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TACIR acts on Internet sales tax, recommends mandatory collections



The issue of how to collect and distribute sales tax revenue, whether from internet sales or otherwise, came before the House Finance, Ways, and Means Committee in April 2018.

The County Mayors Association proposed legislation that if passed would have transferred an estimated \$100 million in out-of-state sales tax collections from cities to counties. Under the amendment proposed by the County Mayors, the distribution of these voluntary online sales collections would be altered to provide counties 75 percent of the total local share, while cities would receive just 25 percent. A second amendment would redirect an estimated \$145 million in state shared sales tax revenues from cities to counties.

City officials adamantly opposed this legislation. And as a



The Supreme Court's *Wayfair* decision in June 2018 paved the way for states to require more out-of-state sellers with no physical presence in the state to collect sales tax.

result, House Bill 971 by Rep. Charles Sargent / Senate Bill 1075 by Sen. Bo Watson, was sent to TACIR to study the revenue sources for Tennessee cities and counties, as well as the services they provide.

TACIR formed a working group of its local government members to examine these issues.

The group suggested the study should focus initially on internet sales tax collections and how it will be distributed in light of the *Wayfair* case, and on provisions of Tennessee law set to become effective July 1, 2019.

The Supreme Court's *Wayfair* decision in June 2018 paved the way for states to require more outof-state sellers with no physical presence in the state to collect sales tax. Tennessee already has a rule—Tennessee Department of Revenue Rule 129 initiated by the Haslam Administration —that *See* **TACIR** *on Page 5*

Dynamic lineup set for 2019 TML Legislative Conference

March 18 - 19, Nashville DoubleTree

A host of state officials are lined up to speak during the 2019 TML Legislative Conference, slated for March 18-19 at the DoubleTree in Nashville.

Speakers for the two-day event will include Lt. Gov. Randy McNally, House Speaker Glen Casada, House Finance Chair Susan Lynn, House Local Chair John Crawford, State Comptroller Justin Wilson, and TBI Director David Rausch.

Conference registration opens at 11 a.m. on Monday, March 18, followed by lunch at noon.

The conference will kick off at 1 p.m. and run through 4 p.m. on Monday afternoon.

On Tuesday, March 19, things will get underway at 7:30 a.m. with a breakfast served until 8 a.m. The conference program will begin at 8 a.m. and continue until 10 a.m.

The two-day conference provides an excellent forum to network with other municipal officials and interact with your legislators. Those in attendance are encouraged to attend legislative committee meetings while in Nashville.

The voice of Tennessee's municipal governments must be heard



Lt. Gov. Randy McNally



House Speaker Glen Casada

in the legislative process, and the TML Legislative Conference is a great opportunity to communicate that message.

For information regarding registration and hotel reservations, visit <u>www.TML1.org</u>

Tennessee economy to see continued growth in 2019

On the heels of very strong growth in 2018, experts project that Tennessee and the US will see sustained economic growth in 2019 with the possibility that growth could slow as the economy confronts tightening labor markets and rising interest rates. Patterns of slower growth typically follow many years of sustained expansion, according to a report released by the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

"The economy is in good shape

the fading effects of federal tax cuts and increased spending, along with rising interest rates and brewing tariff wars, are likely to mean slower growth in coming years.

"This is by no means a recessionary outlook," Murray added. "But the growth we are projected to see in 2019 is at a slower rate than what we saw in the years leading up to the state of recovery in which we currently operate."

Tennessee should see nonfarm jobs grow by 1.4 percent in 2019, slightly slower than the 1.8 percent pace of job growth in 2018. This means nearly 43,000 new jobs for Tennesseans in 2019. The state's inflation-adjusted gross domestic product should rise 2.6 percent next year. Tennessee's expected economic growth will largely mirror growth in the national economy. "Historically low unemployment rates and an increase in both job growth and per capita personal income are all indicators that prove how well Tennessee's economy performed in 2018," said Bob Rolfe, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. "We appreciate the work done See **GROWTH** on Page 5

Credit, inventory among causes of housing crisis in Tennessee's smaller communities

BY KATE COIL *TML Communications Specialist*

Good housing has long been a part of the American dream, but for many Americans, the dream of decent housing is becoming unattainable.

Tennessee is no exception.



and continues to expand, but job gains could slow as a result of a plateau, which has occurred throughout the country," said Matt Murray, associate director of the center and project director for the 2019 Economic Report to the Governor of the State of Tennessee, which includes a special section examining federal tax cuts and tariffs.

With the economy now in the ninth year of recovery since the Great Recession, Tennessee's inflation-adjusted gross domestic product grew by 2.7 percent in 2018, two-tenths of a percentage point behind overall US growth. The state's labor market is especially buoyant as reflected in a record low unemployment rate. However, A report by ThinkTennessee, a nonpartisan public policy research organization, and the Tennessee Housing and DevelopmentAgency rankedTennessee 34th in the nation for the supply of adequate affordable housing.

The study found that the state's average median household income is \$48,547 yet a prospective homeowner needs to make at least \$55,760 a year to afford the average home mortgage in the state. The state doesn't fare much better when it comes to the gap between wages and renting.

According to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), a Tennessean making the state's minimum wage of \$7.25 per

While a lack of affordable housing is an issue, merely adding new housing stock isn't the solution to the housing crunch for many communities.

hour would have to work at least 71 hours a week to afford the average one-bedroom rental in the state.

At present, the average minimum wage worker in the state can only comfortably afford a rent of \$377 per month or less. To make the average rent charged in the state – approximately \$745 per month – a worker with a 40-hour work week needs to make at least \$14.50 per hour, which is double the state minimum wage.

Even rural areas of the state see a disconnect between wages and housing. NLIHC found the average monthly rent in rural Tennessee is \$570 per month, meaning that workers must make \$10.97 per hour if they work 40-hours a week to afford basic rent and still have money left over for necessities like food, utilities, and transportation to and from work.

Officials across the state of Tennessee are seeing the effect affordable housing issues are having on residents with the need for affordable housing becoming an issue in terms of economic development, health, and financial stability for many communities.

CREDIT CRUNCH

Ken Thorne, director of economic development for the Northwest Tennessee Development District, said many residents in his area would love to buy a home, but past financial decisions keep them from it.

"A lot of times you can buy

for cheaper than you can rent, but the catch is you have to have good credit," he said. "Plus, a lot of landlords run credit checks and will not rent to people who have bad credit. It makes financing an issue for low-income people. It has become a vicious cycle. People can't build credit because they can't get a home, but they can't get a home because of their credit."

Across the state in Northeast Tennessee, Lindy Turner, executive director of community housing development organization Clinch-Powell Resource Conservation and Development Council, has been working with the organization since 1989 to help deliver affordable housing solutions. The group works to develop affordable housing and provide services to get residents into homes in the region. Her organization often works as a credit counselor to help get prospective homeowners into good financial shape.

"People have made poor financial decisions trying to make good financial decisions," Turner said. "A lot of low-income families fall prey to predatory lenders like mobile home providers that offer to put you in a home for a dollar and a deed but have all these hidden costs. We also see it a lot with the payday loans and title loans. Then people cannot make payments and interest rates are ridiculous. A lot of these lenders have big signs in their windows that say 'we built your *See* **HOUSING** *on Page 3*

Supreme Court midterm docket set, several cases pertain to local government issues

BY LISA SORONEN State and Local Legal Center

The Supreme Court's docket for its current term is set.

The most interesting case the Supreme Court has agreed to hear for local governments (and more generally) will be heard next term. *In New York State Rifle & Pistol Association Inc. v. City of New York, New York** the Court will decide whether New York City's ban on transporting a handgun to a home or shooting range outside city limits violates the Second Amendment, the Commerce Clause, or the constitutional right to travel.

This term the Court will also decide a religious display on public land case, a significant procedural employment case, and a case involving money damages against a local government employee who allegedly fabricated evidence used in a trial.

In Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission v. American Humanist Association,* the Supreme Court will decide whether a local government has violated the First Amendment by displaying and maintaining a 93-year-old, 40-foot tall Latin cross memorializing soldiers who died in World War I.

The Fourth Circuit applied the so-called three-prong Lemon test, as modified by the Supreme Court's most recent monument decision *Van Orden v. Perry* (2005), to conclude that the government display and maintenance of this cross violates the Establishment Clause.

The lower court first concluded that the cross has a secular purpose thus passing the first prong of the Lemon test. Specifically, the Commission obtained the cross to maintain safety near a busy highway intersection and preserves the memorial to honor World War I soldiers.

But the Fourth Circuit concluded that a reasonable observer would understand this cross to advance religion. The Latin cross is the "preeminent symbol of Christianity." While the cross has secular elements (like the words valor, endurance, courage, and devotion inscribed on its base and a plaque at the base listing the memorialized soldiers), the "immense size and prominence of the cross" "evokes a message of aggrandizement and universalization of religion, and not the message of individual memorialization and remembrance that is presented by a field of gravestones."

The Fourth Circuit also concluded that the cross fails Lemon's third prong because it creates an excessive entanglement between government and religion. First, the commission has spent \$117,000 to maintain and repair it. In 2008 it set aside an additional \$100,000 for renovations. "Second, displaying the cross, particularly given its size, history, and context, amounts to excessive entanglement because the commission is displaying the hallmark symbol of Christianity in a manner that dominates its surroundings and not only overwhelms all other monuments at the park, but also excludes all other religious tenets."

The question the Supreme Court will decide in *Fort Bend County v. Davis** is if an employee fails to exhaust administrative remedies with the EEOC before filing a lawsuit is the lawsuit barred.

