan, ordinance, rule, or regional zoning ordinance exercising jurisdiction over zoning, including development, infrastructure, or land use, outside the boundaries of a municipality is void and unenforceable. Authorizes a county and municipality to enter into an interlocal or other agreement for the completion of or for the process of winding down development, infrastructure, or land use obligations in progress prior to the adoption of such resolution. Authorizes a developer to be party to any such interlocal agreement, with consent of the respective county and municipal governing bodies. Requires a person filing a preliminary plat, final plat, site plan, or building permit within a county which has adopted the provisions of this act, and for which site, the location is outside a municipal boundary but within the municipality's urban growth boundary, to include a declaration of whether the person seeks to have the property annexed by a municipality. Establishes conditions based upon either approval or disapproval of such declaration regarding annexation.

SB1792 - Rules for utility relocation cost reimbursement and mandates minimum reimbursement for high-cost projects. State Website

S. Reeves (R) | Transportation General
Feb. 05, 2026 - Withdrawn in Senate.

As introduced, requires the commissioner of transportation to establish rules governing reimbursement of relocation costs to a utility. Requires reimbursement of at least $2.5 million for projects with utility relocation costs exceeding $2.5 million. Requires the department to approve a utility owner's plan to accomplish the proposed new location of utility facilities in highway rights-of-way if the proposal would effectuate the relocation at the lowest cost to the utility's ratepayers. Makes other related revisions. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4 and Title 54, relative to utility relocation projects by the department of transportation.

Legislative Progress: Jan. 22, 2026: Referred to Committee

AI Summary: Senate Bill 1792 amends Tennessee Code Annotated to align the statutory definition of "utility" with existing Department of Transportation policy, explicitly including modern broadband and fiber optic infrastructure for relocation reimbursement. It establishes a statutory minimum reimbursement cap of $2.5 million for utility relocation projects exceeding that amount, while granting the transportation commissioner discretion to authorize higher payments based on factors such as project complexity, utility impacts, and ratepayer protection. Rules are mandated to govern reimbursement procedures, promote financial prudence, and ensure equitable treatment of utilities and their customers during highway construction-related relocations.

SB1810 (HB1744) - Ch. 602, Rounding transactions to the nearest nickel. State Website

S. Reeves (R), C. Baum (R) | Commercial Law
SB1810: Mar. 23, 2026 - Companion bill became Public Chapter 0602.
HB1744: Mar. 23, 2026 - Enacted as Public Chapter 0602, effective March 18, 2026.

As enacted, authorizes a private entity that is engaged in business with the public and accepts cash payments to round off all figures used in the transaction amount to the nearest nickel, if exact change is not available; authorizes a financial institution that provides currency in exchange for a payment instrument received to round off all figures used in the transaction amount to the nearest nickel, if exact change is not available.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 9; Title 45; Title 47, Chapter 50; Title 47, Chapter 18 and Title 67, relative to cash transactions.

Public Chapter: 602

Legislative Progress: Senate | Mar. 23, 2026: P C Assigned

House | Mar. 23, 2026: P C Assigned

AI Summary: Cash transactions in Tennessee may be rounded to the nearest nickel when pennies are no longer in production and exact change is unavailable, with specific rounding rules based on the final cents of the transaction amount. Rounding applies only to cash payments or the cash portion of mixed-tender transactions and does not affect electronic payments or the precise calculation and remittance of sales tax. A proposed amendment to HB 1744/SB 1810 would maintain these provisions but has not yet been adopted. The law takes effect upon enactment.

Amendment Summary: House amendment 1 (012839) authorizes a private entity, or its employees or contractors, engaged in business with the public and accepting cash payments for transactions, or a financial institution that provides currency in exchange for a payment instrument received, to round to the nearest nickel if exact change is unavailable. Specifies that rounding to the nearest nickel does not apply to electronic transactions or sales tax calculations. Exempts rounding a cash transaction to the nearest nickel if the penny is no longer in production from claim eligibility under the Consumer Protection Act of 1977.

SB1892 (HB1928) - TDEC approval of proposed subdivision plans. State Website

J. Bowling (R), R. Bricken (R) | Environment & Nature
SB1892: Feb. 03, 2026 - Withdrawn in Senate.
HB1928: Feb. 02, 2026 - Introduced in the House.

As introduced, requires proposed subdivision plans to be approved by a local planning commission or other agency authorized to approve such plans prior to their submission to the department of environment and conservation for approval rather than such plans being approved by the department first. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 13 and Title 68, Chapter 221, relative to permits.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Feb. 02, 2026: Referred to Committee

House | Jan. 22, 2026: Filed

AI Summary: Approval of proposed subdivisions is conditioned on local planning commission or authorized agency approval, and the Department of Environment and Conservation is required to update its website to allow upload of official subdivision approval documentation. Tennessee Code Annotated Section 68-221-407 is amended to reflect these changes, effective July 1, 2026, applying to permit applications approved after that date.

Comments:

> Don Scholes, 1/29/2026, 11:53 AM: This is probably a caption bill. As written, it appears to give the local planning commission the ability to approve water and wastewater infrastructure plans before the submission to TDEC. Poorly drafted is this is the intent. TAUD needs to oppose a written.

