

JOINT LEGISLATIVE POLICY OF THE TRI-CITIES

BRISTOL ♦ KINGSPORT ♦ JOHNSON CITY



107TH General Assembly of Tennessee
FIRST SESSION

THANK YOU



For over a decade, the cities of Bristol, Kingsport, and Johnson City have jointly established a policy agenda for the purpose of providing a unified voice on issues directly affecting our citizens and the quality of municipal services we provide to our communities.

The achievement of these policy initiatives will enhance the collective health, welfare, safety, and prosperity of our residents making each and every one of tantamount importance during the First Session of the 107th Tennessee General Assembly.

Thank you in advance for your commitment to the citizens of Bristol, Kingsport, and Johnson City.

Recognition of Bristol Council and Staff

Mayor Margaret Feierabend

Vice Mayor David Shumaker

James E. Messimer

Joel Staton

Fred Testa



City Manager Jeff Broughton

Recognition of Johnson City Commission and Staff

Mayor Jane Myron

Vice Mayor Jeff Banyas

Phil Carriger

Stephen M. Darden

Marcy Walker



City Manager M. Denis “Pete” Peterson

Recognition of Kingsport BMA and Staff

Mayor Dennis R. Phillips

Vice Mayor Ben Mallicote

Valerie Joh

Ken Marsh, Jr.

Larry Munsey

Tom Parham

Jantry Shupe



City Manager John G. Campbell

RECOGNITION OF AREA LEGISLATORS

- **Senators**

 - Ron Ramsey (District 2)

 - Rusty Crowe (District 3)

 - Mike Faulk (District 4)

- **Representatives**

 - Jon Lundberg (District 1)

 - Tony Shipley (District 2)

 - Scotty Campbell (District 3)

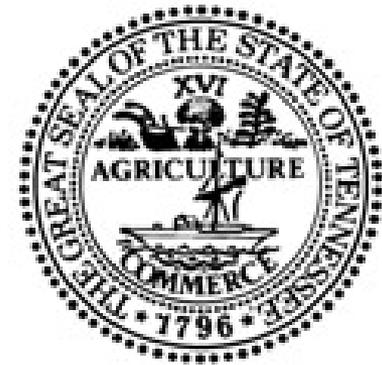
 - Kent Williams (District 4)

 - David Hawk (District 5)

 - Dale Ford (District 6)

 - Matthew Hill (District 7)

 - Michael Harrison (District 9)



Legislative Policy Initiatives

- 22 Policy Objectives grouped into Six Areas
 - Local Revenue
 - Education
 - Economic Development
 - Unfunded Mandates and Local Control
 - Transportation
 - Public Safety

LOCAL REVENUE



State Shared Taxes

- *We oppose any reduction in state-shared tax revenue.*
- *Any reduction places additional financial burdens on local taxpayers*

Single Article Sales Tax Cap

- *The Single Article Sales Tax Cap, limiting the local option sales tax charged on a single item, has not increased since 1990.*
- *We ask that the \$3,200 to \$4,800 increment be added to the local government taxable base once the economy improves to provide additional local sales tax revenue. This action preserves the states tax base on purchases from \$1,600 to \$3,200 while providing growth opportunities to local government.*



EDUCATION



Tennessee Diploma Project

- *We support the Tennessee Diploma Project.*
- *We urge lawmakers to maintain the higher benchmarks and standards.*
- *We must continue to raise Tennessee's academic standards and graduation requirements to better prepare students for success.*

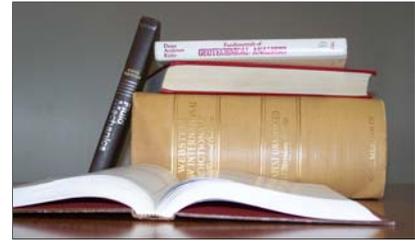


Basic Education Program (BEP)

- *We support full funding of the BEP 2.0 program as state fiscal conditions allow.*
- *We oppose any change that would make the formula less transparent or reduce state funding from localities that have supported K-12 education with additional local resources.*
- *We oppose indexing local education funding to inflation.*



EDUCATION (continued)



ARRA Funded Programs

- *Important educational programs previously funded out of the BEP have been funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), including extended contracts, coordinated school health, internet connectivity, and others.*
- *These programs are of great value and should be funded at historical levels when ARRA funding is exhausted.*

Pre-K Funding

- *Pre-K funding has been provided as a specific appropriation outside of the BEP formula.*
- *We oppose any funding change to pass Pre-K program costs to local education agencies, or to incorporate Pre-K funding into the BEP formula.*



EDUCATION (continued)