Lois Davis claims she was *See* **COURT** *on Page* 7





ALCOA

The Alcoa Board of Commissioners has approved construction engineering inspection services for the fourth phase of an extension of the city's Pistol Creek Greenway. Vaughn & Melton Consulting Engineers, Inc., will provide inspection services to ensure construction does not have negative impact on the creek and is conscious of wetland delineation, quality control, and traffic. The project is being funded by a \$1.2 million 80-20 grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation. The fourth phase of the greenway project will connect Alcoa's primary trail near the Meadowood Apartments on North Wright Road at Clayton headquarters through 2.2 miles of trail.

COLUMBIA

U.S. Sens. Lamar Alexander and Marsha Blackburn have announced the Senate has passed legislation to protect and preserve President James K. Polk's home in Columbia. Alexander and Blackburn introduced the James K. Polk Presidential Home Study Act on Jan. 16. The legislation, which was included in the Natural Resources Management Act, passed the Senate by a vote of 92-8. The U.S. House of Representatives will now consider the legislation. Alexander is a cosponsor of the Natural Resources Management Act. The legislation directs the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to evaluate the suitability and feasibility of designating the site as a unit of the National Park System. Once the study is completed, the conclusions and recommendations will be submitted to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources and the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, of which Alexander is a member. If the study recommends the Polk Home should be included in the National Park System, Congress would then need to pass legislation designating the Polk Home as a new unit of the National Park System.

COVINGTON

The city of Covington is working to remove blighted buildings to allow redevelopment on the empty lots through a \$240,000 Community Development Block Grant. The city chipped in \$70,000 of additional funds for the total \$310,000 project, which aims to remove homes that have been neglected or abandoned. Removing these structures not only has the impact of immediately improving property values for homes and properties in the neighboring area but also opens up a new lot for the development of new homes or businesses. The city plans to demolish around 11 homes in the first phase of the blight removal project with some five dozen homes on a waiting list for redevelopment.

fers cloud-based software to hotels to help efficiently run their dayto-day operations including staff communications, housekeeping, service recovery and other hotel operations.

GALLATIN

Wood Group, a multi-national heavy civil construction company, has relocated its southeastern U.S. office to Gallatin, bringing 200 jobs to the area. The company serves a variety of clients in the commercial, industrial and residential development sectors and moved to the Gallatin location because of its increased office space and more space for customers. The 200 employees housed in the new facility are affiliated with the company's heavy civil construction service line. Available services include site grading, heavy excavation, road construction and maintenance, as well as land clearing and underground utility work. Based in Scotland, the company offers project, engineering and technical services to energy and industrial markets in more than 60 countries worldwide. The company, which has approximately 60,000 employees, has annual revenues in excess of \$10 billion.

KNOXVILLE

The Tennessee Department of Transportation has awarded the city of Knoxville a \$950,000 grant for creating a pedestrian and bike path on Chapman Highway, giving a safe option for pedestrians walking, biking and taking transit. The project is set to begin construction mid-2021. To make this project successful, the city will contribute a total of \$857,895. Chapman Highway is a state and federal highway managed by TDOT. The project will extend a sidewalk from the intersection and connect to the existing sidewalk near Young High Pike. It will create pedestrian crossings at three intersections with Chapman Highway: Stone Road, Fronda Lane, and Woodlawn Pike. Additionally, the project will improve four Knoxville Area Transit bus stops. The project will also include 3,200 feet of multiuse path and 525 feet of sidewalk. Stone Road, Fronda Lane, and Woodlawn Pike will be upgraded with pedestrian signals and crosswalks, including a total of seven

grant funding as part of a new campaign to encourage access to parks and green spaces. The 10-Minute Walk campaign was created by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), along with The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) after a recent study found that a third of Americans do not have a park within a 10-minute or half-mile walking distance of their home. Memphis is one of 10 cities that received funds from the campaign to support city planning and policy efforts that help increase access to high-quality, close-to-home parks and public green space. Chattanooga previously received funds from the program in 2018, and the program has been ongoing since 2017.

MT. JULIET

The Music City Star train station in Mt. Juliet will see an additional 100 parking spaces after numerous requests by riders. The Mt. Juliet Chamber of Commerce, city officials, and Regional Transportation Authority have approved a \$2.5 million project to add the additional spaces, bringing the total number of spaces in the lot to around 250. Construction will begin in the summer and is expected to last between six and eight months. The Mt. Juliet and Hermitage stations are the two busiest stations on the line with between 160 and 180 riders boarding in Mt. Juliet daily.

NEWPORT

The city of Newport has received a \$950,000 multimodal grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation to construct new sidewalks in the area. Sidewalks will be installed from the Old Cosby Highway/Cosby Highway intersection north to the corner of Cosby Highway and Broadway and then continuing west along Broadway to the intersection with Hendrick Drive. Another sidewalk extension will also be conducted from the Broadway and C Street intersection west toward the Newport Federal Bank parking lot. Beyond sidewalk installation, the grant will also fund pedestrian signal upgrades. The city is providing a 5 percent match to the funding, which will bring the infrastructure project's total cost to \$1 million. The sidewalk and pedestrian improvements are part of the city's

Springfield cuts ribbon on city's new bark park



Springfield citizens, officials, and their four-legged friends cut the ribbon on the newly constructed Central Bark Park within the city's Garner Street Park. The dog park was funded through grassroots efforts and includes benches, fencing, dog waste clean up stations, garbage cans, and a pet drinking fountain.

Kingsport art installation honors endangered species



Kingsport recently installed the "Silent Skies Mural Project" downtown. The project is a representation of an installation that opened last August in Canada that featured 678 portraits of endangered bird species in North America. Kingsport's own Suzanne Barrett Justis is a Signature Member of Artists for Conservation, and "Silent Skies" features six of her portraits. The mural recreates the 8-inch by 8-inch canvases arranged in the original 100-foot mural and is designed to draw attention to the need to conserve and preserve bird species across the skies.

West Tennessee cities share in recycling grant



FRANKLIN

Hotel management software company Quore will expand its Franklin operations by creating 45 new jobs and investing \$780,000. With this expansion, Quore will hire more employees at its Franklin location to keep up with growing demand and will occupy a new facility. Headquartered in Franklin, Quore is the hospitality industry's market leader of hotel management software. With software used by more than half of the top 100 highest-earning hotel management companies in the U.S., Quore of-

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LEXINGTON

The city of Lexington has received a Class 2 Public Protection Classification from the Insurance Services Office (ISO) after several years of intensive focus and organizational improvement. The Class 2 designation is the second-highest possible rating and means Lexington homeowners could see a reduction in their insurance premiums. Businesses and industries looking to locate in Lexington will have an even greater incentive to invest in the community. Currently, only 32 other fire departments in Tennessee and only 1,545 fire departments across the country have achieved the Class 2 rating.

MEMPHIS

FedEx Logistics will move its headquarters to downtown Memphis, investing \$44 million and creating 689 jobs in the area. FedEx Logistics will be consolidating its Memphis operations into the former Gibson Guitar Factory building, located in downtown Memphis. The new facility will include its 120,000-square-foot office space. FedEx Logistics, headquartered in Memphis, is a subsidiary of FedEx Corporation and provides worldwide freight forwarding services that can help increase supply chain efficiency and drive down costs by replacing a maze of channels with one global distribution command and control center. FedEx currently employs more than 30,000 people in the Memphis area. The FedEx Express hub in Memphis is the largest sort facility in the FedEx Express global network. In March 2017, FedEx announced it would make a capital investment of more than \$1 billion to modernize its Memphis Hub and improve operational efficiency and reliability.

MEMPHIS

The city of Memphis is one of 10 communities that has received

overall Downtown Master Plan and the developing plans for additional bike and pedestrian paths.

ROGERSVILLE

The town of Rogersville is working with a Tennessee state historian on the restoration of the city's oldest log structure. The Powell Log House served as the law office of Samuel Powell, who represented Tennessee's First Congressional District from 1815 to 1817 and was instrumental in establishing the first law school in the state. Powell practiced law in Rogersville beginning in 1805 and also served as a local judge. The building that served as his law office was built sometime between 1795 and 1805 and was gifted to the city by its previous owner, who was unable to make city-mandated repairs to the structure. State Historian Dr. Carroll Van West will be working with Rogersville Building Inspector Steve Nelson, who participated in the restoration of the 1824 Hales Springs Inn, on the project.

WINCHESTER

The Winchester Airport Authority has been awarded a \$1.87 million grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Aeronautics Economic Development Fund. The funds will be used to develop and construct a new hangar that will include classroom space for the Tennessee College of Applied Technology's aviation maintenance technology program. The classroom will provide students with a secondary location for their studies and provide access to more hands-on experience. TCAT's automotive technology program may also see use of the classroom. The Aeronautics Economic Development Fund was created in 2017 through the governor's budget, and is designed to fund projects that will impact job creation and investment opportunities in Tennessee's aviation industry. The initiative distributed \$20 million between eight airports this year.

The cities of Adamsville, Henderson, and Lexington are getting a boost to their recycling programs after the West Tennessee Regional Recycling Hub received a \$179,000 grant from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). The program will make 96-gallon recycling bins available to residents of the three cities at no cost. Recyclables do not need to be separated, and local governments will pick up the recycling along with trash pick up. City officials hope the program will increase recycling in the area.

Elizabethton, Johnson City partnering to preserve Tweetsie Trail landmark

Officials from Elizabethton and Johnson City are coming together to renovate a former coal company building as part of the area's Tweetsie Trail.

The Estep Coal Company is a historic landmark located along a segment of the trail that passed near downtown Elizabethton where West F Street splits into East Elk and East Doe avenues.