SB1922 (HB1705) - Requires state and local government employers to use E-Verify for new hires. State Website

R. Briggs (R), T. Rudd (R) | Government Regulation
SB1922: Mar. 30, 2026 - Senate passed with amendment 1 (015864).
HB1705: Apr. 06, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.

As introduced, beginning July 1, 2026, requires all state and local governmental employers to verify the work authorization status of each prospective employee through the federal E-Verify program prior to employment. Authorizes the attorney general and reporter to enforce compliance with the requirement against local governments and subjects a noncompliant local government to the withholding of all funds of this state allocated to the local government via grant, contract, or statute, including, but not limited to, state-shared taxes. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4; Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 8; Title 12 and Title 50, relative to employment.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Mar. 30, 2026: Passed

House | Apr. 06, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor

AI Summary: Employment verification requirements are imposed on Tennessee state and local government employers, mandating the use of the federal E-Verify program to confirm work authorization for new hires starting July 1, 2026, with a temporary allowance to continue using third-party Form I-9 verification vendors until January 1, 2027. Employers must maintain documentation of E-Verify results for the duration of employment, and the attorney general is authorized to investigate violations and withhold state funds from noncompliant local governments or local education agencies. A proposed amendment clarifies the prohibition on adopting policies contrary to these verification requirements but has not been enacted.

Amendment Summary: Senate amendment 1 (015864) specifies that an employer who currently uses a third-party vendor for Form I-9 verification for prospective employees may continue to use such vendor until January 1, 2027, at which time the employer must begin using the E-Verify program.

SB1932 (HB1862) - Confidentiality requirements for certain personal information of elected state and local public officials. State Website

J. Yarbro (D), S. Brooks (D) | Media & Publishing
SB1932: Apr. 14, 2026 - Referred to Senate Calendar Committee.
HB1862: Apr. 08, 2026 - House State & Local Government deferred to first calendar in January.

As introduced, requires that certain personally identifying information of elected state and local public officials be maintained confidentially with limited exceptions.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2 and Title 10, Chapter 7, relative to elected public officials.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Feb. 02, 2026: Referred to Senate State and Local Government Committee

House | Feb. 02, 2026: Referred to Committee

AI Summary: Personally identifying information of elected state and local public officials held by government entities is made confidential and exempt from public inspection under Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 10, Chapter 7, Section 504(f). Confidential

information must be redacted when possible but cannot be used to deny access to otherwise public records. Exceptions allow access by law enforcement, courts, government agencies performing official functions, and when officials authorize release. A proposed amendment would add an exception permitting consumer reporting agencies to access this confidential information under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act. The act takes effect July 1, 2026.

Amendment Summary: Senate State & Local Government amendment 1 (016987) requires that certain personally identifying information of elected state and local public officials be maintained confidentially and not open for public inspection, unless law enforcement agencies, courts, or other governmental agencies are performing official functions, records are currently open under state law, or authorized by the official.

SB1958 (HB1971) - Limits the ability of individuals to seek court orders challenging the legality or constitutionality of state government actions. State Website

J. Stevens (R), A. Farmer (R) | Judiciary
SB1958: Apr. 02, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
HB1971: Mar. 30, 2026 - House passed with amendment 1 (014939).

As introduced, removes the right of a cause of action for any affected person who seeks declaratory and injunctive relief in any action brought regarding the legality or constitutionality of a state governmental action.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 1, Chapter 3 and Title 49, relative to causes of action.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 02, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor
House | Mar. 30, 2026: Passed

AI Summary: Sovereign immunity is reaffirmed by repealing Tennessee Code Annotated Section 1-3-121 and limiting causes of action against the state. A cause of action is established for declaratory or injunctive relief against political subdivisions of Tennessee regarding governmental actions, excluding claims for damages or challenges to state statutes. A proposed amendment clarifies that this cause of action does not limit other causes or waivers of sovereign immunity to vindicate constitutional rights under the Tennessee or United States Constitutions.

Amendment Summary: House amendment 1 (014939) limits the cause of action for any affected person to seek declaratory and injunctive relief against a government action to just actions of political subdivisions of this state. Specifies that such cause of action does not apply to challenges to the validity or constitutionality of state law. Authorizes an individual to seek damages and legal costs from an institution of higher education, if the individual believes that they were subjected to discrimination, on the basis of one's race, color, ethnicity, or national origin, including those resulting from affirmative action practices, by an institution of higher education.

SB1962 (HB1983) - Limits hard water levels in public water systems. State Website

M. Pody (R), R. Grills (R) | Utilities
SB1962: Apr. 08, 2026 - Taken off notice in Senate Finance, Ways & Means.
HB1983: Mar. 18, 2026 - House Agriculture Subcommittee deferred to final calendar 2.

As introduced, establishes that public water systems have a maximum allowable hardwater level of 180 mg/L, measured as calcium carbonate equivalents. Creates compliance and reporting requirements. Exempts measurements that exceed the limit due to seasonal runoff in certain circumstances.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 221, Part 7, relative to hardwater standards.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Mar. 11, 2026: Recommended By Full Committee
House | Jan. 22, 2026: Filed

AI Summary: Maximum hardwater level standards are established for public water systems in Tennessee, setting a limit of 180 mg/L as calcium carbonate equivalents. Compliance is required for systems receiving state funds for upgrades costing $25,000 or more starting July 1, 2026, with exemptions allowed for seasonal runoff under specified conditions. Monitoring and reporting of hardwater levels are mandated, and enforcement is assigned to the relevant department. A proposed amendment would limit these requirements to community water systems serving 10,000 or more people, requiring such systems to demonstrate average hardwater levels below 180 mg/L before receiving state funds unless water softening treatment is included in upgrades, and it modifies the seasonal runoff exemption provisions accordingly.

