In an effort to promote freedom & prosperity in our state, the Beacon Center of Tennessee (founded as the Tennessee Center for Policy Research) presents our second “Idea a Day” pamphlet. This publication offers 51 ideas—one for each remaining legislative day in the 107th General Assembly—that seek to protect & advance individual liberty in our state. For the sake of brevity, each idea is offered in a single sentence and is accompanied by a link to original work published by the Beacon Center or contact information for more details about that particular topic. Many of the ideas will also lead to job creation and/or put money back in the pockets of Tennesseans. Those that are “job creators” and “tax savers” are marked with a special emblem notating their added benefit.
1. **JOB CREATOR**

Enact an economic liberty act that would limit all new occupational regulations to those that directly impact the health, safety, & welfare of Tennesseans. Read: “Testimony in Support of an Economic Liberty Act” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=407

2. **JOB CREATOR**

Lower the number of occupations that require a license, currently at 111, which makes Tennessee one of the most heavily regulated states in the nation. Read: “Testimony in Support of an Economic Liberty Act” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=407

3. **JOB CREATOR**

Eliminate titling acts that give the state a monopoly on certain occupational titles. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

4. **JOB CREATOR**

Allow grocery stores to sell wine, thus creating net job growth & giving consumers more choice. Read: “Drunk with Power” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=220

5. **TAX SAVER**

Prohibit professional regulatory boards from increasing occupational fees without the legislature’s approval. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

6. **JOB CREATOR**

Eliminate the state minimum wage & prohibit local “living wages” that make it more difficult for many Tennesseans to find gainful employment. Read: “Minimum Wage Hike Means Maximum Harm for Working Poor” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=267

7. **TAXES**

Pass a constitutional amendment to clarify that an income tax on labor is unconstitutional. Read: “Income Tax Ban Will Keep Tennessee Competitive” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=2015
Repeal the state death tax, which will result in more retirees & wealthy individuals moving into & investing in Tennessee, thus spurring job growth. Contact: Ryan Turbeville, ryan@beacontn.org

Repeal the state gift tax, one of only two in the nation, which deters wealthy & retired individuals from moving into & investing in Tennessee. Contact: Ryan Turbeville, ryan@beacontn.org

Repeal the state income tax on stocks & bonds, boosting state & local economic growth. Contact: Ryan Turbeville, ryan@beacontn.org

Place a limitation on the growth of local property taxes unless voters approve the tax increases via referendum. Watch: “Lawmakers Seek to Require Voter Approval of Tax Hikes” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=2444

Make the state Copeland Cap more stringent by requiring a supermajority to “bust” the cap, allowing Tennesseans to keep more money in their pockets. Read: “Solving Tennessee’s Spending Problem” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=350

Revise the calculation for the Copeland Cap from one based on personal income growth to a more limited population plus inflation growth. Read: “2011 Tennessee Pork Report” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=2174

For any bill that will significantly impact the state budget, require a 72-hour waiting period between the time the bill is filed & the time of the first hearing on the bill. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org
Enact a provision that will automatically return surplus revenue to taxpayers after topping off the rainy day fund. Read: “2011 Tennessee Pork Report” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=2174


Get the government out of the golf course business by selling state-owned golf courses or leasing courses that operate at a loss. Watch: “State-Owned Greens Wind Up in the Red” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=1262


Reform asset forfeiture laws to eliminate any financial incentives for law enforcement activity. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

Build upon the newly enacted measures to curb lawsuit abuse, bringing additional job growth to Tennessee. Read: “Lawsuit Abuse Reform in the Volunteer State” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=1914

Create a level playing field by ending corporate welfare that gives tax breaks or handouts to favored businesses. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org
22 Prohibit local governments from using taxpayer money to lobby the state or federal government. Read: “The Dangerous Cycle of Taxpayer-Funded Lobbying” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=224

23 **JOB CREATOR**  **TAX SAVER**

Require fiscal notes to include the cost that new legislation would impose on small businesses. Read: “Accurately Calculating the Cost of Tennessee Legislation” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=2230