The building was once an important stop on the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad, known as the Tweetsie, which served mining communities between Cranberry, N.C., and its headquarters in Johnson City.

The Estep Coal Company was operated from Lindberg Estep for 67 years until his death in 2015, providing coal to those in the area who still used coal heating.

As a result, the building has become a local landmark and is now owned by Elizabethton, which has aimed to preserve the structure and its heritage.

Since Johnson City owns the

Tweetsie Trail itself, Johnson City officials are working with the city of Elizabethton and the Tweetsie Trail Conservancy to preserve the building as one of several landmarks that dot the trail.

Plans for the project include renovations, fundraising for the project, and securing the building's foundation.

Other plans call for using the building to display documentation about its history and the larger history of the area as it is connected to coal and the railroad.

The Tweetsie Trail is a rails-totrails project that traces the length of the former Tweetsie Raiload nearly ten miles from Johnson City to the Valley Forge community just outside Elizabethton.

The trail also provides access to numerous historic landmarks such as the Millgan Depot, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park, Sabine Hill and the Gen. Nathanial Taylor House, the Elizabethton Lions Club Park, and the Elizabethton Covered Bridge.

#37*

WAGE

Credit, inventory among causes of housing crisis in smaller communities

HOUSING, from Page 1

credit,' but actually they hurt credit." Even with good-paying jobs coming to the area, Thorne said housing is still out of the reach for some.

"We have a community with a situation that is about to get a humongous plant, but there isn't enough housing for the workers who are going to be moving in to the area," he said. "There is a particular need for low-income housing and rental places. A lot of times, we see builders selling houses to lower-income people that they really can't afford. They are in over their head."

LACK OF INVENTORY

With many newer built homes out of the price range of those who need housing, residents often turn to older housing stock that needs repairs. Most communities have also found their rental stock - the few homes available to those whose financial history prohibits them from getting a mortgage - are usually in older and sometimes unmaintained neighborhoods.

"A lot of homeownership rates in our area are exceedingly high, but they aren't necessarily new purchases," Turner said. "We see a lot of situations where grandma and grandpa own a house and then they put a trailer on the same property for their kids and another one for the grandkids. They may have separate septic or electrical hookups or they may be running extension cords."

Nancy Burnette, executive director of Maryville Housing Authority, deals with Section 8 residents in the city. She said the makeup of her program is about 70 percent elderly and disabled residents while the remainder are working families, often with parents working multiple jobs to support children and other relatives.

"We assumed that paying utilities on top of rental costs is a struggle for many of those families, so we got college students to do a survey," she said. "To our surprise, their main issue wasn't coming up with the money, but rather just finding affordable housing. That seems to be the main issue: just finding housing. There isn't enough housing in any size, price range, or makeup when our families search for rental housing. They often have to take whatever they can find, whether or not it's close to work or schools."

One of the reasons for a lack of housing stock in many communities is that construction costs have risen, making it hard for developers to

make a profit. It is hard for us to just cover our costs. We stopped building new houses about 10 years ago because the houses couldn't appraise for as much as they cost to build. You can't stay in business that way.'

Some look to mobile homes as a solution, but Turner said these residences have the opposite effect on credit and wealth.

"For most people, your home is your ticket to building wealth; it's one of the few things that typically appreciates in value," she said. "Unless they are a permanent foundation, mobile homes depreciate just like a car. Even mobile homes on a permanent foundation don't appreciate in value. It is hard to resell them, and they don't stay in good repair. It is very expensive to do any type of home repair because nothing in a mobile home is a standard size. You always have to make a special order. When you consider the cost of the land, all of the development that needs to go on a land, and other associated costs you can build a stick house for relatively the same amount as purchasing a mobile home."

BEYOND BUYING POWER

However, just building new homes isn't a viable solution to housing issues. A 2018 report for the Federal Reserve titled "Can More Housing Supply Solve the Affordability Crisis?" found that the mere addition of new housing will not mitigate the "affordability crisis" currently experienced by the American housing market.

"The share of households spending greater than 30 percent of their income on housing is near an all-time high," the study found. "The increasing expenditure share on housing does not appear to be driven by households consuming housing units of higher physical quality, or by rising construction costs. Rather, quality-adjusted prices are increasing even as the cost of producing a home has stayed more or less the same. These facts have prompted many to suggest that constraints on the supply of housing, such as labor shortages, are at the heart of the affordability crisis."

While renters have the heavier burden of housing costs than owners, the study found that the fact renters are paying such high housing costs combined with outstanding debt like student and vehicle loans are among the reasons why renters can't save enough money to become homeowners.

The Federal Reserve study also found that balancing costs like childcare and transportation ranging from public transportation to gas and vehicle maintenance can make housing that looks "affordable" on the surface more costly for homeowners and renters. A house that is seemingly cheaper to rent or own might actually cost more because the homeowner or renter is spending more money getting to and from

TENNESSEE STATE RANKING \$15.74 In Tennessee, the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is \$819. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities — without paying more PER HOUR than 30% of income on housing - a household must earn \$2,729 monthly or \$32,749 annually. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this **STATE HOUSING** level of income translates into an hourly Housing Wage of:

FACTS ABOUT TENNESSEE:



The National Low Income Housing Coalition shows the gap between what is on the market and what many of the state's workers can actually afford. The average Tennessean needs to make twice the state's minimum wage to afford the state's average rental cost with money still left over for essentials like food, childcare, and transportation. More than a third of the state's residents are renters, and many cannot get the loans or mortgages needed for homeownership.

work and destinations like the grocery store.

The fact that wages have remained stagnant while costs for rent, food, and transportation have gone up mean that consumers have less money to spend on the essentials. Developers are also passing on more construction costs to tenants and buyers than ever before as well. The study inevitably determined that improving amenities, like public transportation, was more cost-effective than just adding new housing stock.

Pamela Caskie, director of development with the Sevierville Development and Planning Department, said health care is an issue that keeps many of the residents in the area's service-based economy from being able to save money toward housing.

"Our average residents' wage is 60 percent to 80 percent of the median income or below. You can start with no experience here making \$10 an hour, but on the other hand, you can work for 30 years and never make more than \$14 an hour in our service-based businesses," she said. "In order to buy a house you have to put 5 to 20 percent down on the purchase. People who work in our service economy have a really hard time saving any money. Most of them don't have health care offered to them or they can't afford the health care that is offered to them. They tend to get their hours cut during low season. If you get some



Financial advisors say citizens should spend 30 percent or less of their income on housing, but there is often a descrepancy in what people can afford and what is on the market. The blue represents 30 percent of wages for various groups while the yellow is the average market rent for apartments in the state.

money put away, it always seems three problems you aren't going to like your hours get cut or you have have a solution that has any longevan unexpected health emergency ity. The first leg of that stool is housthat destroys that nest egg and you're ing - you have to have somewhere right back at square one.

to put people. The second problem is transportation. You have to have a reliable, affordable way to get them to their jobs. And third, you have to have a consistently available, reasonably affordable, safe place for daycare. Any one of those problems falls off the stool and the stool drops over for both the person and the community in general."

make a profit.

Turner said Clinch-Powell used to be in the business of building new homes on vacant lots, but the rise of construction costs ended that program

"We are a developer, and we just develop for low-income houses," she said. "The cost to build a new house is so high that it is hard to

Other issues like childcare and transport can also eat into a housing budget. To address housing issues, Caskie said city officials need to look at more than just housing stock in their communities.

"Housing is a three-legged stool," Caskie said. "You can fight one problem, but until you solve all

No loan is too large or too small



The town of Dandridge recently closed a \$465,000 note with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to finance equipment for the town. Dandridge has used the TMBF loan programs 11 times beginning in 1998. Pictured from left to right (seated) Cathy Dixon, city recorder; George Gantte, mayor; and Matt Rudder, town administrator. Standing is Steve Queener, TMBF marketing representative.

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The city of Millington recently closed a \$2 million loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to finance school system improvements. The city has used TMBF programs 10 times beginning in 1996. Pictured are John Trusty, finance director; Karen Findley, city clerk; Terry Jones, mayor; and Tommy Green, TMBF marketing representative.





PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Richard Clowers has been appointed to the position of town manager by the Englewood City Commission, having pre-



Richard Clowers

viously served the town as gas superintendent. Clowers had been selected to serve as the town's interim city manager in October 2018 after former interim city manager Sherri Denton left the role. Clowers has been employed with Englewood for approximately 12 years.

Hannah Davis has been selectedasthe new affordable housing program manager for Nashville Mayor David Briley's Eco-



nomic and Community Development Team. Davis will oversee the Barnes Fund, the housing trust fund that makes competitive grants to nonprofit housing developers in order to increase affordable housing options. In her role, Davis will primarily oversee the Barnes Fund, the housing trust fund that makes competitive grants to nonprofit housing developers in order to increase affordable housing options for Nashvillians. In addition to working with HP Consulting since 2013, Davis has served as the director of the Nashville Social Enterprise Alliance and as a site coordinator for the United Way of Metropolitan Nashville. She holds a bachelor's degree in international studies and economics from Ohio State University and a master's in business administration from Colorado State University.

Michael Jones has been selected as the new chief of police for the city of Bolivar. Jones has been with the Bolivar Po-



Michael Jones

lice Department for 28 years, serving in several positions including canine officer, drug investigator, patrolman, sergeant, lieutenant. and has served the last 10 years as a captain. He has worked on investigations with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, drug task forces, and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. He is a second-generation police officer, following in the footsteps of his father who retired from the Selmer Police Department. Jones joined the Bolivar Police Department at the age of 21 after working as a security guard while in college at Middle Tennessee State University. His goals for the department include

filling vacant positions, assisting in starting neighborhood watch programs, implementing crime prevention education programs, and becoming more proactive with the public, particularly with Bolivar's youth.

