

**February 19, 2015**

While inside my warm study on this very cold Monday morning, the worst winter storm in decades is causing treacherous road conditions. Tucked inside the holler in Lancaster, just venturing outside to get wood to keep the fire box stoked is ever so challenging, let alone attempting the bluff and secondary roads to Interstate 40. It is an ice skating rink out there, indeed. Thank goodness it's a holiday and many are home from work and school as we recognize Presidents Day.

The 109th Legislative machine is now in its fast paced rhythm. Most committees have met for the first time last week, holding hearings and in some cases, as in Transportation Subcommittee which I chair, have already voted on legislation, sending it on to the full standing committee. All members were to have their bills filed by 4:00 p.m. last Thursday. Go to the TN General Assembly website where you can navigate the 1,372 bills filed and their prime sponsors.

This year, I am carrying my heaviest load of legislation since being elected in 2008. Here are three of the fifteen:

HB1339: Prohibits EBT cardholders from purchasing Tobacco Products, having the same penalties as last year's bill I carried prohibiting liquor purchases on any EBT card.

HB1348: Repeal Common Core standards by implementing the best standards already tested, piloted, and successful from states that were rated the best in the nation prior to CC. This is not playing political football with our children. Parents and teachers are NOT happy. As their representative I will do all I can to be their voice.

HB1342: Many of the murder trials are focused on the defendants rights. This bill is focused on the murder victim's rights, to allow the family to present a picture of their loved one in the court procedure.

Again, stay engaged by using the website to follow up on bills debated and fleshed out in committees before reaching, OR NOT, the House Floor. I encourage folks of the fabulous fortieth to come to your office, War Memorial 105, and take part in the process of governing.

Our State Constitutional Officers presented a numbers meeting for General Assembly members interested in the state's checkbook. Here are some basic facts.

Where does the money go?

The majority of Tennessee's budget is concentrated in four areas:

1. TennCare: FY15 is 10.3 billion! - 31.4% of total budget
2. Education K-12: FY15 is 5.5 billion! - 16.8% of total budget
3. Human Services : FY15 3.0 billion - 9.1 % of total budget
4. Other Health & Social Services: FY2015 - 2.2 billion - 6.7% of total budget

In total, the top four expenses comprise over 75% of the budget.

The total Federal Funds received by State Agencies is as follows:

TennCare 51% - Human Services 21% and Education 8%.

YOUR State tax dollars funnel as follows:

General Fund - 52%; Education - 33.1%; Highway Fund - 5.1%; and last but not least,

Where do the state general funds come from?

Your Sales Tax collected is our major source of income, at 59%. Franchise and Excise Tax brings 15% into Tennessee's piggy bank, as well.

With significant recurring cost increases in TennCare, Education, Correction, and Employee Insurance, we are fast approaching to where revenues coming in are not keeping up with the growth of government. So where do we cut government? I have a bumper sticker in my office that says: WHERE GOVERNMENT GROWS, FREEDOM DIES. Attached to all these federal programs we have fewer State's rights to govern as Tennessee sees fit. Just look at how

Healthcare and Education have taken us out of the driver's seat and placed us basically into the back seat! Citizens across my district are very concerned about state sovereignty on a great many matters ranging from Education to Obamacare. Something must give. The burden of the taxpayer cannot continue to carry this heavy load. True reform will only come when this massive government gorilla, taking every aspect of the American life, is replaced by responsible behaviors. Welfare reform must return as a priority in the state with incentives to WORK and fathers to be committed to the mothers of their children in marriage. The importance of marriage is enormous to our culture. Today, 43% of births are outside of marriage, as compared to 18% in 1980. In a recent Gallup poll, 71% of respondents between 18 and 34 years of age said having a baby outside of marriage is morally acceptable! Just FYI, the poverty rate for children in homes with married parents was 11%. The poverty rate for children in homes with a single mother was 44.3%. That was 2009 - and those numbers have increased immensely! We have a culture crisis, and we must point the needle back to a free and prosperous people instead of irresponsible people dependent on government. That is the Truth.

In closing, please schedule to attend a Coffee Conversation on Fridays at 7:30 a.m. Check [weaverhouse40.com](http://weaverhouse40.com) for locations, or call my office 615-741-2192.

On June 21, 1776, President John Adams wrote: "Statesmen, my dear Sir, may plan and speculate for liberty, but it is Religion and Morality alone, which can establish the Principles upon which Freedom can securely stand."

Honored to serve you,  
Terri Lynn