

Week of April 21st legislative committee calendars: [House](#) | [Senate](#)

📌 The General Assembly is expected to adjourn the 2025 legislative session next week.

This Week at the Capitol



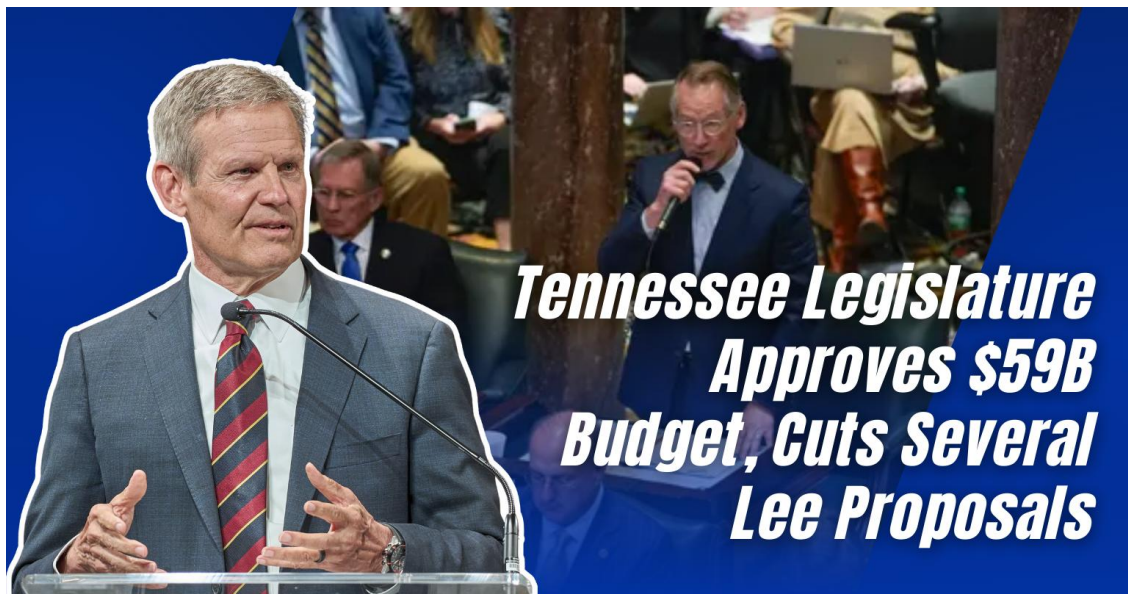
Congratulations!

**Estie Harris Named to
Nashville Post INCharge
2025**

NashvillePost
INCHARGE

HB
STRATEGIES Tennessee

Congratulations to HB Strategies Managing Principal Estie Harris for once again being named to the Nashville Post's annual "In Charge" list. The 2025 edition recognizes influential leaders shaping the state's political landscape, and Estie's continued presence on the list highlights her respected role in state government affairs and strategic advocacy across Tennessee.



The General Assembly passed a \$59.8 billion state budget, reallocating \$180 million from Gov. Lee's proposals including his starter home loan fund and Duck River initiative to legislative priorities such as \$1 billion in road projects, a \$447M statewide voucher program, and equipment grants for emergency services. The budget also adds to the state's record \$2.2B rainy day fund and reflects concerns over federal funding instability, while Democrats raised objections over cuts to food programs and lack of grocery tax relief.

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The Tennessee Association of Optometric Physicians (TAOP) visited the Capitol this week for their Day on the Hill. Members met with lawmakers to discuss legislative priorities and promote access to high-quality eye care for Tennesseans across the state.



The delegation of Tennessee lawmakers left with a deeper appreciation and understanding for the work at St. Jude and its investment in the community and the state

HB Strategies Joins Lawmakers for Visit to St. Jude

Last week, HB StrategiesTN team and Managing Principal Estie Harris joined longtime client St. Jude in welcoming a delegation of state lawmakers to the hospital's Memphis campus. The group learned more about St. Jude's mission and its deep investment in the local community, including its Strategic Plan that outlines the creation of 2,300 new jobs and \$2.3 billion in new construction.



The **Coollest Thing Made in Tennessee** competition highlights the state's vibrant manufacturing industry. The contest not only brings attention to all the cool things made in Tennessee, but also the outstanding career opportunities available in manufacturing—an industry that employs one in eight people in the state and contributes over \$62 billion to the economy!

The 2024 contest saw over **75,000 votes** cast! Don't miss out on the opportunity to showcase your product!

2025 CONTEST ANNOUNCED!

NOMINATIONS ACCEPTED

MONDAY, JUNE 16 – JUNE 30

MANUFACTURING EXCELLENCE LUNCHEON

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1

*Winner announced! All participants invited to attend.