Cheryl Lewis-Smith, human resources director for the city of La Vergne, has been appointed to the International Executive

Council for



Lewis-Smith

the International Personnel Management Association for Human Resources Management (IP-MA-HR). Lewis-Smith currently serves as president-elect on the Tennessee Personnel Management Association (TPMA) Board of Directors and will assume the presidency role in April 2019. She began serving on the TPMA board in 2014. Lewis-Smith has 27 years of experience in human resources and has been with the city of La Vergne since 2013. She holds a bachelor's degree with a double major in psychology and sociology from Judson College and a master's degree in organizational communication from Western Kentucky University. She also holds designations as a Professional in Human Resources Management (PHR) with SHRM along with a Senior Certified Professional designation (IPMA -SCP) within the International Public Management Association for HR.

Abb Oglesby, training manager for the Municipal Technical Advisory Service, recently completed the Tennessee



tribution and sale of alcohol throughout the state. It has both regulatory and licensing responsibilities while also operating

ufacture. dis-

Russell Thomas

a law enforcement division. A native of Tullahoma, Thomas holds a bachelor's degree in political science and a law degree from the University of Tennessee. He served as an assistant

Ken Wilber

district attorney in Nashville for four years before going into private practice as a criminal defense and general civil litigation attorney.

Ken Wilber, who recently retired as mayor of Portland after 30 years working for the city, has been selected as the Portland Chamber of

Commerce's Citizen of the Year for his service to the community. A Portland native, Wilber's career with the city began when he served on the city council from 1987 until 1995. He then worked as superintendent of the city's public works department from 1996 until 2003, being elected the city's mayor in 2005. During his tenure, Wilber was instrumental in bringing new industry to the area, promoting health and fitness, historical restoration, and improving city infrastructure. He was named Mayor of the Year by the Tennessee Municipal League in 2016 and is involved in numerous organizations. Wilber has been active in the Greater Nashville Regional Council, the Sumner County Council of Government, Cumberland Region Tomorrow, the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System and Tennessee Municipal League Risk Management Pool.

Adam Wilson has been selected as the new parks and recreation director for the city of East Ridge. Wilson has 14 years of experience in



Adam Wilson

recreation and leisure administration including athletic programming, special event organization, and tournament management. Before coming to East Ridge, he worked with the Catoosa County Recreation Department in various roles including interim recreation director, athletics director, and recreation director. He also worked with the Metro Atlanta YMCA and as a tour guide at the Braves Museum and Hall of Fame in Atlanta. Wilson holds a bachelor's degree in parks, recreation, and leisure studies from the University of West Georgia and its a certified parks and recreation professional.

Former Gov. Bill Haslam selected for D.C. fellowship

Former Gov. Bill Haslam will be part of the inaugural class of fellows as the American University in Washington D.C.'s Sine Institute of Policy and Politics.

In this role, Haslam and other fellows will work with students and participate in events like discussions and study sessions to "uncover new ways to inform cross-sectoral policy solutions.'

The other fellows are Abdul El-Saved, former executive director of the Detroit Health Department and former candidate for governor of Michigan; William Kristol, political analyst and founder of the Weekly Standard; Ruth Marcus, political commentator and columnist for the Washington Post; and Karen Zacarías, playwright, founder of Young Playwrights' Theater and Latinx Theater Commons. Wes Bush, chairman of defense contractor Northrop Grumman, will be a



Bill Haslam

distinguished lecturer.

The Sine Institute was established last year with the stated goal of "bringing together experts and top scholars with students to work on the nation's most pressing challenges in a way that promotes common ground and nonpartisan policy solutions."

Moore to serve as new **MTAS police consultant**

David Moore has been selected as a new police management consultant for the University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS).

Moore will be serving the western district of the state, operating out of the MTAS office in Jackson. Moore served as the police chief for the city of Martin for 12 years and has a total of 26 years of law enforcement experience.

Moore was previously president of the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police. He also served as director of training and as a lecturer for V-Academy Law Enforcement Training and as an adjunct professor and lecturer with the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Moore holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from UT



David Moore

Martin, a master's in criminal justice from Bethel College, and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy.

Former Kingston city manager Pinkerton dies

Jim Pinkerton, former city manager of Kingston, died on Feb. 7 after a lengthy illness.

Pinkerton served as Kingston's city manager from 2001 until his retirement in 2013, joining the city after a lengthy career in engineering.

Growing up in the Inglewood



in public management by nearing from subject-matter experts with experience in the field. The Tennessee CPM program is accredited by the National Certified Public Manager Consortium and available to UT employees.

Russell Thomas, former Davidson County assistant prosecutor, has been tapped to serve as the executive director of Tennessee's Alcoholic Beverage Commission. ABC regulates and enforces state laws that govern the man-

neighborhood of Nashville, Pinkerton earned a bachelor's degree in engineering with a focus in civil sanitary engineering from Vanderbilt University in 1967.

After graduation, he worked for the Boeing Company performing stress analyses on the Saturn V Launch Vehicle. He then worked as a state hydrologist for the state of Tennessee from 1969 to 1973.

He served as executive vice president and co-owner of Wayne L. Smith and Associates, Inc., in Knoxville from 1973 until 1985, working



Jim Pinkerton

in Florida for several years in the 1980s before returning to Tennessee to work for Flynt Engineering Company in 1996.





The Museum of Appalachia near Norris has been selected as the **Best Museum in East Tennessee** by readers of the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's monthly publication The Tennessee Magazine. More than a million readers cast ballots in the reader poll that contained 28 categories. The Museum of Appalachia was selected because of its extensive collection of both indoor and outdoor exhibits and artifacts as well as its interpretation of living farm and village history related to the pioneer period of East Tennessee and the Southern Appalachian Mountains. The non-profit organization aims to preserve Appalachian artifacts and instill in the community-regionally, nationally, and internationally-a greater knowledge of, and appreciation for, the Southern Appalachian heritage.

The U.S. Senate passed legislation to expand the Shiloh National Military Park in Shiloh, which will help attract more visitors to Tennessee, boost local economies, and protect the site for future generations. Sens. Lamar Alexander and Marsha Blackburn introduced the Shiloh National Military Park Boundary Adjustment and Parker's Crossroads Battlefield Designation Act. The U.S. House of Representatives will now consider the legislation. The Shiloh National Military Park Boundary Adjustment and Parker's Crossroads Battlefield Designation Act would designate battlefields at Davis Bridge and Fallen Timbers in Tennessee and Russell House in Tennessee and Mississippi, as part of the Shiloh National Military Park. The legislation also designates Parker's Crossroads as an affiliated area of the National Park System. The National Park Service has already determined that these battlefields are nationally significant and in need of preservation and protection. The majority of the land included in this legislation is currently owned by the state of Tennessee and the Civil War Trust

Tennesseans have some of the worst dental health in the nation, according to Center for Disease Control statistics compiled by financial planning site Wallet Hub. Tennessee ranked 41 out of 50 in terms of overall dental health as well as had the second lowest percentage of adolescents who visited dentists regularly and the fourth fewest dentists per capita.

Beecher Wallace Homestead near Fall Creek Falls added to state park system



The Beecher Wallace Homestead in the Dog Cove area near Fall Creek Falls State Park has been added to Tennessee's public lands, according to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) and The Land Trust for Tennessee. The historic homestead will be managed by state park staff and open to the public. The 4.8-acre homestead will serve as a connection point for visitors to the Cumberland Plateau, which features nearby recreational areas including Lost Creek and Virgin Falls State Natural Areas. The homestead addition features a barn, sheds, and a farmhouse originally constructed in the late 1800s. Tennessee State Parks will protect the integrity of the home to help interpret the area's history to visitors. This homestead will give visitors a glimpse into the pioneer life of the late 1800s. The property adjoins 750 acres acquired by the state in recent years with the assistance of The Land Trust, Open Space Institute, and Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation.

TACIR recommends mandatory collections

TACIR from Page 1

would require out-of-state sellers with more than \$500,000 in sales in Tennessee to collect and remit sales tax. However, the Tennessee General Assembly voted not to enforce the rule until the Courts ruled on the matter.

TACIR recommended that based on the Wayfair decision, the state should move to mandatory sales tax collections on outof-state sales. Because it would eliminate an unfair tax advantage for some out-of-state sellers, wouldn't apply retroactively, and includes a safe harbor for those who transact only limited business in the state, the General Assembly should allow the Department of Revenue to enforce Rule 129.

In addition to Rule 129 - in 2005, Tennessee adopted a comprehensive re-write of the state's tax provisions to bring our state's tax laws into compliance with the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement (SSUTA). Implementation of these provisions are set to become effective July 1, 2019. Some of those provisions, however, would involve significant changes to Tennessee's tax laws. They include three major changes to the state's sales and use tax laws: 1. Intrastate Sales and Revenue Sourcing. For sales where the sellers and the buyer are both located in Tennessee, the jurisdiction where the goods are delivered is not necessarily the jurisdiction in which the seller is located. Under the SSUTA agreement, the jurisdiction where the goods are delivered would receive the local option sales tax revenue (destination sourcing). TACIR recommended to avoid complicating sales tax collection for in-state sellers and to avoid shifting revenue away from jurisdictions where infrastructure investments have already been made to support retail, Tennessee should continue to distribute local option sales tax revenue from

sales within Tennessee to the jurisdiction where the sale originated, not to its delivery destination.