Amendment Summary: Senate Energy, Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee amendment 1 (014549) requires a community water system serving a population of 10,000 or more persons that seeks state funds for a system upgrade to first demonstrate to the Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) that the system's average hardwater level in the preceding calendar year was below 180 milligrams per liter (180mg/L). Requires that if a community water system's average hardwater level equaled or exceeded 180 mg/L in the preceding calendar year, the water system is ineligible to receive state funds for a system upgrade, unless the system demonstrates to the Department that water softening treatment will be part of the system upgrade for which the water system is seeking state funds. Exempts the receipt of state funds for routine maintenance, repairs that cost less than $25,000, administrative expenses, or operational costs from triggering a demonstration that a system's average hardwater level in the preceding calendar year was below 180mg/L. Establishes that a community water system serving a population of 10,000 or more persons that demonstrates hardwater levels exceeding 180 mg/L directly caused by seasonal runoff are temporarily exempt from the maximum hardwater standard during the affected period. Requires public water systems subject to the requirements of this section to monitor hardwater levels and include the results of the monitoring in the annual water quality reports.

Priority: High Position: Oppose

SB2022 (HB2383) - Commissioner of TDOT to establish rules governing reimbursement of relocation costs to a utility. State Website

S. Reeves (R), K. Vaughan (R) | Transportation General
SB2022: Mar. 11, 2026 - Taken off notice in Senate Transportation.
HB2383: Feb. 05, 2026 - Referred to House Transportation Subcommittee.

As introduced, requires the commissioner of transportation to establish rules governing reimbursement of relocation costs to a utility; requires reimbursement of at least $2.5 million for projects with utility relocation costs exceeding $2.5 million; requires the department to approve a utility owner's

plan to accomplish the proposed new location of utility facilities in highway rights-of-way if the proposal would effectuate the relocation at the lowest cost to the utility and its ratepayers; makes other related revisions.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4 and Title 54, relative to utility relocation projects.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Jan. 22, 2026: Filed

House | Feb. 05, 2026: Referred to Subcommittee

AI Summary: Utility relocation reimbursement policies are codified and expanded to explicitly include modern broadband and fiber optic infrastructure under HB 2383 (Tennessee). A statutory minimum reimbursement cap of $2.5 million per project is established, with discretionary authority granted to the Commissioner to approve higher amounts based on factors such as project complexity, utility impacts, and ratepayer protection. Rules are mandated to govern reimbursement procedures, utility obligations, and dispute resolution, effective July 1, 2026.

SB2057 (HB2385) - Utility system providing waste water service.

State Website

B. Taylor (R), K. Vaughan (R) | Utilities
SB2057: Apr. 22, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
HB2385: Apr. 21, 2026 - House passed with amendment 2 (016052).

As introduced, clarifies that a utility system providing waste water service must provide a connection to the owner of real property for waste water service when the utility system has an existing gravity sewer line located adjacent to the owner's property, not just where the utility system has an existing gravity sewer line on such property.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 7, Chapter 35; Title 7, Chapter 82 and Title 68, Chapter 221, relative to sewer systems.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 22, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor

House | Apr. 21, 2026: Passed

AI Summary: Connection to wastewater service is required upon request of a property owner when a utility system has an existing gravity sewer line or sewer force main located on or adjacent to the owner's property within public easements or rights-of-way. The proposed amendment to HB 2385/SB 2057 (Tennessee) expands the conditions for mandatory wastewater connections to include sewer force mains accessible by appropriate technology. The act takes effect upon becoming law to ensure public welfare.

Amendment Summary: House amendment 2 (016052) requires a utility system under the regulation of the Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation (TBOUR) which provides wastewater service to provide a connection, upon request of the owner of real property for wastewater service when the utility system: (1) has an existing gravity sewer line located on or adjacent to the owner’s real property within the street right-of-way, public access easement, or public utility easement; or (2) has an existing sewer force main located on or adjacent to the owner's real property that can be accessed using technology designed for such an application.

SB2127 (HB2040) - Criminal offense of intentionally communicating a threat of harm to a public official or a member of official's family.

State Website

B. Taylor (R), A. Parkinson (D) | Criminal Law
SB2127: Feb. 03, 2026 - Withdrawn in Senate.
HB2040: Feb. 02, 2026 - Withdrawn in House.

As introduced, creates the criminal offense of intentionally communicating a threat of harm to a public official or a member of the public official's immediate family; punishes a violation as a Class E felony.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, relative to threats against certain persons.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Jan. 22, 2026: Filed

House | Jan. 23, 2026: Filed

AI Summary: An offense is created for intentionally communicating a threat of harm to a public official or their immediate family due to the official's capacity, punishable as a Class E felony. Definitions clarify "communicate," "immediate family," and "public official" consistent with existing statutes. The law takes effect July 1, 2026.

Comments:

> Don Scholes, 1/23/2026, 12:14 PM: Only applies to elected officials.

SB2147 (HB2486) - Allows the Tennessee Duck River Development Agency to submit annual reports electronically.

