

An Idea a Day

106th Tennessee General Assembly



45 IDEAS FOR A PROSPEROUS TENNESSEE



Tennessee Center for Policy Research



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One of the main duties of lawmakers is to secure and defend the individual liberty of their fellow citizens. To that end, the Tennessee Center for Policy Research presents 45 ideas—one for each remaining legislative day in the 106th General Assembly—that seek to protect and advance individual liberty in our state.

For the sake of brevity, each idea is put forward in a single sentence. Inevitably, such a brief description omits some nuance and detail. Each idea is accompanied by a link to original work published by the Tennessee Center for Policy Research. The links will provide more detailed information about each particular idea.

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Budget

- 1** Strengthen the Copeland Cap by requiring a two-thirds majority vote of each house to pass a budget that exceeds the rate of personal income growth. <http://bit.ly/1UjnZ4>
- 2** Require all appropriations or revenue-related bills to remain public for 72 hours before holding a hearing or conducting a vote on them. <http://bit.ly/32Z05E>
- 3** Enact meaningful fiscal note reform that would make fiscal notes more accurate and subject to scrutiny. <http://bit.ly/4s4dJ5>

Education

- 4** Permit the creation of cyber charter schools in Tennessee. <http://bit.ly/2t8YkH>
- 5** Allow homeschooled students to participate in public school athletic programs. <http://bit.ly/Ddy8j>
- 6** Create scholarships that allow special needs students and children in foster care to attend any school of their parents' or guardians' choice. <http://bit.ly/45qi5k>
- 7** Make the teacher level data portion of the Tennessee Value Added Assessment publicly available. <http://bit.ly/45qi5k>
- 8** Eliminate the cap on the number of charter schools and remove the eligibility requirements to attend a charter school. <http://bit.ly/4GBCCg>
- 9** Provide a franchise and excise tax credit to corporations that offer scholarships for students to attend a school of their parents' choice. <http://bit.ly/1obGFg>

Government Reform

- 10** Prohibit government agencies and local governments from using tax dollars to lobby the state or federal government. <http://bit.ly/33SZpl>
- 11** Amend the judicial election provision of the Tennessee Constitution or permit the direct election of judges as the Constitution currently requires. <http://bit.ly/1BFE9p>
- 12** Put an end to corporate welfare where certain businesses receive public funds or favored tax treatment, giving them an unfair advantage over their competitors. <http://bit.ly/21KbyW>
- 13** Promote a more business-friendly atmosphere by spending, regulating, and taxing less. <http://bit.ly/44kr54>

- 14** Limit the number of bills each legislator can file to reduce the number of laws enacted and shorten the length of legislative sessions. <http://bit.ly/2QSVJb>

Government Waste

- 15** Save millions of tax dollars by selling state-owned golf courses. <http://bit.ly/3bifos>
- 16** Sell all state-owned aircraft not used for state universities' aerospace programs. <http://bit.ly/3bifos>
- 17** Stop investing millions of taxpayer dollars in the failed switchgrass-to-ethanol program that has proven to be harmful to the environment. <http://bit.ly/3Q18Di>

Healthcare

- 18** Allow Tennesseans to purchase health insurance from anywhere in the United States. <http://bit.ly/1ZvUAc>
- 19** Permit Tennesseans between the ages of 19 and 34 to purchase less costly "mandate light" health insurance plans. <http://bit.ly/1ZvUAc>
- 20** Allow doctors licensed in other states to practice in Tennessee and give other health professionals greater authority to provide minor treatments. <http://bit.ly/1ZvUAc>
- 21** Permit state employees to opt for high-deductible health insurance plans with health savings accounts in lieu of their current plans. <http://bit.ly/1ZvUAc>
- 22** Seek a federal Medicaid waiver allowing TennCare enrollees to utilize health savings accounts. <http://bit.ly/1ZvUAc>
- 23** Encourage the use of cash-only, walk-in, and minute clinics across the state to serve low-income or uninsured Tennesseans. <http://bit.ly/4yxWLb>

Property Rights

- 24** Place at least a ten year prohibition on any public-to-private transfer of property seized via eminent domain. <http://bit.ly/3gc6Sj>
- 25** Require the approval of local legislative bodies before eminent domain can be invoked to take private property. <http://bit.ly/3gc6Sj>
- 26** Amend the statutory definition of "blight" to prevent abusive condemnation practices. <http://bit.ly/3gc6Sj>
- 27** Compensate private property owners or exempt them from land use regulations when the regulations diminish the value of their property. <http://bit.ly/3gc6Sj>

Regulation

- 28** Enact an economic liberty act that would simplify the regulatory climate faced by entrepreneurs. <http://bit.ly/4fQdX0>
- 29** Eliminate titling acts that give the state a monopoly on occupational titles. <http://bit.ly/1K8lQd>
- 30** Repeal most of the 110 occupational licensure laws and prevent the enactment of additional protectionist laws such as the proposed interior design licensing act. <http://bit.ly/3N0pwp>
- 31** Join the majority of states that allow grocery stores to sell wine. <http://bit.ly/4effJf>
- 32** Place limitations on the dangerous and potentially unconstitutional use of red light cameras by Tennessee cities. <http://bit.ly/3BfrT2>

Taxation

- 33** Resist any efforts to impose an income tax on Tennesseans. <http://bit.ly/3A9qvl>
- 34** Reduce or eliminate the sales tax on food and offset the reduced revenue with spending cuts. <http://bit.ly/WwLOb>
- 35** Repeal the Hall Income Tax that discourages wealthy individuals and retirees to move into Tennessee. <http://bit.ly/WwLOb>
- 36** Permanently repeal the law that automatically increases the state gasoline tax to offset reductions in the federal gasoline tax. <http://bit.ly/WwLOb>
- 37** Lower the cigarette tax to generate more revenue, taking advantage of the state's geographic proximity to other states. <http://bit.ly/WwLOb>
- 38** Refuse to re-enact the Unauthorized Substances Tax that disproportionately affected minorities and the poor and also ran afoul of the state Constitution. <http://bit.ly/1PAWcf>

Technology

- 39** Prohibit state and local governments from using tax dollars to provide Internet access to the general public. <http://bit.ly/FJ33z>
- 40** Prevent taxes or "fees" on Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technologies. <http://bit.ly/FJ33z>

Transparency

- 41** Eliminate the labor cost and multiple request rules imposed by the Office of Open Records Counsel under the Public Records Act. <http://bit.ly/32Z05E>
- 42** Bring the General Assembly within the purview of the public records and open meetings laws. <http://bit.ly/32Z05E>

Transportation

- 43** Transform existing high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes to high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, allowing unaccompanied drivers to pay a fee to use the lanes. <http://bit.ly/3ERDKe>
- 44** Increase transportation funding by approving public-private partnerships. <http://bit.ly/3ERDKe>
- 45** Reject “build it and they will come” proposals to fund transportation projects that lack consumer demand. <http://bit.ly/46Ggi6>

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