2. Single Article Cap. Another issue in adopting the SSUTA provisions, is how it affects state and local single article caps. In the early 2000's, when the state faced a budget shortfall, the state raised the single article cap from \$1,600 to \$3,200.

However, the state applied a universal 2.75 percent local rate to the dollars between \$1,601 -\$3,200 and kept all those additional revenues for the state. Under the SSUTA, the state and local single article caps would be limited to only some high value items - motor vehicles, aircraft, watercraft, modular homes, manufactured homes, and mobile homes. A complete program is set to go into effect July 1, 2019, to refund businesses for any additional tax paid because of this change. Although a single article cap on high value items is not ideal for municipal governments, the alternative of having to identify and refund businesses for additional tax owed would be problematic for municipal governments. TACIR recommended to avoid the need for such a program, and to avoid raising taxes on the sale of non-exempt high value items, Tennessee should retain its single article sales tax cap for all sales.

development funds for rural communities Six cities are among recipients of more than \$5 million in grants

designed to improve industrial parks in rural communities.

Gov. Bill Lee and Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Bob Rolfe announced the Site Development Grant funding as part of the larger Rural Economic Opportunity Act.

"I would like to congratulate the 13 communities receiving Site Development Grants," Lee said. "One of Tennessee's major initiatives is helping rural communities, and with the assistance of these grants, these communities will be better positioned for economic success and investment. I look forward to seeing these communities continue to grow and excel."

The grants are intended to help rural communities overcome barriers to achieve Select Tennessee site certification and prepare them to receive economic development projects that will create jobs in their communities. The funds assist communities in completing infrastructure needs and making engineering improvements on project-ready sites. "When a company is looking to expand or locate new operations in our state, one of the most important assets a community can have to land a project is a shovel-ready site," Rolfe said. "I am proud of these 13 communities for taking the initiative to be better prepared for economic growth with the assistance of the Site Development Grants."

Cities receive share of \$5M in industrial park

"Through the Site Development Grants, we are partnering with these communities to help them remain competitive in the economic development game by creating project-ready sites," said Sammie Arnold, TNECD assistant commissioner of Community and Rural Development. "With this investment, we expect to see more job creation and anticipate future growth in these communities."

The city of Henderson was awarded \$448,2000 for the clearing and grading of 15 acres of land at the Henderson Industrial park while the city of Jackson was awarded \$379,546 for the clearing of 16 acres of land and design of a new industrial access road at the Highway 223 East Site.

of land at the Oakland Rail Site.

The city of Clarksville, in conjunction with Montgomery County, received \$500,000 for the grading of 42 acres at the Clarksville Montgomery County Corporate Business Park North.

Additional grants were given to Macon County for its industrial park site near Lafayette as well as funds for improvements to industrial parks in Decatur, Grundy, Lauderdale, Hawkins, Obion, and Stewart counties.

Applications were reviewed by an advisory committee made up of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, Austin Consulting, Tennessee Valley Authority, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Tennessee Department of Transportation and USDA Rural Development.

TNECD is currently accepting applications for the next round of Site Development Grants.

3. Uniform Tax Rate and Distribution of Revenues. The SSUTA agreement required the state to adopt a uniform local option sales and use tax rate for out-of-state sellers with no physical presence in Tennessee. The local rate was set at 2.25 percent.

During the January meeting, Commissioners voted to amend TACIR's report to set the uniform rate at 2.75 percent to avoid any inequities between brick and motor stores and out-of-state venors. Vendors will have the option of a uniform 2.75 percent local rate or using the actual local rate.

The Lewisburg Industrial Development Board will receive \$378,000 to purchase 27 acres to add to its Interstate 65 Commerce Park.

The city of Morristown received \$1 million to prepare a million-square-foot building site at its East Tennessee Progress Center. The city of Columbia's Industrial Development Board also received \$1 million to purchase 129 acres

All local governments interested in receiving Site Development Grants must submit a Letter of Intent by March 8, 2019, and a completed application by April 5, 2019.

Additional information regarding the grants can be found at https://www.tn.gov/ecd/rural-development/tnecd-site-development/select-tennessee-site-development-grant.html.

Nominations now being accepted for 2019 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards

The Tennessee Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards are the most prestigious environmental and conservation awards in the state.

Marking its 33rd year, the awards have been presented to city and county governments, individuals, organizations, and educational institutions making significant contributions to the protection and improvement of our natural resources and wildlife.

The awards are designed to bring about a greater knowledge and awareness of effective practic-

es and projects and to give proper recognition to those persons and organizations that make outstanding contributions to the natural resources of their community and the state.

The Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards include 10 categories: Building Green, Clean Air, Energy and Renewable Resources, Environmental Education and Outreach, Environmental Education and Outreach (school category), Land Use, Materials Management, Natural Heritage, Sustainable Perfor-



mance, and Lifetime Achievement (professional and volunteer).

Nominations are being accepted until April 30, 2019.

More information is available at www.tn.gov/environment



For more information about the Tennessee Drug Card, visit TML's website at www.TML1.org

Tennessee economy to see growth in 2019

GROWTH from Page 1

by the Boyd Center as their report forecasts trends we can expect to see not only in Tennessee, but across the country for the upcoming year.

A special chapter of the report zeroes in on the implications of federal tax reform and rising trade tensions for economic growth in Tennessee. The net effect of tax reform is likely to be a short-term boost to economic growth through 2019. Tariffs, on the other hand, are leading to higher consumer and producer prices as well as job losses throughout the country.

International trade plays a larger role in Tennessee than in similarly sized states, with exports to Canada, Mexico, and China alone totaling \$16.2 billion in

2017. In addition, more than 150,000 Tennesseans work for foreign-owned companies. US tariffs on aluminum and steel are particularly costly for Tennessee's machinery, automobile, and auto part manufacturers.

Other projections from the report include:

The Federal Reserve will continue to raise interest rates in 2019. Inflation accelerated slightly in 2018, which is one factor that will contribute to higher interest rates in the coming year.

The U.S. trade deficit will increase in 2019, with a 4.1 percent increase in exports forecast to be more than offset by a 6.4 percent increase in imports, dampening growth.

Tennessee job growth is projected to slow in 2019, but the professional and business services sector and the transportation and utilities sector will see robust gains.

The state's unemployment rate will tick up to 3.6 percent in 2019, with the tight labor market drawing more people into the labor force to pursue a job.

Slower economic growth will mean slower growth in sales tax revenues.

Since 1975, the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research, housed within UT's Haslam College of Business, has provided Tennessee's governor with an annual economic report that includes an indepth analysis of state and national trends and forecasts.



Advertising: \$9.25 per column inch. No charge to TML members. Send advertising to: Carole Graves: cgraves@TML1.org.

ASSISTANT PUBLIC WORKS **DIRECTOR/ADMINISTRATION** GERMANTOWN. The city of Germantown is seeking a qualified individual to serve as assistant public works director of administration. Under administrative direction of the public works director, direct and manage administrative support programs and services of the department, including budget, personnel/payroll, purchasing, contract administration, inventory & asset management, and computer operations. This position will provide highly responsible and complex staff assistance to the director, such as statistical and policy analysis and business forecasts. In conjunction with the assistant public works director of operations, this position will also assume responsible control of the department in absence of the director. The minimum requirements for this opportunity include: bachelor's degree in business or public administration, governmental accounting or related field and at least five years of professional financial and administrative services experience to include responsibility for planning, organizing and managing departmental fiscal activities. Master's degree in a related field and management experience over public works functions strongly preferred; or any combination of education, training, and experience providing the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform essential job functions. For more details and applications, please visit https:// www.governmentjobs.com/careers/ germantown. Open until filled. EOE.

BUILDING AND CODES INSPECTOR

HENDERSONVILLE. This position is responsible for performing all necessary and required inspections of buildings, property, and related systems to ensure compliance with applicable building codes. This position is eligible for possible merit and COL increases as well as longevity and other excellent benefits. Monthly pay is \$3,944 - \$4,248 or DOQ. Candidate must possess one or more valid and current ICC Inspector certifications equaling a combination building inspector; 1-3 years of related work experience; high school diploma or GED; possession of or ability to obtain a valid TN Driver's License: and the ability to satisfactorily utilize basic computer applications. Candidates will 3+ valid ICC certifications who do not possess a combination Building Inspector certification may apply for this position; however, if hired, candidate must obtain combination Building Inspector certification within one year of hire date. To apply go to www.hvilletn.org and view the Job Openings page under the Human Resources Department or come by Hendersonville City Hall at 101 Maple Drive North, Hendersonville, TN 37075. Closing date for acceptance of applications is March 1 at 4 PM CST.

managerial work in the maintenance, repair, installation, operation, and minor construction of municipal water distribution, and wastewater collection system facilities. Requires an associate's degree with major course concentration in engineering technology, or a related science field; and five years' experience in public utilities maintenance construction, at least two of which must have been in a supervisory capacity; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience, which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Must possess or obtain a state of Tennessee Grade II Distribution System Operator's License and a state of Tennessee Grade II Wastewater Collection System License within twenty-four (24) months of hire. Must be in compliance with TDEC Rule 0400-49-01 and remain in compliance throughout employment. Must possess and maintain a valid driver's license. Salary is \$50,729 - \$68,962 (DOQ) annually with excellent benefits package. To apply for this position, you must submit an original Town of Collierville application. Applications are available to download at www.collierville.com under the Employment Opportunities tab, or you may obtain one from our Human Resources Office located at 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN, 38017, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Completed applications must be submitted either by mail or in person to the above address. Open until filled. EOE.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

