

TENNESSEE GOVERNMENT UPDATE

NEWS FOR THE CLIENTS AND FRIENDS OF BASS, BERRY & SIMS PLC

April 15, 2011

Controversial bills were the order of the week in the Tennessee General Assembly. Looking toward adjournment in late May, many of the more controversial bills filed earlier this year are under consideration.

For example, for the fourth year in a row, a bill to allow the sale of wine in grocery stores failed. The subcommittee of the House State and Local Government Committee deferred consideration of the bill until July 4, 2012. That deferral will not prevent the introduction next January of another bill on the same subject. [The Tennessean has more on this story.](#)

In a victory for education reformers, a bill to allow the election of county school superintendents by popular vote was defeated. [Tom Humphrey with the Knoxville News Sentinel](#) has that story and a discussion about a "compromise" that allows employees to keep guns in a locked car in their employer's parking lot even if the employer has a "no-guns" policy.

Yesterday, the House passed a bill requiring, as a prerequisite to voting, "evidence of identification" that includes a photograph. Having passed the Senate already, the bill now goes to the governor for his consideration. Attorney General Robert Cooper had earlier in the week opined that the requirement would be unconstitutional unless the state provides a mechanism for those without drivers' licenses to procure an official photo ID without cost. (The link to General Cooper's opinion is [here](#)). [Joe White of WPLN in Nashville has the story.](#)

With regard to the budget process, the State Funding Board is scheduled to meet today to discuss, among other items, revenue estimates for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011. This is another step along the way to the adoption of a balanced budget by the General Assembly, a constitutional requirement that must be met before the session adjourns.

Jamie Woodson, a highly-regarded, 39-year-old Republican senator from Knoxville, announced that she would resign her Senate seat at the end of this legislative session to become president of the State Collaborative on Reforming Education known as SCORE. Woodson is the current Senate Speaker Pro Tempore. SCORE was founded by former U.S.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist who serves as its chairman. The organization has been active in support of Tennessee's Race To The Top application and implementation. The [Knoxville News Sentinel reports more on this story](#).

Finally, the *Update* has been criticized for being "obsessive" about animals in the last two editions. We promise no more gratuitous comments linking animals and legislation. Though, one might want to note that the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has on its agenda today a proposal to allow unfettered, no holds barred, no bag limit, year-round hunting of feral hogs (*sus scrofa*) in Tennessee. The hogs are a nuisance and a danger to the environment in some of the mountainous areas of middle and east Tennessee. For those interested in the details, please see the [TWRA's webpage](#) on the subject.



J. Richard Lodge
(615) 742-6254
dlodge@bassberry.com



H. Lee Barfield II
(615) 742-6202
lbarfield@bassberry.com



Erica Bell Vick
(615) 742-7901
evick@bassberry.com

150 Third Avenue South, Suite 2800 • Nashville, TN 37201 • (615) 742-6200
The Tower at Peabody Place • 100 Peabody Place, Suite 900 • Memphis, TN 38103 • (901) 543-5900
1700 Riverview Tower • 900 South Gay Street • Knoxville, TN 37902 • (865) 521-6200