



What's New on the Hill

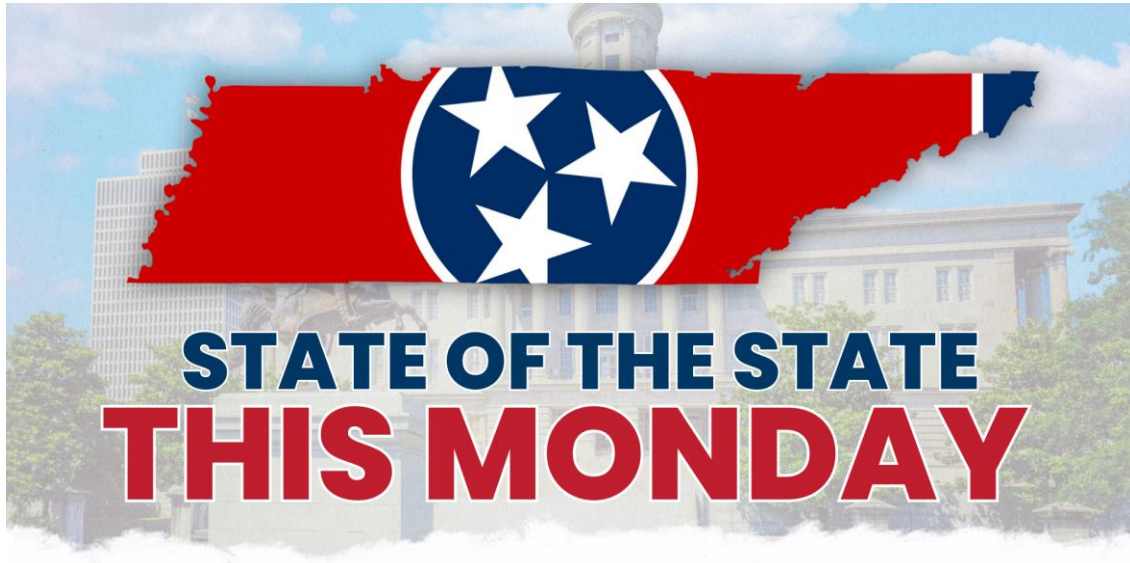
Dates of Importance: Week of February 5th, 2024

Here are upcoming dates of importance:

Monday, February 5th - State of the State Address

Monday, February 5th - Voter Registration Deadline for the Presidential preference primary

Next Weeks Legislative Calendars - [House](#) and [Senate](#)



REMINDER: Tennessee's State of the State address is scheduled for this Monday, February 5th at 6 p.m. CST. Governor Bill Lee will deliver important updates and priorities for the state. The address can be found on Lee's [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) channels and will be aired statewide.



Tennessee Governor Bill Lee has appointed Mary L. Wagner to the Tennessee Supreme Court, a significant achievement as she joins the ranks of esteemed judges. Wagner's extensive experience as a circuit court judge and her background in law, including teaching at The University of Memphis School of Law, uniquely position her for this role. Notably, her appointment contributes to the commendable fact that 60% of the TN Supreme Court will now be composed of women! This appointment fills a vacancy created by the retirement of Justice Roger A. Page and awaits confirmation by the General Assembly. [Read more >>>](#)



1. Concerning Gun Bill Removed from Consideration:

Legislation (SB1037/HB746) aimed at altering regulations regarding firearms possession has been removed from consideration. The bill sought to remove the authority of businesses to prohibit weapons on their premises and eliminate related criminal offenses. Following concerns raised by the Chamber and the business

community, the sponsor decided to withdraw the bill from consideration during this legislative session. [Read more about SB 1037/HB 746.](#)

2. Two Major Business Tax Hikes Introduced:

Freshman Representative Aftyn Behn and Senator Charlane Oliver have introduced two bills that could significantly impact businesses.