PULASKI. The Pulaski-Giles County Economic Development Commission (EDC), is seeking candidates for the position of executive director. The EDC Board seeks a dynamic leader for this opportunity to direct an organization that supports the retention and expansion of Giles County's businesses and the attraction of new businesses. Candidates must have any combination of education and/ or experience that has provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for satisfactory job performance. Abachelor's degree in public/business administration, urban planning, economics, marketing, finance or related field is preferred. Must have considerable knowledge of business development, community, and economic development. Must have a working knowledge of local zoning and infrastructure. Must have the ability to communicate effectively to groups and individuals, engineers, architects, contractors, developers, businesses, and the general public. Must have the ability to establish good working relationships with other organizations and economic development practitioners. Must have the ability to prepare and analyze reports and data and have skill in the operation of necessary tools and equipment, i.e. computer, word processing, spreadsheet software, social media, online documentation and general office equipment. Please send resumes with a minimum of three professional and three personal references by March 15, to Pulaski-Giles County Economic Development Commission, Attention: Personnel Committee, 203 South First Street, Pulaski, TN 38478.

related field with seven years of fire service experience, with three years in fire service management. Qualified applicants must have successfully completed Fire Officer II training from the Tennessee State Fire Academy, or equivalent training and must possess and maintain at least an EMT license from the state of Tennessee. For more information and for a complete job description, visit <u>www.lakelandtn.</u> <u>gov/jobs.</u>

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

ERWIN. The town of Erwin, Tennessee is accepting Resumes' for the position of Public Works Director. Seeking an organized and detail-oriented individual with the ability to plan, organize and direct the activities and operations of the Public Works Department including: Street and Right-of-Way Maintenance, Sanitation, Recycle Collection Operations, Storm Water Management and Maintenance, and other related work as required. This individual will assist the City Recorder with planning and coordinating of major capital projects. The Public Works Director is responsible for implementation of the departmental budget, the direct and indirect supervision of assigned staff of the Public Works Department, as well as Parks and Recreation. Exercising discretion and independent judgment with respect to assigned duties is required. Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university (or equivalent) with major course work in civil engineering, environmental studies, public administration or management is preferred. At least five years of increasingly responsible public works experience including supervisory or management responsibility in road construction or maintenance, refuse collection, or in other construction trades or any combination to provide a thorough knowledge of public works management is preferred. Salary is negotiable dependent on education and experience. Must possess a valid Tennessee driver's license. Application is a public record. The position is open until filled. You may obtain an application by visiting Erwin Town Hall at 211 North Main Avenue, or by calling 423-743-6231 to receive by mail. Feel free to contact Citv Recorder Glenn Rosenoff regarding our excellent benefits.Mail or submit completed application and resume' to: Town of Erwin, City Recorders Office, Attn: Glenn Rosenoff, P.O. Box 59, Erwin, TN 37650. EOE

REFERENCE ASSOCIATE – YOUTH SERVICES

COLLIERVILLE. This position provides a variety of reference, research, and program services to patrons in the day to day operations of the department. Requires a degree from an accredited college with major course work in library ccience or a related field; supplemented by two years previous experience and/or training in personal computer operations, office management, office administration, customer service, record management, and area of assignment; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Must be able to work a combination of day, night, and weekend work. Shift hours can vary to ensure proper coverage of desk during open hours. Must possess and maintain a valid driver's license. Salary is \$24,799 - \$31,154 annually (DOQ) with excellent benefits package. To apply for this position, you must submit an official town of ColliervilleApplication. Applications are available to download at www.collierville.com under the Employment Opportunities tab, or you may obtain one from our Human Resources Office located at 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN, 38017, Monday -Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Applications must be submitted either by mail or in person to the above address. EOE.

SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD

COLLIERVILLE. This is a responsible traffic position assisting school age children to safely cross intersections, major streets, and assisting in the relief of traffic congestion at the schools in the Collierville system during hours when children are going to or coming from school. Requires a high school diploma or equivalent; one (1) month related experience and/or training; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Must attend special departmental training programs in traffic control. Working of shifts is required. Applicants must be 18 years of age or older. Must have the ability to pass a work related background check. Must be able to pass a work related drug test. Must be able to perform duties in inclement weather. Must possess physical stamina to stand for long periods of time. Salary is \$12.75 per hour. To apply for this position, you must submit an original Town of Collierville application. Applications are available to download at www. collierville.com or you may obtain one from our Human Resources Office located at 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN, 38017, Monday -Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Completed applications must be submitted either by mail or in person to the above address. Open until filled. EOE.

SENIORMAINTENANCEWORK-ERWASTEWATERTREATMENT COLLIERVILE. The purpose of this classification is to perform semiskilled to skilled work as part of a public works/utilities crew performing maintenance and construction tasks on

TML Board to meet March 18

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Municipal League will meet in regular public session on Monday, March 18, 2019, at 10 a.m. in the Nashville Meeting Room of the Doubletree Hotel, 315 4th Avenue North, Nashville, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, March 15, at the offices of the Tennessee Municipal League, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville. Additional information may be obtained from Jackie Gupton, 615-255-6416.

public works/utilities projects. This position requires a high school diploma or GED; supplemented by 6 months previous experience and/or training involving construction or maintenance work in area of assignment; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Must possess and maintain a valid driver's license. Salary is \$24,960 - \$29,637, depending on qualifications, with excellent benefits package. To apply for this position, you must submit an original town of Collierville application. Applications are available to download at www.collierville.com under the Employment Opportunities tab, or you may obtain one from our Human Resources Office located at 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN, 38017, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Completed applications must be submitted either by mail or in person to the above address. EOE.

SERVICE WORK

GALLATIN. The city of Gallatin's Public Utilities Department is seeking qualified applicants for the position of utility service worker in the sewer division. The purpose of this position is to perform unskilled manual and semiskilled work assisting in the installation, construction, repair, maintenance and care of utility lines and related structures. 40 hour per week, day-time position with some weekend work required. The starting rate is \$15.91 + excellent benefits. Dutiesinclude assisting in the flushing and maintenance of water distribution lines and appurtenances, maintenance and repair of water distribution and sanitary sewer lines and related infrastructure; making water and sewer taps and repairing leaks. Applicants must have general knowledge of the tools, materials, and equipment used in general construction and maintenance work as well as the ability to understand and follow oral and written instruction. At minimum, applicants must have a high school diploma/equivalent, with six months' of recent work experience in construction, equipment operation, or utilities experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. To apply, please visit our website at www.gallatintn.gov. Open until filled. EOE.

CITY FORESTER I

JACKSON. The person in this capacity will perform his/her duties under the direction of the planning director. They will develop, administer, and monitor programs and polices to insure compliance with the city's tree and landscape ordinances. This person will perform a variety of administrative, public relations, and coordination of volunteer tasks to accomplish the mission of Keep Jackson Beautiful (KJB), thus assuring a better quality life and environment of the city of Jackson. Review site development plans and preliminary subdivision plats and provide technical assistance and recommendations for both the vegetative impact evaluation and the overall landscaping plan, including on-site inspections to identify trees to be preserved. Coordinate various grant applications and administration. Conduct programs and workshops for the community which relate to litter prevention, recycling, and beautification. Bachelor's degree in urban forestry or closely related field; valid driver's license. Hourly rate: \$22.13. Job description available on the city website: www.cityofjackson. net. EOE. Please contact the city of Jackson, Personnel Department, 127 E. Main Street, Suite 303, Jackson, TN, 38301. Phone (731)-425-8525; fax (731)-425-8673. Applications accepted until Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2019.

DISTRIBUTION/COLLECTION MANAGER

COLLIERVILLE. The purpose of this classification is to perform highly responsible supervisory and

FIRE CHIEF

LAKELAND. The city of Lakeland is seeking qualified applicants for the position of fire chief. This employee is responsible for a broad range of administrative and support services under the general supervision of the city manager. The fire chief is primarily responsible for directing and coordinating all department activities including fire suppression, rescue services, emergency medical treatment, hazardous materials response, fire investigation program, community risk reduction programs, training programs, and equipment maintenance and repair. The fire chief is also responsible for directing and administering the annual departmental operating and capital budgets, evaluating needs and formulating recommendations for fire department resources including personnel, apparatus, equipment and facilities. Fire chief will prepare reports on departmental activities and present to the city manager and Board of Commissioners and will develop and maintain a comprehensive emergency management plan for the city and will serve as the city liaison with surrounding municipalities to coordinate mutual emergency management plans. This is a newly created department within the city of Lakeland that is currently approved to start operations on July 1, 2019. The minimum requirements for this opportunity include: bachelor's degree in fire science, business administration, or a

Bond Fund Board to meet March 18

Notice is hereby given that the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund Board of Directors will meet in regular public session on Monday, March 18, 2019, at 8:30 a.m., local time, in the Vanderbilt Room on the lobby level of the Doubletree Hotel at 315 Fourth Avenue North, Nashville, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. Some members of the board may participate in such meeting by telephonic means, which will be audible to any member of the public attending such meeting. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, March 15, at the offices of TMBF, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd., Suite 502, in Nashville. Additional information may be obtained at 615-255-1561.

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High Court to hear cases that pertain to local government

COURT from Page 1

fired for not reporting to work on a Sunday. She was instead attending a church service. Davis claims her firing was done in retaliation for reporting that she was sexually harassed and sexually assaulted by a superior.

She filed sexual harassment and retaliation charges with the Texas Workforce Commission. After investigating, the commission told her she could sue, and she brought a retaliation and religious discrimination lawsuit. Fort Bend pointed out she didn't exhaust her administrative remedies by filing a charge of religious discrimination with the Texas Workforce Commission.

Fort Bend argues that administrative exhaustion is a jurisdictional requirement of Title VII, meaning if an employee fails to satisfy it a court cannot hear the case.