24 Require oversight of the Department of Revenue’s ability to issue tax variances, which can significantly raise or lower a company’s tax bill. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

25 Limit the number of bills each legislator may file, thus reducing the number of laws enacted & shortening legislative sessions. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

26 Implement oversight of the state’s Families First program, which is ripe for abuse & potentially allows recipients to purchase non-qualified products, including alcohol. Watch: “Tax Dollars Spent on Porn & Booze” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=2367

27 Revise the method of placing Supreme Court & appellate judges on the bench so that it complies with the state Constitution. Read: “The Current Plan on Judges is Ridiculous” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=148


29 **TAX SAVER**

Turn various services over to the private sector that could easily be handled outside of state government. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

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**EDUCATION**

30 Allow parents across Tennessee to take a portion of the funding already spent on their child & send him or her to the school of their choice. Read: “Parents Should Have Choice in Education” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=1931

31 Make the extensive value-added assessment data on student achievement publicly available to parents. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org
End social promotion that leads to the graduation of children to the next grade level without the core skillset needed for success. Read: “Lessons for Tennessee from Florida’s Education Revolution” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=1893

Grade all public & charter schools based on overall academic performance & learning gains with easy-to-interpret A, B, C, D, or F grades. Read: “Lessons for Tennessee from Florida’s Education Revolution” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=1893

Create alternative teacher certification paths, providing teachers with options & additional opportunities to obtain a license. Read: “Lessons for Tennessee from Florida’s Education Revolution” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=1893

Give principals & local administrators more decision-making authority over personnel matters within their schools. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

Allow Tennesseans to purchase health insurance from any state in the country. Read: “Implementing State-Based Healthcare Reform” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=384

Permit Tennesseans between ages 19 & 24 to purchase less costly “mandate light” health insurance plans. Read: “Implementing State-Based Healthcare Reform” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=384

Ease restrictions on cash, minute, & walk-in clinics to enhance quality medical services to low-income Tennesseans. Read: “Implementing State-Based Healthcare Reform” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=384

Provide state employees with a consumer-driven health insurance plan option with a health savings account in lieu of their current plan. Read: “Implementing State-Based Healthcare Reform” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=384

Allow doctors in other states to practice in Tennessee & permit non-physician medical professionals to provide minor services currently prohibited by law. Read: “Implementing State-Based Healthcare Reform” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=384

Prohibit public-to-private transfers of property seized via eminent domain. Contact: Ryan Turbeville, ryan@beacontn.org
42 Require approval by local legislative bodies before unaccountable agencies can take private property using eminent domain. Contact: Ryan Turbeville, ryan@beacontn.org

43 Treat regulations on private property as “takings” & provide property owners with compensation when regulations diminish the value of their property. Contact: Ryan Turbeville, ryan@beacontn.org

**ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT**

44 **TAX SAVER**

End the failed switchgrass-to-ethanol program that has cost taxpayers more than $60 million, yet has failed to become commercially viable. Watch: “Field of Dreams” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=1372

45 **TAX SAVER**

End the continuous taxpayer handouts to solar energy, thus allowing the sector to perform on its own accord in the free market. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

46 **TAX SAVER**

Cut the real estate transfer tax by 21 percent by simply ending the unnecessary purchase of wetlands and forests. Read: “2011 Tennessee Pork Report” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=2174

**TECHNOLOGY**

47 **TAX SAVER**

Prevent taxes or fees on Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technologies. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

48 Prohibit state & local governments from using tax dollars to fund failed experiments to provide high-speed Internet to the general public. Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org
49  **TAX SAVER**

Increase transportation funding & reduce the burden on taxpayers by permitting private investments in infrastructure through public-private partnerships.

Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

50  **TAX SAVER**

Convert existing HOV lanes to high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, allowing unaccompanied drivers to pay a fee to drive in the under-utilized lanes.

Contact: Justin Owen, justin@beacontn.org

51  **TAX SAVER**

Reject “build it & they will come” proposals to fund mass transit projects that lack consumer demand. Listen: “Justin Owen on Mass Transit” http://www.beacontn.org/?p=1689