

August 1, 2011 - The "Loop"

Caring enough to visit the fortieth district where the folks truly are the "salt of the earth", Governor Haslam asked the question, "As Governor, how can I better serve you and what issues are most important to you?" This is public service at its core. As an elected official it is imperative that we remember we work for those who hired us, the voter. Asking the question how can we do a better job and by working with the concerns that matter most to folks, then ultimately good results will come. Making our state and our communities a better place to live, work and play is our mission.

Government works the best when closest to the people. I applaud all the local officials who attended the Governor's visit and brought to his attention infrastructure issues vital to this rural district and how that affects jobs in the fortieth district. He hears the request numerous times from the Senator and the State Representative. Listening to your concerns only confirms it even more.

You have heard me say numerous times just how important teamwork is. From the Governor down through all local officials we all play a part of "work worth doing."

Thanks again to all who attended last week's Q and A, July, breakfast. Celebrating progress in the new hangar at Lafayette Municipal Airport, the Governor is better informed as we all continue to take care of business by staying the course.

It is back to school time as many children in the 40th district are in the classroom today. Sure seems like the summers go by faster each year! Wait a minute. It still is summer. Any one can attest to that by just stepping out of your air conditioned home, office or automobile. With August being the hottest month of the year, we have another 30 days of humidity and heat! No wonder many of us are ready for fall. School just seems to start earlier and earlier each year.

The Tennessee Department of Education announced its application to the U.S. Secretary of Education for a waiver requesting regulatory flexibility around the No Child Left Behind Act. This option will not replace comprehensive reform, or give states or districts a pass from accountability, but allow us, the state of Tennessee to have more control of our schools instead of Washington. Again we are not asking to lower the standards, just give us more freedom and options that work for Tennessee. This is a step in the right direction. Being a huge fan of reform or remove NCLB, who knows better how to teach our students than the local LEA's, our teachers and our parents? Give us less Washington D.C. and more state and local control period. Umm, Perhaps then we could start school like we did back in the good ole' days, after Labor Day, setting dates for student testing that works for Tennessee and not for the Federal Guys.

"Life is not only about what Government can deliver. It is about governments allowing enough freedom and responsibility to do things with their own lives."

~Margaret Thatcher

You are a pleasure to work for. Blessings!