State Website

M. Pody (R), K. Haston (R) | Regional Authorities
SB2147: Mar. 17, 2026 - Taken off notice in Senate State & Local Government.
HB2486: Feb. 05, 2026 - P2C, caption bill, held on desk - pending amdt.

As introduced, permits the board of directors of the Tennessee Duck River Development Agency to file annual reports electronically. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 14; Title 4, Chapter 31; Title 7; Title 13; Title 64; Title 66; Title 67 and Chapter 68 of the Private Acts of 2024, relative to development authorities.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Jan. 23, 2026: Filed

House | Feb. 03, 2026: Filed

AI Summary: Electronic submission of annual reports by development authorities is authorized by amending Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 64-1-606. The change applies to reports required under Title 64 and related private acts of 2024. The amendment takes effect immediately upon becoming law.

Comments:

> Don Scholes, 1/29/2026, 12:04 PM: This is a caption bill TAUD will track.

SB2152 (HB2024) - Makes changes to the Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act.

State Website

P. Walley (R), P. Marsh (R) | Utilities
SB2152: Mar. 03, 2026 - Taken off notice in Senate State & Local Government.
HB2024: Feb. 04, 2026 - Referred to House Business & Utilities Subcommittee.

As introduced, increases, from 15 to 20, the number of calendar days that may pass from the actual date specified in the first notice after a person responsible for excavation or demolition has given the notice of the intent to excavate or demolish before the person is required to serve additional notice if the excavation or demolition has not yet been completed; makes other changes to the Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 65, Chapter 31, Part 1, relative to underground utility damage prevention.

Legislative Progress:
Senate | Feb. 05, 2026: Referred to Senate State and Local Government Committee
House | Feb. 04, 2026: Referred to House Business and Utilities Subcommittee

AI Summary: Underground utility damage prevention regulations are amended in Tennessee by extending the notification period from 15 to 20 calendar days and adding "dredging" to the definition of excavation activities. Digital locating is defined as applying visual indicators to digital imagery or electronic maps to mark underground utilities, and the requirement for electric white lining is replaced with a mandatory pre-excavation meeting between excavators and utility operators. The use of vacuum excavation is authorized for locating or protecting underground facilities after notification, and digital locating records are incorporated into facility record requirements.

SB2162 (HB2616) - Allows governing bodies to hold executive sessions to discuss employment of director-level staff. State Website

R. Briggs (R), J. Moon (R) | Public Employees
SB2162: Apr. 15, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
HB2616: Apr. 14, 2026 - House passed with amendment 1 (017236).

As introduced, authorizes governing bodies to conduct executive sessions for the purpose of considering employment and interviewing of director-level staff for such governing body.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 8, relative to executive sessions for consideration of employment by a governing body.

Legislative Progress:
Senate | Apr. 15, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor
House | Apr. 14, 2026: Passed

AI Summary: Executive sessions are authorized for governing bodies in Tennessee to interview applicants for director-level staff positions without public notice, with decisions and deliberations required to occur in open meetings. Attendance is limited to governing body members, relevant staff, and applicants, and minutes must disclose all attendees except applicants. Applicant materials are confidential upon request, with records of selected applicants becoming public upon hiring, while non-selected applicants' materials remain confidential. A proposed amendment clarifies "director-level" positions as those appointed by the mayor or governing body with authority over departments, and reiterates confidentiality and public records provisions; this amendment has not yet been adopted.

Amendment Summary: House amendment 1 (017236) rewrites the bill to, instead, authorize a governing body to conduct an executive session for the purpose of interviewing applicants for employment as director-level staff of the body without providing public notice of such session. However, the governing body is prohibited from making hiring decisions or deliberating in such session. All deliberation and voting must be done in an open, publicly notice meeting. Attendance at any executive session for the purpose of interviewing applicants must be limited to members of the governing body, relevant staff, and the applicants. The minutes of the session must be disclosed to all persons who were in attendance, except for applicants. If requested by the applicant, application materials must be kept confidential and are not open to public inspection. However, interviews and application materials must be kept as public records if the applicant is selected for employment or appointment. As used in this amendment, "director-level" means a position that is filled by the mayor or a vote of the governing body or by the mayor with confirmation by the governing body, excluding the chief of police; and has authority over the operation and employees of a department, agency, or division of the governmental entity.

SB2175 (HB2205) - Gives priority to water system projects in rural counties for loan fund consideration. State Website

K. Yager (R), K. Keisling (R) | Environment & Nature
SB2175: Mar. 16, 2026 - Senate passed.
HB2205: Apr. 06, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.

As introduced, requires the department of environment and conservation to add water system projects located in rural counties to the priority list for consideration for loans from the water system revolving loan fund.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 221, relative to water.

Legislative Progress:
Senate | Mar. 16, 2026: Passed
House | Apr. 06, 2026: Passed

AI Summary: A new subdivision is added to Tennessee Code Annotated Section 68-221-1205(c) to include water systems located in rural counties, defined as counties with populations under 57,000 based on the 2020 or subsequent federal census. The amendment expands regulatory provisions to specifically address rural counties. The act takes effect immediately upon becoming law.

