

BACKGROUND

Cities in Tennessee operate under one of six charters types:

- 66 municipalities operate under the General Law Mayor-Aldermanic Charter, which sets no limits on compensation for mayors and alderman.
- 13 municipalities operate under Home Rule
- Three cities have a metro form of government where salaries of these officials are determined locally
- 212 cities operate under a private act charter where, with few exceptions, the private act establishes that the compensation of elected officials is not subject to statutory limits and is to be determined by ordinance.
- 49 cities operate under the General Law Manager-Commission Charter where salaries of elected officials may be established locally.

Therefore, in the 343 municipalities operating under these five municipal charters, the salaries of mayors and other members of a municipal governing body are not subject to statutory limits. Instead, compensation may be established locally either by specific language of a private act, by ordinance, or according to the Home Rule process.

The sixth charter - Modified General Law Manager-Council Charter- has statutory limits on compensation paid to the elected officials and is the only charter type with such a restriction. There are two cities currently operating with this type of charter.

PROBLEM

The salaries of mayors and council members of municipalities operating under the Modified General Law Manager/Council Charters are statutorily limited and these limits have been in place for decades without adjustment.

REMEDY

Pursue legislation that would remove the statutory limits on salary for mayors and council members for these two cities and allow compensation to be determined locally.

Anticipated Benefits

This change will bring these two cities in line with the overwhelming majority of the other 343 cities whose compensation is not limited under state statute.

