

April 23, 2015

To the Folks of the Fortieth District!

Here in the quiet of my home, it is the first Thursday NOT in the Hallways of the Legislative Plaza since January. After a very long, intense yesterday, around the 10 o'clock evening hour, the House finished the people's business in record time, saving the taxpayers millions across the state! We adjourned until January 12, 2016.

The first half of the 109th General Assembly is now in the books. The legislation we passed is the result of much discussion, debate, and determination to live within the means so as to be fiscally responsible (balanced a \$33.3 billion budget), cut taxes (Hall income tax for seniors over 65,) put \$73.5 million in the state's Rainy Day Fund, improve our education system (gave deserving teachers a raise and repealed common core), plus provide an even better environment for businesses to grow. But unlike Washington D.C.'s out of control spending, partisan gridlock and disconnect, we addressed many of the issues that concerned our constituents on both sides of the aisle. Priorities for the second half of the 109th will bring even tougher issues. The healthcare COST mechanics need real repeal in order to bring true affordable health insurance for Tennessee families. How to fund our transportation infrastructure, going forward, is another crisis concern. The federal government is out of money. That means it will be the state legislators who will make the difficult decisions in order to keep Tennessee focused forward on a sound fiscal foundation.

Here are some top bills that await the Governor's signing into law:

HB1035 the repeal of common core in the state with funding to replace standards with a system based solely on Tennessee values and ideas.

HB645 Educators Liability Trust Fund provides insurance coverage to protect against damages or claims within the scope of teachers' employment or assignment.

HB138 creates a carefully regulated and monitored individualized education account for children with special needs such as autism, traumatic brain injuries, visual, hearing, and orthopedic impairments. Parents can have options in order to choose what is best for their child. It is estimated about 5% would choose to use the program funded through local and state monies.

Last November, following the passage of Amendment I, the people spoke and the representatives listened, by overturning a 2000 Tennessee Supreme Court decision that restricted the legislature's ability to provide common sense protections for women considering abortions.

HB977 provides for informed consent and establishes a 48-hour waiting period following the consent before an abortion can occur. Again, this bill does not take away the ability of any woman or girl to have an abortion.

HB1368 requires state licensure and inspection of abortion facilities in Tennessee.

HB606 establishes an online verification program to help ensure compliance with state laws requiring motorists to have car insurance.

HB10 promotes CIVICS education in Tennessee. You cannot defend liberty if you know not what those liberties are, stated in our Constitution and our Bill of Rights.

HB197 aims to help children with life-threatening seizures by decriminalizing the possession of cannabis oil as a treatment.

HB646 establishes the Community College Reconnect Grant, a last dollar scholarship for adults who want to return to community college and complete their associate's degree.

HB1341 prohibits public funds or resources in Tennessee from being allocated toward enforcement of federal laws if that results in a violation of any Tennessee laws or the Tennessee Constitution.

HB1105 changes the way Tennessee currently manages its State Aid Road Grant Program to make it easier for counties to access state funds to upgrade, repair and improve roads and infrastructure.

HB1342 in any criminal homicide an appropriate photograph of the victim while still alive will be admissible evidence when offered by the district attorney during the trial.

HB 1372 enacts the “Tennessee Freedom From Traffic Cameras Act.” As amended, it only removed speeding cameras exempting school zones and “s” curves. Stay tuned for the next chapter in 2016.

Bills that did not pass that were of high interest and will no doubt return next session:

HB675 exempts certain students from payment of out-of-state tuition at state institutions of higher education.

HB1049 School vouchers enacting the Tennessee Choice & Opportunity Scholarship Act

There are many more bills to mention; however, go to the Tennessee General Assembly website, which is a very user-friendly tool for you to watch the actions of legislation and the process for passage. <http://www.capitol.tn.gov/>

It is a humbling honor to cast your vote on that House floor in Nashville. Often decisions are not easy ones. But with God, all things are possible and prayer sustains the strength needed. Clarity and wisdom are afforded to all who would just simply ask the Father above. Realizing we may not all agree on every issue, it is my prayer that Tennessee rise above all other states and be “Light” in an increasingly dark world.

Mike and I live amongst the salt of the earth, you, the good folks of the fortieth district. I hope you know I will continue to protect your values, principles and liberties. Looking forward to seeing you where we live, work and play!

Blessings,
Terri Lynn