SB2191 (HB2386) - Allows political subdivisions to share costs with developers for public infrastructure projects. State Website

B. Taylor (R), K. Vaughan (R) | Utilities
SB2191: Apr. 22, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
HB2386: Apr. 21, 2026 - House passed with amendment 2 (017203), which authorizes a county, municipality, or metropolitan government (political subdivision) to enter into a cost-sharing agreement (agreement) with a private developer to develop improvements to offsite public infrastructure, including utility extensions, if such improvement is required for the development to be completed. Requires that any such cost-sharing agreement be based upon the proportionate utilization or impact the development would have on public infrastructure. Authorizes a political subdivision to offset costs from any agreement through revenue from impact fees collected from other developments, bond proceeds, or unencumbered tax revenues.

As introduced, authorizes a political subdivision to enter into a cost-sharing agreement with a developer for the development of certain public infrastructure. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 13; Title 65 and Title 68, relative to infrastructure development.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 22, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor

House | Apr. 21, 2026: Passed

AI Summary: Cost-sharing arrangements are authorized between developers and political subdivisions in Tennessee for offsite public infrastructure improvements necessary to service private developments, with cost allocation based on proportional impact. Political subdivisions must determine the need for such improvements within 60 days of a developer's request, though a proposed amendment would remove the phrase "from the date on which the approval is requested" from this timeline. If parties cannot agree on cost-sharing amounts, the Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation may be requested to determine the share, and political subdivisions may fund their portion through impact fees, bonds, or tax revenues.

Amendment Summary: House amendment 2 (017203) authorizes a county, municipality, or metropolitan government (political subdivision) to enter into a cost-sharing agreement (agreement) with a private developer to develop improvements to offsite public infrastructure, including utility extensions, if such improvement is required for the development to be completed. Requires that any such cost-sharing agreement be based upon the proportionate utilization or impact the development would have on public infrastructure. Authorizes a political subdivision to offset costs from any agreement through revenue from impact fees collected from other developments, bond proceeds, or unencumbered tax revenues.

Comments:

> Don Scholes, 2/5/2026, 5:01 PM: As written, this bill does not include utility districts or utility authorities.

SB2199 (HB1913) - Regulatory Freedom Act of 2026.

State Website

J. Johnson (R), C. Boyd (R) | Government Regulation
SB2199: Apr. 16, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
HB1913: Apr. 13, 2026 - House passed with amendment 1 (017265).

As introduced, enacts the "Regulatory Freedom Act of 2026." Requires an agency holding a hearing as part of its rulemaking process to make a good faith effort to notify each trade association or organization operating in this state that represents the regulated community and that may be impacted by the new or amended rule at least 45 days prior to the public hearing for which there is a period of public comment regarding the new or amended rule. Specifies that the notice must be sent by electronic mail and must include a copy of the new or amended rule. Also specifies that the notice must request that the association or organization provide comments during any such period of public comment, or provide such comments directly to the agency, for the purpose of generating a fiscal impact statement. Defines "fiscal impact statement" to mean the estimate of the actual cost of compliance of a new or amended rule based on its projected and collective fiscal impact on the regulated industry, trade, business, or community, excluding speculative, anti-competitive, or hypothetical costs, and the assumptions and reasoning upon which the actual costs of compliance are based. Specifies other requirements for agencies in regard to fiscal impact statements. Makes other revisions related to public hearings by agencies.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 5, relative to administrative rules.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 16, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor

House | Apr. 13, 2026: Passed

AI Summary: Administrative rulemaking in Tennessee is reformed to require agencies to publish new or amended rules prominently and notify relevant trade associations at least 45 days before public hearings. Agencies must generate fiscal impact statements estimating actual compliance costs after public comment, incorporating feedback from affected industries, and report annually on cumulative fiscal impacts. Rules with negative fiscal impacts exceeding $1 million over five years require legislative approval before taking effect. Emergency rules must file fiscal impact statements within 45 days or expire, with high-impact emergency rules expiring sooner unless approved by the legislature. A proposed amendment would limit these requirements to agencies whose rules require legislative approval, exclude certain federally mandated or fee-related rules, and define the "regulated community" more narrowly, among other clarifications.

Amendment Summary: House amendment 1 (017265) enacts the Regulatory Freedom Act of 2026. Requires state agencies to prominently publish a new or amended rule that affects the regulated community on its homepage a minimum of 45 days before the required public hearing is scheduled as part of its rulemaking process. Applies to agencies whose rules are required to be approved by the General Assembly. Exempts rules that are adopted as required pursuant to a federal law or regulation, including rules necessary to maintain federal requirements or where failure would risk federal financial participation or related to the increase or decrease of professional and occupational licensure fees by a professional or occupational regulatory body or board or fees that are required by statute, to the increase or decrease of facility licensure fees. Requires state agencies to make a good faith effort to notify each trade association or organization operating in this state that represents the regulated community and that may be impacted by the new or amended rule a minimum of 45 days prior to the public hearing. Requires the notice to invite the association or organization to provide comments during any such period of public comment, or provide such comments directly to the agency for the purpose of generating a fiscal impact statement. Requires state agencies to: (1) generate a fiscal impact statement for a new or amended rule that affects the regulated community that is anticipated to have a negative fiscal impact on the regulated community after the public hearing with public comment period; (2) include information related to the actual or potential negative fiscal impact of the new or amended rule to an impacted industry, business, or trade shared during a public comment period, if such information was shared; and (3) include, with each fiscal impact statement, proof satisfactory that the agency sought feedback from representatives of the regulated community likely to experience a negative fiscal impact by the new or amended rule. Requires the Senate and the House of Representatives to approve a proposed rule by majority vote if the fiscal impact statement of a rule that affects the regulated community indicates that the negative fiscal impact of the rule is estimated to be greater than $1,000,000 over a five-year period, or over a one-year period for an emergency rule. Requires an agency to provide written notice to the Governor, the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Representatives and the Chairs of the Joint Government Operations Committee if the fiscal impact statement exceeds the monetary cap. Requires an agency to compile an annual report by January 31, 2028, and each January 31 thereafter, aggregating the fiscal impact statements generated for each new or amended rule that affected the regulated community and that went into effect during the immediately preceding year to illustrate the total and cumulative impact. Requires the annual report be filed with the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Secretary of State (SOS), and the Chairs of the Joint Government Operations Committee, and be published on the SOS website. Requires an agency to file a fiscal impact statement with the SOS within 45 days after an emergency rule goes into

