

TENNESSEE GOVERNMENT UPDATE

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

April 29, 2011

Whew! What a relief! Prince William and Catherine Middleton have been married. And, after all these years, Cambridge has a Duke and Duchess, and Carrickfergus (Northern Ireland, *Rock of Fergus*) at last, has a Baron.

On more provincial matters, the governor's budget amendment will be released Tuesday morning. Governor Haslam has apparently indicated that he will request additional funding for mental health and intellectual disability programs. This helped head off a potentially stormy debate on the House floor Thursday morning on the bill renewing the hospital assessment fee. The bill passed handily. Republican freshman Rick Womik (Rockvale) noted to his colleagues that the assessment fee was really a "donation" by hospitals. [Rick Locker of *The Commercial Appeal* has the details.](#)

The leadership of the House of Representatives has agreed with Senate leadership to end collective bargaining for teachers' associations with local education agencies. [Chas Sisk has the details in *The Tennessean*.](#) The pending legislation will repeal the 1978 legislation that authorized collective bargaining by teachers' associations.

The state and local committee in both houses of the legislature approved a bill that will allow direct corporate contributions to candidates in Tennessee elections and raise the maximum donation substantially. For example, in the case of a political action committee contributing to a gubernatorial campaign committee, the maximum contribution will be raised by \$3,200 (from \$7,500 to \$10,700). [Tom Humphrey with *The Knoxville News Sentinel* has the story.](#)

The tort reform bill is scheduled to be considered on the House floor May 9, 2011; the bill is not yet scheduled for floor consideration in the Senate.



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