Early College Initiative

- *The correlation between a well-educated workforce, economic expansion and upward mobility is undeniable.*
- *The burden of funding higher education is being placed more and more by the state on tuition-paying parents and students.*
- *We support state funding for dual-enrollment classes to allow high school students to earn college credit while still in high school.*
- *Broadening the state Lotto-funded HOPE scholarship program could fund this program.*



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Pre-Project Funding

- *The Tennessee Industrial Access Road Program and FastTrack Infrastructure Development Program require a bird-in-hand project for funding.*
- *We encourage the programs be modified to provide for pre-project funding when local communities participate in the funding.*

Economic Development Tools

- *Economic development tools must be expanded to better compete with neighboring states that offer a variety of incentives not found in Tennessee.*
- *We support the creation of additional economic development tools to assist local governments in industrial recruitment and existing business expansions with a dedicated source of revenue.*
- *We also support providing direct assistance and state loan programs to targeted companies.*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Farmers Market Pickle Bill

- *We support legislation allowing vendors at a farmers market or community event to sell certain home-canned foods without a state license.*
- *We also request the relaxation of rules for farmers markets for the distribution of sample products to customers.*



UNFUNDED MANDATES AND LOCAL CONTROL



Unfunded Mandates

- *We support the enactment of legislation barring any State mandate without corresponding State funding to support the mandate.*

Local Control

- *We oppose diminishing local control of the provision of utility services, emergency services, economic development and other services provided by local government.*
- *We oppose the promulgation of mandatory provisions guiding debt management that are financially burdensome, unnecessarily restrictive, or remove local decisions from the control of locally elected officials.*

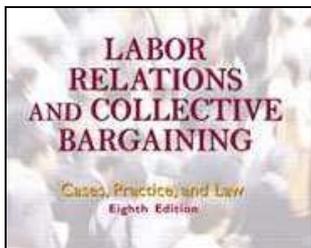


UNFUNDED MANDATES (continued)

AND LOCAL CONTROL

Collective Bargaining

- *We oppose any bill that would allow any local government employee the right to strike or collectively bargain, even if limited in application.*
- *We oppose federal legislation of any act mandating collective bargaining, and if passed, request that Tennessee challenge the federal law as an infringement on state sovereignty.*



TRANSPORTATION



Airport Roadway Access

- *We support the widening of SR 75 from SR 36 to the Tri-Cities Regional Airport.*
- *We request additional funding to widen SR 75 from the Airport Parkway to Northeast State Community College.*
- *We also request funding for improvements to SR 75 and a portion of SR 126 from the airport north to SR 394 in Blountville.*



I-81 / I-26 Interchange Reconstruction

- *We support reconstruction of the substandard I-81/I-26 interchange which maintains a consistently high truck crash rate due to the tight ramp radii.*



TRANSPORTATION (continued)



Indexing of Gas Tax

- *The fixed gasoline tax revenue gap between transportation needs and available revenue is increasing annually.*
- *It is estimated that \$1.00 spent on transportation infrastructure boosts the gross domestic product \$1.59.*
- *We support indexing of the gas tax to fund transportation infrastructure improvements.*



Transportation Challenge Grants

- *We support the creation of TDOT Challenge Grants to expedite projects for the less populous cities and counties willing to fund a larger share of project costs in their locality for road improvements on the state route system.*

ROAD WORK
NEXT 5 MILES

TRANSPORTATION (continued)



Rail Passenger and Freight Service

- *We support funding for passenger and intermodal freight rail service as alternative modes of transportation.*
- *We support the establishment of a direct intermodal rail service between Bristol, Knoxville, and Memphis for both passenger and freight traffic.*
- *We encourage TDOT to coordinate with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to incorporate rail service between both states.*



PUBLIC SAFETY



Red Light Cameras / Traffic Enforcement

- *We oppose legislation limiting the ability of local government to implement technologically advanced solutions to regulate and enforce traffic laws.*
- *We further oppose legislation regulating traffic signal timing by local governments.*



Emergency Communication District Consolidation

- *We oppose the mandatory consolidation of Emergency Communication District Boards.*
- *When 911 boards consolidate, consolidation should be based on logical service delivery areas.*

PUBLIC SAFETY (continued)



Promotion and Support of Regional Fire Training Centers

- *We support the creation of regional fire training centers to serve volunteer and professional firefighters in Tennessee.*
- *We support State funding to assist local governments operating multi-jurisdictional fire training centers.*

Drug Treatment Centers

- *We request legislation requiring all substitution-based treatment centers for opiate addiction be required to obtain a Certificate of Need from the Tennessee Health Services and Development Agency.*
- *We also request broadening of the current law to include new substances that offer similar addictive treatment regimens as methadone.*



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!



Discussion