effect. Establishes that an emergency rule expires 180 days after becoming effective, upon the adjournment of the next special session convened by the General Assembly, or on the 14th legislative day of the next regular legislative session if the fiscal impact statement of an emergency rule has an anticipated negative fiscal impact greater than $1,000,000. Effective January 1, 2027, and applies to rules for which a notice has not been filed with the SOS prior to January 1, 2027.

SB2237 (HB2552) - Local governments must respond to development applications within 30 days and formalize contract changes in writing. State Website

J. Johnson (R), W. Lamberth (R) | Local Government
SB2237: Apr. 22, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
HB2552: Apr. 21, 2026 - House passed with amendment 2 (016772), which establishes additional requirements of a municipality, county, or metropolitan form of government (local government) regarding reviews of development applications, development plans, and site inspections submitted by developers or contractors. Effective January 1, 2027.

As introduced, requires a local government to approve, deny, or identify deficiencies in a development application, development plan, or a site inspection submitted by a developer within 30 days. Requires changes in contracts between local governments and contractors or developers to be in writing; requires a local government to release a contractor or developer from its required bond within 30 days of receiving a determination from an independent inspector that the contractor or developer has completed all work required by the contract. Makes other related changes.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 7, relative to local governments.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 22, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor
House | Apr. 21, 2026: Passed

AI Summary: Local governments in Tennessee are required to approve or provide written deficiency reports for development applications within specified timeframes, with applications deemed approved if no timely response is given. Developers may receive partial fee refunds if applications are denied after two deficiency reports. Contracts between local governments and developers or contractors cannot be unilaterally amended, and local governments must release bonds within set periods following independent inspections confirming contract completion. A proposed amendment would extend approval timelines, require placing approvals and bond releases on planning commission or governing body agendas, and allow conditional approvals after unresolved deficiencies, but this amendment has not yet been adopted. These provisions take effect January 1, 2027, and do not apply to contracts existing before December 31, 2026.

Amendment Summary: House amendment 2 (016772) establishes additional requirements of a municipality, county, or metropolitan form of government (local government) regarding reviews of development applications, development plans, and site inspections submitted by developers or contractors. Effective January 1, 2027.

Comments:

> Don Scholes, 2/5/2026, 5:07 PM: As written, this does not apply to utility districts or utility authorities

SB2264 (HB2073) - Defines certain government entities as employers of lobbyists when they hire contractors or representatives for lobbying purposes. State Website

A. Lowe (R), L. Reeves (R) | Campaigns & Lobbying
SB2264: Apr. 21, 2026 - Senate passed with amendment 1 (018288).
HB2073: Apr. 15, 2026 - Taken off notice in House Finance, Ways & Means Subcommittee.

As introduced, provides that a school board, municipal utility, utility district, and department, agency, or entity of county or municipal government that employs a contractor, subcontractor, or representative for purposes of lobbying is deemed to be an employer of a lobbyist. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2; Title 3 and Title 8, relative to lobbying.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 21, 2026: Passed
House | Mar. 31, 2026: Recommended By Full Committee

AI Summary: Amendments to Tennessee lobbying laws clarify that state departments, agencies, or entities employing contractors or representatives for lobbying are not considered employers of lobbyists. A proposed amendment would require school boards, municipal utilities, utility districts, and local government entities employing such contractors to file disclosure reports within 45 days after each six-month period ending June 30 and December 31. These provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Amendment Summary: Senate amendment 1 (018288) requires each school board, municipal utility, utility district, and department, agency, or entity of county, municipal, or metropolitan government that employs a contractor, subcontractor, or representative for purposes of lobbying to file the disclosure report within 45 days following conclusion of the six-month periods ending June 30 and December 31.

SB2313 (HB2390) - Ch. 618, Gibson County - utility district commissioners to serve more than two consecutive terms. State Website

J. Stevens (R), B. Martin (R) | Local Government
SB2313: Apr. 13, 2026 - Enacted as Public Chapter 0618, effective March 25, 2026.
HB2390: Apr. 06, 2026 - Companion bill became Public Chapter 0618.

As enacted, clarifies that commissioners for utility districts created pursuant to the Utility District Law of 1937 in Gibson County are not prohibited from serving more than two consecutive terms.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 7, Chapter 82, Part 3, relative to utilities.