The first bill (**HB 2234/SB 2065**) proposes a new tax on digital advertising services to fund a universal pre-K program. This tax, if enacted, would impose a 9.5% levy on annual gross revenues derived from data transactions from digital advertising services in the state. Concerns have been raised regarding the potential burden this tax could place on businesses and its potential impact on job losses. [Read more about HB 2234/SB 2065.](#)

The second bill (**HB 2043/SB 1934**) introduces a new Business Enterprise Tax. This tax, if passed, would impose a tax rate of 0.75% on a business' taxable enterprise tax base and would subject the entire worldwide net earnings of a business to apportionment for tax purposes. Like the first bill, concerns have been voiced regarding the potential adverse effects on businesses and employment. [Read more about HB 2043/SB 1934.](#)

3. Workers' Compensation Administration Bill:

SB 2094/HB 1694, initiated by the Bureau of Workers' Compensation, introduces various changes to workers' compensation statutes. The bill standardizes electronic filing procedures, clarifies uninsured employer penalties, and seeks to extend the enforcement of worker's compensation insurance coverage laws. The Chamber has expressed support for this legislation, which is currently progressing through committees. [Read more about SB 2094/HB 1694.](#)



The Transportation Network Growth Opportunity (TNGO) initiative, in collaboration with TNECD, Launch Tennessee, and Team Tennessee, aims to stimulate research and innovation in the transportation sector. The TNGO Mobility and Automotive Discovery seeks to address mobility and transportation challenges by connecting communities, companies, and researchers across the state. Applications for phase one are open until February 2, 2024. [Learn more here.](#)

Audited Financial Statements for the State of Tennessee

The State of Tennessee provides audited financial statements as a matter of convenience. These statements reflect the financial condition as of June 30th for the corresponding fiscal year. It's important to note that there may have been changes in the state's financial affairs since the last audit. Currently, the state only publishes financial statements in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF),

necessitating Adobe Acrobat Reader software for viewing. [Access the audited financial statements here.](#)



IN THE NEWS



- **Tennessee Workers' Comp Rates Will Decline for Eleventh Consecutive Year in 2024**

The Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance (TDCI) announces that workers' compensation insurance premiums will decline for most Tennessee businesses in 2024 for the 11th consecutive year.

[TN.GOV](#) - Jan. 22, 2024

- **Tennessee Announces Awards for Statewide Electric Vehicle Charging Stations**

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) has awarded \$21 million in federal funds for electric vehicle (EV) fast-charging stations across the state. Thirty-one EV fast charging locations are needed to fill gaps along the state's designated Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFC) which include Tennessee's two-digit interstate routes and US 64. The Tennessee Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (TEVI) Deployment Plan details

how with federal funding the state will install EV charging infrastructure and support the establishment of an interconnected EV network across the nation.

[TN.GOV](#) - Jan. 31, 2024

- **Secretary of State Tre Hargett Issues New Warning to Tennesseans About Uniform Commercial Code Scam**

Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett is issuing a new warning to all Tennesseans about a scam involving Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) documents.

[SOS.TN.GOV](#) - Jan. 29, 2024

- **Governor Lee, Commissioner McWhorter Announce Snap-on to Expand Manufacturing Operations in Carter County**

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee, Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Stuart C. McWhorter and Snap-on officials announced today the company will invest \$44 million to expand its manufacturing operations in Elizabethton, Tennessee.

[TN.GOV](#) - Jan. 30 2023

- **December Unemployment Rates Down in Nearly Every County**

Nearly every county in Tennessee ended 2023 with lower unemployment, according to new data from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD). Ninety-two of the state's 95 counties posted rates in December that came in lower than their November statistics.

[TN.GOV](#) - Jan. 25, 2024

- **More Than Half Of Republicans Oppose School Vouchers In Public School Teachers' Poll**

More than half of likely Republican primary voters say they somewhat or

strongly oppose Gov. Bill Lee's school voucher program, according to a poll conducted for the Tennessee Education Association.

[PRO.STATEAFFAIRS.COM](https://pro.stateaffairs.com) - Jan. 30, 2024

- **Tax Expert: Tennessee Is Caving To Businesses On Tax Cut And \$1b+ Refunds, Offers Another Option**

As Tennessee faces a tighter budget in 2024, Gov. Bill Lee's administration plans to move forward with a significant tax cut and refund for businesses, selling it as a "necessary legislative fix" to avoid a legal challenge.

[TENNESSEELOOKOUT.COM](https://tennesseelookout.com) - Jan. 29, 2024

- **Republicans Reviving Bill Allowing Teachers To Carry Guns In Schools**

Lawmakers are reviving a bill to allow teachers and school staff to carry guns in schools. The Senate was scheduled to take the bill up in committee last year but postponed after the Covenant School shooting.

[WKARN.COM](https://wkarn.com) - Feb. 1, 2023