Davis argues that exhaustion is a "waivable claim-processing requirement" and that Fort Bend waived it by waiting five years "and an entire round of appeals all the way to the Supreme Court" before raising it.

The Fifth Circuit held that the failure to exhaust administrative remedies is a waivable rule not a jurisdictional rule that would bar the lawsuit from proceeding.

The lower court reasoned: "Here, Congress did not suggest-much less clearly statethat Title VII's administrative exhaustion requirement is jurisdictional, and so we must treat this requirement as nonjurisdictional in character. The statute says nothing about a connection between the EEOC enforcement process and the power of a court to hear a Title VII case."

The issue the Supreme Court will decide in McDonough v. Smith is whether the statute of limitations for a due process fabrication of evidence claim begins to run when the criminal proceedings terminate in the defendant's favor, or when the defendant becomes aware of the tainted evidence and its improper use.

Edward McDonough, former Democratic Commissioner of Rensselaer County Board of Elections, approved forged absentee ballot applications which he claims he didn't know had been falsified. Youel Smith investigated and prosecuted McDonough. McDonough claims Smith "engaged in an elaborate scheme to frame McDonough for the crimes by, among other things, fabricating evidence."

After two trials, McDonough was ultimately acquitted. Just before three years passed since McDonough was acquitted he sued Smith under Section 1983 for violating his due process rights by fabricating evidence and using it against him.

The Second Circuit held that McDonough's due process claim was time barred because the threeyear statute of limitations started running when the fabricated evidence had been disclosed to him (as late as the end of his first trial), not on the day of his acquittal.

McDonough argued his claim was most analogous to a malicious prosecution claim, which does not accrue until a favorable termination of the prosecution.

But according to the Second Circuit: "Because the injury for this constitutional violation occurs at the time the evidence is used against the defendant to deprive him of his liberty, whether it be at the time he is arrested, faces trial, or is convicted, it is when he becomes aware of that tainted evidence and its improper use that the harm is complete and the cause of action accrues. Indeed, the harm-and the due process violation—is in the use of the fabricated evidence to cause a liberty deprivation, not in the eventual resolution of the criminal proceeding."

At the time of publication, it is possible the Supreme Court, will get involved this term in a dispute over the census.

In January, a federal district court held that a question about citizenship may not be included in the 2020 census. The federal government has asked the Supreme Court to rule on this question right away rather than let the Second Circuit weigh in because the census questionnaire must be printed soon.

As of early February the Supreme Court had not indicated whether it will hear this case this term. Federal District Court Judge Furman explains why the census is so important to local governments: "[The census] is used to allocate hundreds of billions of dollars in federal, state, and local funds. Even small deviations from an accurate count can have major implications for states, localities, and the people who live in them — indeed, for the country as a whole.

The State and Local Legal Center (SLLC) files Supreme Court amicus curiae briefs on behalf of the Big Seven national organizations representing state and local governments. *Indicates a case where the SLLC has filed or will file an amicus brief.



The U.S. government's public debt is now more than \$22 trillion — the highest it has ever been - according to the U.S. Treasury Department. Falling tax revenues and rising federal spending have contributed to the rise in the public debt, which Treasury Department officials said has risen more than \$2 trillion since the day President Donald Trump took office. Despite being in the second-longest economic expansion since the post-World War II boom, the U.S. is projected to rack up annual deficits and incur national debt ately following World War II - the only time the national deficit has been this large was during the Great Recession.

The number of cyclist and pedestrian deaths in the U.S. is at its highest point in 25 years, according to recently released research from the League of American Bicyclists. Approximately 835 cyclists were killed in 2016, the highest figure reported since 1991. Additionally, 2016 saw 5,987 pedestrian fatalities, the highest number recorded since 1990. The statistics were compiled from the number of people who died in motor vehicle crashes in 2016, with the total number of people who died in motor vehicle crashes in 2016-including cyclists, pedestrians, and those in motor vehicles - at 37,461.

The U.S. economy added 304,000 jobs in January, marking the 100th straight month of payroll growth in spite of the U.S. government shutdown and an accelerating trade war with China. While the market extended its record streak of job gains, unemployment also saw an increase in January from 3.9 percent to 4 percent. Economists believe this is related to the government shutdown. While initial January gains were optimistic, data revised from previous months was



March 2-3: Clarksville

Hunting and Fishing Expo The great outdoors is calling. Sportsmen can get ready for the upcoming turkey and fishing seasons. The expo will showcase some of the best in boats, trucks, and outdoor gear. For more info visit https:// tuckesseeoutdoors.com/

March 16: Bell Buckle

Fourth Annual Daffodil Day

This quaint little festival began in 1978 to celebrate the coming of spring and the thousands of daffodils that line the roads and farmlands for a six mile stretch of highway leading into Bell Buckle. The event normally features a daffodil flower show as well as seed and flower exchanges. For more information on these book signings, go to the Bell Buckle Coffee Shop and Book Swap Facebook page.

March 21-24: Knoxville

Big Ears Festival

Big Ears Festival is a dynamic, interactive experience that explores connections between musicians and artists, crossing all musical genres while interfacing with film, performance and the visual arts. For more info visit https://bigearsfestival.org/

March 22-23: Linden

Blooming Arts Festival Back and better than ever, this highly-anticipated event will feature a diverse and compelling mix of fine arts, local craftsmanship, engaging performances, and fantastic eats. For more info visit www.bloomingartsfestival.org.

March 29-30: Savannah

TN River BBQ Battle & Music Fest The Kansas City Barbeque Society sanctioned cook-off, formerly known as Blues Hog BBQ & Music Fest, is back on at Green Acres RV Park in Savannah. Professional cooking teams from across the country will be competing for cash prizes. Visit www.tnriverbbqbattle. com for more info.



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at rates not seen since the 1940s, according to the Congressional Budget Office. CBO officials said that - other than immediless so. Employment gains from November and December were revised down by a total 70,000.

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Casada discusses goals, challenges as new House Speaker

BY LINDA BRYANT

The Tennessee House of Representatives began a new era in 2019 with the election of Rep. Glen Casada as Speaker of the House.

On Jan. 8, 2019—and in front of a capacity crowd—Casada accepted the gavel from Tennessee's first female Speaker Beth Harwell, who had served for eight years.

The 59-year-old leader, who was first elected to the legislature in December 2001, is widely viewed as a staunch conservative Republican leader, who regularly takes strict stances on issues such as ending abortion, cutting taxes and imposing tighter limits on immigration. Yet, he also has a bipartisan approach. One of his first gestures as Speaker of the House was to pick two Democrats to lead key legislative committees.

Casada began his tenure as Speaker of the House with a few surprises by announcing what he called "historic changes" to the traditional committee structure, by establishing several new subcommittees. He said the changes would "usher in a new era of accountability and oversight for corrections, children's services and TennCare."

He also appointed the first woman to chair the House Finance Committee: Rep. Susan Lynn (R-Mt. Juliet). The finance subcommittee will be led by Rep. Andy Holt (R-Dresden), who has voted against the Republican budget several times in recent years.

The District 63 Republican, who represents parts of Franklin and Thompson Station in Williamson County, also has a history of helping underrepresented populations in the public and private sectors. He has advocated for families affected by autism and has received numerous civic awards, including being named the 2015 Hero of Tennessee by the Tennessee Disability Coalition, Legislator of the Year by the Tennessee Cancer Association, and Guardian of Small Business by the National Federation of Small Business (NFIB).

Tennessee State Comptroller Justin P. Wilson, a friend and colleague, once described Casada as the legendary character in the classic country song, "The Gambler."

"Like the gambler in the song, Glen knows when to hold 'em and when to fold 'em, and can effectively articulate the reasons for this decision," Wilson said." That's what makes him so effective."

TT&C: Congratulations on your new position as Speaker of the House. Can you reflect on a couple of key lessons you've learned over your career of public service from starting as a Williamson County commissioner in 1994 until now? Are there consistent strategies or beliefs that have guided you over the past 25 years?

GC: The thing that stands out the most for me in terms of learning is this: You work in a group. You work in a legislative body and you present ideas then you build a consensus and move forward.



House Speaker Glen Casada

"State government not only created the federal government, it also created local government to address things such as planning, zoning, and law enforcement, just to name a few things. The state government would intervene when a local government enters into an area it's not constitutionally authorized to do. To me that's the line of demarcation."

TT&C: Can you share some ideas about where Republicans and Democrats can find some mutual territory?

GC: Something that is near and dear to my heart—and that I think everyone wants to address—is mental health. We have a lot of individuals in our state who are a danger to themselves, their families and the community at large. Many are without adequate mental health services. So, let's start with that part of mental health and really address the issue together. Specifically, I think all parties want to address long-term care from the standpoint of providing beds and paying for long-term care.

TT&C: What about the statewide opioid crisis, that's an issue that seems to have affected all strata of society.

GC: It's very important to address. In the state of Tennessee, we have taken some positive steps for two years in a row, and it has yielded some positive results. We've begun on that path and will continue. We have a long way to go, but I think the next journey needs to be mental health.

TT&C: You recently made sweeping changes to committees in the House of Representatives and created new subcommittees that you said will "usher in a new era of accountability and oversight for corrections, children's services and TennCare." The newly created Higher Education Subcommittee will focus on academic, vocational and technical preparation for jobs and provide leadership on the Drive to 55 initiative to equip 55 percent of Tennesseans with post-secondary credentials. The new Menchallenges in your new role as Speaker of the House? Are there certain aspects of the job that you know are going to be difficult? GC: Yes, there are difficult aspects but what I think is important—what is always on my mind—is how to make the system and process work equitably for all people. Our House members are smart; they are leaders back in their districts. I don't want to marginalize anyone. At the same time, there is a process and an order and decorum they must follow. Achieving that balance is my challenge, making sure it's included but in a way that's orderly and methodical and in a manner that can move us forward.