REGISTER TO ATTEND



Questions
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For full contest timeline or to sponsor:
coolestthingmadeintn.com



2025 Coolest Thing Made in Tennessee Contest Returns!

Following a successful first year, the Tennessee Chamber is thrilled to launch the second annual Coolest Thing Made in Tennessee Contest—a celebration of the state’s thriving manufacturing sector. This statewide competition shines a spotlight on the innovative products made in Tennessee and the rewarding careers available in an industry that employs 1 in 8 Tennesseans and contributes over \$62 billion to the state economy.

Nominations will be open from June 16–30. For rules, key dates, and how to enter, visit coolestthingmadeintn.com.

Don’t miss your chance to show off your product and industry pride!



Foster Care Extension Bill Unanimously Passes Legislature

Tennessee lawmakers unanimously approved a bill extending foster care benefits from age 21 to 23 for young adults aging out of the system. Backed by Gov. Bill Lee’s administration, the legislation expands access to housing support, healthcare, tuition assistance, and life skills training through the Department of

Children's Services. Advocates say the measure provides a critical safety net for those transitioning into adulthood without a traditional support system. The bill, which carries a nearly \$4 million price tag in the upcoming budget, now heads to the governor's desk.

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Tennessee's \$18.6 billion TennCare program could face significant financial risk under proposed \$880 billion Medicaid cuts by the Trump administration and Congress. A federal letter recently warned that programs like TennCare III—operating under a 2021 waiver—may not be renewed or extended, raising alarm about future funding. TennCare covers 1.7 million low-income Tennesseans and relies heavily on federal dollars, which account for over \$11 billion of its funding. Experts say if federal Medicaid law is changed, it would override the current waiver, putting Tennessee's program and enrollees at serious risk.

[READ MORE](#)



Governor Bill Lee has appointed Ryan Hubbard as Tennessee’s first-ever Chief Immigration Enforcement Officer (CIEO) following the passage of his full illegal immigration legislative agenda during the 2025 special session.

Hubbard brings 28 years of federal immigration enforcement experience, including service with the U.S. Border Patrol, INS, and Homeland Security Investigations. Most recently, he served on the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force in Nashville and joined the Tennessee Office of Homeland Security earlier this year.

The newly created Chief Immigration Enforcement Division—housed within the Department of Safety and Homeland Security—will focus on identifying and removing individuals with final deportation orders or violent criminal convictions. A key priority will be pursuing 287(g) agreements, allowing local law enforcement to carry out aspects of federal immigration law in coordination with ICE.

IN THE NEWS

- **Tennessee planning \$6 million audit of Memphis Shelby schools**
Tennessee lawmakers are proposing \$6 million for a forensic audit of Memphis Shelby County Schools, seen by some as a potential precursor to a state takeover. The Senate budget also includes \$4.5 million to expand the Attorney General's special litigation unit.
[TENNESSEELOOKOUT.COM](https://tennesseelookout.com) - April 15, 2025
- **Legislature Approves Bipartisan Bill to Reopen Cases with New Evidence of Innocence**
The General Assembly passed bipartisan legislation allowing people who pled guilty to a crime they didn't commit to present new non-scientific evidence of innocence in court. The bill restores access to post-conviction relief and aims to correct wrongful convictions more efficiently.
[CHATTANOOGAN.COM](https://chattanooga.com) - April 15, 2025
- **Tennessee lawmakers file Memphis Shelby Schools "hostile takeover" at last minute**
Oversight board would have authority on budgets, contracts; state commissioner could replace director, school board members
[TENNESSEELOOKOUT.COM](https://tennesseelookout.com) - April 16, 2025
- **TN lawmakers pass legislation to prohibit enforcement of mandates from UN, WHO, World Economic Forum**
The Tennessee General Assembly passed a piece of legislation to prohibit the enforcement and recognition of requirements or mandates issued by

the World Health Organization, the United Nations and the World Economic Forum.

WBIR.COM - April 17, 2025

- **Tennessee Property Rights Protection Act Signed Into Law By Governor**

Tennessee property owners are safer from the wrath of eminent domain proceedings now that House Bill 444 and its companion Senate Bill 480 have been signed into law.

TENNESSEECONSERVATIVENEWS.COM - April 16, 2025

- **Bill to hold charities liable for providing housing to certain immigrants heads to governor's desk**

House Republicans refused to allow debate Wednesday on the measure, which has drawn pushback from faith leaders as an infringement on religious freedom

TENNESSEELOOKOUT.COM - April 17, 2025

- **House approves Democratic bill fusing school board elections with county commissions** School board and local legislative body members in counties with charter forms of government would be elected at the same time under a bill passed by the House on Tuesday.

PRO.STATEAFFAIRS.COM - April 16, 2025

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