Public Chapter: 618

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 13, 2026: P C Assigned
House | Apr. 06, 2026: P C Assigned

AI Summary: Term limits for utility commissioners are modified by amending Tennessee Code Annotated Section 7-82-307(a)(2)(D) to allow commissioners to serve more than two consecutive terms in counties with populations between 28,800 and 28,900, 42,700 and 42,800, or 50,400 and 50,500 based on the 2020 federal census or any subsequent census. The population thresholds for these exceptions are increased from previous lower limits. This change takes effect immediately upon becoming law.

SB2418 (HB2069) - Requires attorney general approval of contingent fee contracts for legal services by local governments.

State Website

J. Stevens (R), C. Todd (R) | Government Contracts
SB2418: Apr. 13, 2026 - Referred to Senate Calendar Committee.
HB2069: Apr. 14, 2026 - Taken off notice in House Judiciary.

As introduced, requires proposed contingent fee contracts for legal services between a political subdivision of this state and a private-sector attorney to be approved by the attorney general and reporter prior to execution of the contract. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 7; Title 8 and Title 29, relative to lawsuits.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 02, 2026: Recommended By Calendar And Rules Set For Floor

House | Apr. 01, 2026: Recommended By Full Committee

AI Summary: Contingent fee contracts for legal services by Tennessee political subdivisions are restricted, requiring public meetings with detailed disclosures, written findings, and approval by the attorney general before execution. Contracts not approved may lead to dismissal of related judicial proceedings. A proposed amendment would clarify definitions, add finality to the attorney general's decisions, require submission of pre-existing contracts for review, and introduce new provisions limiting public nuisance claims by government entities and private persons, including restricting remedies and standing. The amendment has not been adopted and would also abrogate common law public nuisance to the extent inconsistent with the new statutory framework.

Amendment Summary: House State & Local Government Committee amendment 1 (015628) establishes the process by which a political subdivision may enter into a contingent fee contract for legal services with a private attorney. Requires such contract to be approved by the Attorney General and Reporter (AG) prior to execution. Authorizes the AG to intervene in any civil action in which a political subdivision is represented by an attorney providing legal services under a contingent fee contract that was not approved by the AG, and to request that the proceeding be dismissed. Requires the court to dismiss a matter if the court concludes that the contract for legal services was not approved in accordance with this Act. Requires a political subdivision to submit to the AG for review and approval by July 1, 2026, any contingent fee contract for legal services that was entered into prior to the effective date of this Act. Limits the public nuisance causes of actions and remedies for such that are available to a governmental entity. Specifies actions or conditions that may not be considered a public nuisance or be the basis for a public nuisance cause of action. Limits a public nuisance cause of action that is available to a private person by requiring such person to have sustained a special injury proximately caused by the public nuisance that the person can show the existence of by clear and convincing evidence. Senate amendment 1 (015500) establishes the process by which a political subdivision may enter into a contingent fee contract for legal services with a private attorney. Requires such contract to be approved by the Attorney General and Reporter (AG) prior to execution. Authorizes the AG to intervene in any proceeding in which a political subdivision is represented by an attorney providing legal services under a contingent fee contract that was not approved by the AG, and to request that the proceeding be dismissed. Requires the court or quasijudicial body to dismiss a matter if the body concludes that the contract for legal services was not approved in accordance with this Act. Requires a political subdivision to submit to the AG for review and approval by July 1, 2026, any contingent fee contract for legal services that was entered into prior to the effective date of this Act. Limits the public nuisance causes of actions and remedies for such that are available to a governmental entity. Specifies actions or conditions that may not be considered a public nuisance or be the basis for a public nuisance cause of action. Limits a public nuisance cause of action that is available to a private person by requiring such person to have sustained a special injury proximately caused by the public nuisance that the person can show the existence of by clear and convincing evidence. House State and Local Government Committee Amendment 1 (015628) requires a political subdivision to enter into a contingent fee contracts for legal services if the governing body of the political subdivision calls a public meeting for the purpose of considering the contract and provides in the notice of the meeting, approves the contract in a public meeting after discussion and consideration of the items described in subdivision. Requires the political subdivision to obtain prior approval of the contract by the attorney general and reporter.

SB2450 (HB2114) - Allows local governments to publish public notices online to meet legal requirements.

State Website

B. Powers (R), J. Crawford (R) | Government Regulation
SB2450: Apr. 22, 2026 - Sent to the speakers for signatures.
HB2114: Apr. 21, 2026 - House passed with amendment 2 (018380), which requires the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) to conduct a study to determine if newspapers of general circulation remain the most efficient and effective manner for governments to provide the public with transparent and accessible information. Authorizes TACIR to request information and input from other states, including their political subdivisions, and requires the state and local government agencies in this state to comply with any such request. Requires TACIR to consult with interested parties regarding all issues cited in this study. Requires TACIR to conduct the study within its existing resources. TACIR must report its findings, including any recommended legislation, to the appropriate legislative committees and the Legislative Librarian.