TT&C: You were never a supporter of the Affordable Care Act, but have been public about your support of an expansion of Medicare block grants as a vehicle for improving health care in Tennessee. Can you explain this stance?

GC: With the introduction of the Affordable Care Act we saw health care rates escalate dramatically, and that is because Washington D.C. passed on to the states this cookie-cutter formula that we had to comply with. It forced expensive insurance plans upon the public and people had trouble covering insurance and the costs of healthcare. I think it's better to craft coverage that works specifically for Tennesseans. I think we can do it affordably, much more efficiently, and something that works more economically than the Affordable Care Act.

TT&C: Is there anything else you would like to say about the healthcare system? It's certainly an issue that never seems to 56 percent of districts with high schools saw their graduation rates improve when compared to last year's rates. And that's just one improvement. The state's ACT participation is higher than ever and senior year retake scores are improved by 10-percent last year. It seems like we are on the right track, but how do we continue to get better? GC: That is a sentence I really like: "We are on the right track." For the past two years, we have led the states in education improvement. But improving is not an end destination. We want to be the best in education. What we have done-will continue to do-is require certain standards and competition amongst schools, and reward schools for doing well. I believe the state will continue on that track. Of course, Gov. Lee is advocating for expanding vocational education so that will be good for industry and manufacturing.

TT&C: What's your relationship like with the new administration? How do you characterize your relationships with leaders such as Gov. Lee?

GC: I communicate with Lt. Gov. Randy McNally a minimum of once a week and with Gov. Lee probably twice a week. The three of us are good friends. We trust each other, and we are all committed to moving Tennessee forward. We have the same agenda so it's a tremendous team; it really is.

TT&C: Is there particular legislation this year that's really important to you?

GC: I hate to be redundant but I am committed to mental health. We have to address this along with opiate abuse in our state. Those individuals often cannot take care of themselves. Especially because of our economic success, we really want to help those people. Plus, we now have a surplus so that we can help those people that cannot help themselves.

TT&C: What stands out for you in your first few weeks as Speaker of the House? Has anything surprised you?

GC: Being in leadership for close to 12 years I knew what it entailed, but I did not realize the depth of it. The Speaker's office and my staff are very dedicated individuals. We touch every aspect of state government—from appointing boards to working on issues with the garage and why it's leaking. I'm honored that my colleagues elected me Speaker. It's humbling to manage this legislative branch of government.

TT&C: What's a typical day like in your new role as Speak of the House?

GC: Today I started at 7 a.m. and had breakfast with Gov. Lee. Literally every 30 minutes I meet with staff or members or individuals or with Tennesseans interested in legislation. It's all encompassing.

TT&C: You still hold down a job in veterinary pharmaceutical sales. How do you balance this profession with legislative duties? GC: Obviously, I'm on sabbatical this time of year, but it does slow down so that I can go back to work. The thing about government here in Tennessee is that it's part-time. That's good because, unlike Washington where it insulates itself, we work, go back home, and are accountable to our neighbors and still live in the community. That's why state government is healthier than Washington, D.C.

TT&C: Are many of the issues you deal with in the Legislature similar to local county and city issues but happening on a larger scale?

GC: The Williamson County Commission, where I served, has 24 elected positions. That's one-fourth the size of the state's legislative body, yet the principles are still the same. You find folks who understand your ideas and understand what you were trying to do and then you build consensus from there. That principle of building consensus is the common thread.

TT&C: When you became Speaker of the House you said that you, "accepted the gavel in the spirit of partnership and not partisanship." What does partnership mean to you, and can you give an example of how you hope to or already have created those partnerships?

GC: Well, the first thing that hasn't been done in at least 50 years is sharing the chairmanships with the minority party, which is the Democratic Party in this case. For the past five decades the party in power shared all the committees, but we gave two committees to Democrats this year. That was not only symbolic, but we are reaching out. And that's important-that we are actually sharing power with the minority party.

TT&C: What inspired you to take this step?

GC: We have too many people in Washington D.C. involved in politics who think that unless you agree with them you aren't equal, and that just doesn't work in a democratic republic. You and I have to respect the opinions and thoughts of other people even if we think they are wrong. Even if we think they are definitely wrong we have to respect them. That was the genesis of my decision to focus on partnership.

TT&C: What kind of reaction have you received from your decision?

GC: Several people have commented that there seems to be a spirit of working together in the Legislature. I've reached out to Democrats and met with several in my office, and I get the sense that many of the minority party want to work with me. We have acknowledged that we are going to disagree, maybe even strongly, but at least we want to define our terms before we begin the discussion. Even if we think differently, we want an end result that we can all agree on.

tal Health and Substance Abuse Subcommittee will focus on addressing Tennessee's health issues and continue work to tackle the opioid crisis. Can you speak about why these new committees are significant?

GC: Starting with the oversight committees, it's important that those entities are executive run and executive appointed, and they need legislative oversight. So, when I say legislative oversight what that means is the people of Tennessee's elected representatives are intimately involved in corrections, children and family and TennCare. So, it just brings more Tennesseans to their representatives. It gets them involved in the process and increases transparency.

TT&C: What made you think of that approach?

GC: I have been thinking about it for a while. Several members over the last couple of years have had questions regarding DCS (Department of Children's Services), Corrections, or TennCare, and it felt like they didn't know how to get answers or be involved in that process. It spawned from that. The response has been very welcoming, and Gov. Lee is also open to it.

TT&C: Gov. Bill Lee is very supportive of rural economic development. Is this also a priority for you?

GC: Many parts of Tennessee, including my county [Williamson] are very prosperous, and we have a high increase in development, wealth and jobs to the point that we are having a hard time with our infrastructure. But there are a few parts of the state that are not seeing this kind of growth and prosperity. I think we need to expand growth in more rural parts of the state. A good way to approach that is with broadband. Broadband, workforce development and education are the best ways to bring economic prosperity to the rural parts of the state as well.

We took an important step last year and it has resulted in more Tennessee counties getting broadband. Last year we allowed for nonprofits and cooperatives to form and deliver service, and we provided grants. Since that seemed to have worked, I think we will see Gov. Lee and the Legislature support further expansion with more grant money, as well as legislation that would allow for cooperation with corporations and cooperatives with for-profits and utility districts. We need to continue what we have started in the broadband arena.

TT&C: What do you see as your biggest

be completely solved.

GC: The more government is involved in healthcare the more it is further away from the free market. Everything in life is dictated by businesses competing for our business. It keeps the insurance down on our automobiles; it keeps our groceries low. So, competition and knowing what is the standard you should pay —could exist in health insurance. With health insurance you pay a monthly fee and then you go to the healthcare provider and get what services you need. That drives up the cost of healthcare astronomically. But if those services have more transparency—and you know what you are paying for — then the competition will make it more affordable.

TT&C: So how do you view the balance of local control and state control of government? When is it appropriate for the state to intercede on a local situation?

GC: The Tennessee Constitution is the arbiter. State government not only created the federal government, it also created local government to address things such as planning, zoning, and law enforcement, just to name a few things. The state government would intervene when a local government enters into an area it's not constitutionally authorized to do. To me that's the line of demarcation. If local governments are doing something that's not constitutional, the state has to step in and say, "Sorry, local government, you can't mandate that – for example – a living wage.

TT&C: Tennessee has a reputation of being at the very top of business-friendly states. How do we remain business-friendly and continue to create more jobs and jobs training?

GC: If you talk to any business moving to Tennessee, there are two things that brought them here: low taxes with no income tax and low government regulation. Every two years we have an election in Tennessee for the House of Representatives. Tennessee citizens need to elect and re-elect people that are for small government, low government regulation and low taxes. That, in turn, will keep that [business-friendly] environment in good condition. It establishes an ongoing incentive for businesses, corporations and industries moving into our state.

TT&C: Tennessee continues to improve its public education results. Last year we recorded the highest graduation rate on record—89.1 percent. This year, more than

TT&C: Tennessee government is doing a lot better fiscally than Washington D.C. Can you put into words what you think is going wrong at the federal level?

GC: A couple things that come to mind. One is that they [politicians elected to the federal level] are in Washington 85 percent of the time so they pass legislation and spend money on things a Tennessean would scratch their head about. They take us deeper in debt, and I think they're out of touch with what functions in the business community. Of course, there are men and women in D.C. who are laudable and want to do well. They're often just misguided in thinking that government is the answer to individuals having more freedom.

Tennessee is a very well-run state. Even compared to other states, I think we are the best run and best managed state, and we are even fully funded. And I think it's because we take a very conservative, cautious, and incremental approach to governing. It works here in Tennessee, and I think that it should be a guide for Washington and many other states.

TT&C: Outside of state government, what occupies your time?

GC: I am a devoted member of the Brentwood Baptist Church. When I took the gavel, I asked that God to give me guidance and help me be a good Speaker. My faith is the most important thing to me. I have six grandchildren and four children, and love them all dearly. I spend a lot of time with my two girls and their families. They are the joy in my life.

TT&C: Can you think of one important thing you want Tennesseans to know?

GC: I believe it is incumbent that Tennesseans get to know their state representatives and their state senators on a personal level. We're busy right now, but when there's free time, call up your representative or invite him or her for a cup of coffee. Take them to your business or talk about whatever interests you. Educate them about what you do and what you think. Government should be something where all citizens have to be involved.