

March 4, 2011 - The "Loop"

## Health Freedom Act Headed to House Floor

The "Health Freedom Act" moved this week, clearing all necessary House committees, and is now scheduled for a vote on the House Floor. Many legislators have championed the proposal for two years now to counter the federal health care takeover passed by Congress. House Bill 0115 provides that every person within Tennessee is free to choose or decline any mode of health care services without penalty or punishment from the government. Additionally, it ensures that Tennessee officials will be prohibited from interfering with the health care insurance decisions of every Tennessean.

Believing that expanding government programs is rarely an effective solution to complex issues, some legislators have argued the federal government's takeover of healthcare will only prove to balloon the cost of healthcare services to the states.

Last year, the legislation hit a snag in a House committee after thorough debate over several weeks. Other states have passed similar legislation, and many are already in the process of filing a lawsuit against the federal government regarding the healthcare overhaul. It has been an honor to sponsor this bill of Liberty called The Health Freedom Act!

## House Passes Legislation Honoring Fallen Service Members

By a unanimous vote the House passed legislation Monday evening that properly honors Tennessee's fallen service members.

House Bill 47 requires State flags to be flown at half-staff by State political subdivisions during a day of mourning as declared by the Governor. The bill covers all members of the armed services who courageously give their lives in the line of duty.

The bill sponsor stressed that the nation has been built on the sacrifice of brave service members, many of whom hail from Tennessee. The measure rightfully honors these special sailors, soldiers, and airmen who gave everything for freedom as Americans and Tennesseans.

Wrapping up.

Many of you have emailed or called my office over the last couple of weeks. I have had numerous discussions concerning the collective bargaining legislation that is being discussed here on the hill.

First and foremost, I am not against our teachers. As a legislator who has toured every one of my schools, I have seen first hand teachers going above and beyond the call in today's classroom.

Since my last letter to the teachers in district 40 I have done some discovering on my own and found that perhaps collective bargaining made sense fifty years ago however this prototype is no longer working and in fact the process handicaps a school system's ability to attract and keep the best and the brightest. It is proven that schools who do not have collective bargaining in their districts have higher paid teachers and higher scoring students. School systems are placed in adversarial, confrontational and unreasonable demands simply to avoid a lawsuit. This ultimately impacts the taxpayer, the very people whom the teachers, the school board members and the legislature work for. And the Tennessee taxpayers have shared their opinion as well. They expect positive results from the classroom.

The whole system needs an overhaul. Where we are today has taken years to get here. But I have to ask myself is it any wonder why we are ranked so low in education as a state?

I have done some research on the SCEA, the TEA and the NEA. These are the unions whose members, the teachers, invest their hard earned money to support. All citizens have the right to organize with groups to promote their special interests. But it is something entirely different to allow any one group a special status and access to the decision making process. Tennessee is a right to work state and does not authorize any other public sector employees to engage in collective bargaining, except the union representing educators. Collective bargaining distorts and corrupts democratic government.

Allow me to share what I found to be the 2010 NEA (national education association's agenda at their annual conference.)

Repeal of the right to work provision of federal labor law

Tax supported single-payer health care plan for all residents of the U.S., it's territories, and Puerto Rico

Federal funding for illegal aliens in public education and student aid for illegal's in colleges

Federal programs to teach schoolchildren about sexual orientations

Opposition to tuition tax credits, vouchers, and parental option or choice in education programs

Opposition to using draft registration as an eligibility criterion for financial aid

Opposition to the testing of teachers as a criterion for job retention, promotion, tenure or salary increases

Opposition to designating English as the official language of the united states

Opposition to the use of voter id cards for voting in local, state, and national elections

Opposition to any constitutional amendment limiting taxes or the federal budget.

Good grief, does this reflect the values of Tennesseans?

I truly believe our teachers want respect and recognition for what they do, and they deserve both. As your Legislator my concern is to promote student achievement and reward our teachers therefore making our state a better educated and better trained workforce for our children. This legislation is still in discussion. Let us all be mindful of one thing that is vital, and that is our children.

In closing, I had such a great week as all of the Farm Bureau teams from district 40 came to visit. Working on the Agriculture Committee this year my focus is to make Tennessee an even better place for our farmers to prosper and grow.

Blessings,  
Terri Lynn