As introduced, permits local governments to meet certain public notice requirements by publishing notices electronically online. Broadly captioned.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 1, Chapter 3 and Title 8, Chapter 44, relative to public notices.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Apr. 22, 2026: Engrossed Sent To Governor

House | Apr. 21, 2026: Passed

AI Summary: Requirements are established allowing Tennessee local governments, beginning July 1, 2027, to satisfy public notice publication mandates by posting notices electronically online instead of in newspapers, provided they adopt ordinances and policies ensuring accessibility, security, and compliance with notice standards. Electronic public notice systems must be free to the public, maintain records for verification, and may involve reasonable fees if operated by third parties. Notices legally required to appear in newspapers must still comply with those laws. A proposed amendment would require the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) to study the effectiveness of newspapers versus electronic notices, including historical trends, costs, broadband access, and impacts on transparency and rural communities, with findings reported to the legislature; this amendment has not been adopted.

Amendment Summary: Senate amendment 1 (016284) requires the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) to: (1) conduct a study to determine if newspapers of general circulation remain the most efficient and effective manner for governments to provide the public with transparent and accessible information; (2) study how the public has historically obtained its news and information compared to today; (3) examine the ability of local government entities to create public notice systems; (4) review the costs associated with government entities maintaining online public notice platforms; (5) review all governmental and public entities' notice requirements and practices to determine how much taxpayer money is

used to meet newspaper publication requirements and examine if citizens should be required to pay a subscription fee to access information that is intended to provide notice and transparency of government actions; (6) review public notice practices in other states and any available trends or advances in technology; (7) consult with interested parties regarding the subject of the study, which must include local governments, newspaper publishers, the Tennessee Press Association, representatives from rural communities, government entities in other states that publish notices online, and open government advocates. Authorizes TACIR to request information and input from state and local government entities, which are required to comply with such requests. Requires TACIR to conduct the study within its existing resources. Upon completion of the study, TACIR must report its findings, including any recommended legislation, to the appropriate legislative committees and the Legislative Librarian. House Amendment 2 (018380) requires the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) to conduct a study to determine if newspapers of general circulation remain the most efficient and effective manner for governments to provide the public with transparent and accessible information. Authorizes TACIR to request information and input from other states, including their political subdivisions, and requires the state and local government agencies in this state to comply with any such request. Requires TACIR to consult with interested parties regarding all issues cited in this study. Requires TACIR to conduct the study within its existing resources. TACIR must report its findings, including any recommended legislation, to the appropriate legislative committees and the Legislative Librarian.

SB2498 (HB2492) - Requires the department of finance and administration to promulgate rules for cash transaction rounding. State Website

S. Kyle (D), J. Powell (D) | Taxes General
SB2498: Apr. 20, 2026 - Senate Finance, Ways & Means deferred to 04/21/26.
HB2492: Feb. 05, 2026 - Referred to House Banking & Consumer Affairs Subcommittee.

As introduced, requires the department of finance and administration to promulgate rules relating to cash transaction rounding.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 47, Chapter 18 and Title 67, relative to cash transaction rounding.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Feb. 24, 2026: Referred to Subcommittee
House | Feb. 05, 2026: Referred to Subcommittee

AI Summary: Cash transaction rounding to the nearest five cents is mandated, with rules prohibiting rounding practices that systematically favor sellers and requiring receipts to itemize subtotals, rounding adjustments, and total prices. The Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration is directed to promulgate and enforce these rules under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act using existing resources. Failure to comply with the cash transaction rounding rules is established as a violation under Tennessee Code Annotated Section 47-18-104(b).

SB2534 (HB2164) - Extension of Utility Regulatory Jurisdiction to Certain Nonprofit Utility Systems. State Website

T. Hatcher (R), L. Russell (R) | Utilities
SB2534: Mar. 11, 2026 - Taken off notice in Senate Energy, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.
HB2164: Mar. 11, 2026 - Taken off notice in House Business & Utilities Subcommittee.

As introduced, permits a nonprofit property owners association that provides water and wastewater services exclusively to its members to elect regulation of those utility services by the Tennessee board of utility regulation.

Caption: AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 7, Chapter 82, Part 7 and Title 65, Chapter 4, Part 1, relative to utilities.

Legislative Progress: Senate | Feb. 05, 2026: Referred to Committee
House | Feb. 05, 2026: Referred to Committee

AI Summary: Jurisdiction of the Tennessee board of utility regulation is extended to include nonprofit utility systems created in 1985 that govern and maintain communities with at least 5,000 lots or units, provide water and wastewater services exclusively to members, fund some emergency services, and whose governing board has requested such jurisdiction. Tennessee Code Annotated Section 7-82-701(b)(4) is amended to add this provision. The act takes effect immediately upon becoming law.

HJR726 - Supports rebuilding the Columbia Dam Project to ensure water supply for growth, development, and recreation. State Website

T. Warner (R) | Environment & Nature
Feb. 04, 2026 - Taken off notice in House Agriculture and Natural Resources Subcommittee.

Expresses support for the reconstruction of the Columbia Dam Project on the Duck River and recognizes it as a critical priority to establish an adequate water supply system for sustained growth, economic development, and recreational use.

Caption: A RESOLUTION supporting reconstruction of the Columbia Dam.

Legislative Progress: In Process

AI Summary: Support is expressed for the reconstruction of the Columbia Dam on the Duck River in Tennessee to restore flood control, water supply, and recreational benefits lost after its demolition. The resolution emphasizes compliance with federal and state environmental and safety laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act, Clean Water Act, and Tennessee Safe Dams Act. The project is recognized as a critical priority to address water resource management, economic development, and population growth in Middle Tennessee.