

## TENNESSEE GOVERNMENT UPDATE

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

**February 25, 2011**

### **Tort Reform**

The governor's proposal to reform tort law and procedure in Tennessee is likely to be considered by the legislature in mid-March. In order to provide detailed and timely information about the effort, Bass, Berry & Sims will periodically publish a newsletter on the tort reform effort. The first edition will be transmitted early next week. Part of the political response to the governor's initiative by plaintiffs' lawyers has been the engagement of former U.S. Senator Fred Thompson to lobby the matter. Mike Morrow of *Tennessee Report* has an [in-depth story about Thompson's role](#).

### **Tennessee State Procurement Reform**

Not surprisingly, Governor Haslam's legislative package includes a bill to delay implementation of last year's measure reforming the state's procurement system and creating a procurement commission to oversee all state procurement and a chief procurement officer to manage the procurement process. [Senate Bill 1710/House Bill 2000](#) delays the appointment of a chief procurement officer from March 31, 2011 to July 1, 2011 and the overall effective date from October 1, 2011 to April 1, 2012.

### **Legislative Calendars**

Next week will be the first week of full legislative activity. All committees have scheduled meetings with full calendars.

### **"Aliens" and Business**

[House Bill 1582](#) (sponsored by Murfreesboro Representative Joe Carr and 50 other members of the 99-member house) and Senate Bill 1567 (sponsored by Murfreesboro Senator Bill Ketron, the Senate Republican Caucus chair) will, if enacted, expand Arizona's approach to identifying "aliens" by requiring all public and private employers to maintain active participation in an "E-Verify program." The first violation of the act by an employer includes a penalty that "all licenses held by the private employer shall be suspended for thirty (30) days... ." The bill is expected to have a fiscal impact on the state budget and is almost certain to be amended.



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