

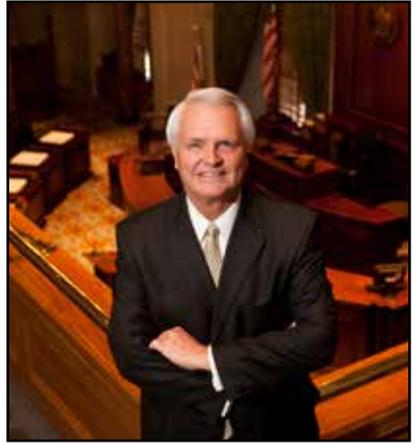
A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO THE TENNESSEE SENATE



2013 EDITION

Welcome to the Tennessee Senate. Thank you for your interest in your government.

My name is Ron Ramsey. I am the Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee. I have this job because a majority of my fellow senators voted for me to be their leader, or "Speaker." Unlike many other states, Tennessee's Lieutenant Governor is also head of its Senate. My duties as both Speaker of the Senate and Lieutenant Governor keep me very busy.



However, because I am a state Senator, my job is officially part-time. Having a part-time legislature is good because it allows elected officials to spend time living and working under the laws they make and with the people they represent.

When the legislature is not in session I run a real estate and auction business with my wife, Sindy, in my hometown of Blountville, which is right on the border between Virginia and Tennessee. It is a wonderful town and I am glad to be able to spend time there when the legislature is not in session.

If you visit the Capitol on a day when the legislature is in session, you will see me presiding over the Senate. I have a gavel, and I do my best to keep Senate sessions moving along quickly and efficiently so my members can get back home to their families and businesses.

I also make all of the Senate's committee assignments. Much of the Senate's work goes on in committees so it is important to have the right people working on the right issues.

Visiting the General Assembly can be overwhelming, but it is also very special. It is important for young people like you to understand their government and how it works. The purpose of this booklet is to help you understand what the Senate does and how it functions with the other branches of your government.

We also hope that this booklet and your visit to the Tennessee Senate inspire you to be a great citizen and to be active in the political process. Tennessee is a great state but it can only stay a great state if people stay engaged and involved in their government.

I hope this visit is the first step in a lifetime of good citizenship for you.

Thank you.

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STATE SYMBOLS



Some of the official state symbols of Tennessee include the raccoon (state animal), the mockingbird (state bird), iris (state flower), ladybug (one of two state insects) and, of course, the state flag.

TN Photographic Services photos



SIGNATURE PAGE

Name _____

My school is _____

My home county is _____

My Senator is _____

THE TENNESSEE SENATE

As you have learned in school, the Tennessee Senate is part of the legislative branch of Tennessee government. The Tennessee House of Representatives makes up the other part of the legislative branch. These two parts together are referred to as the Tennessee General Assembly.

The Tennessee Senate consists of 33 members, each with their own district and each representing about 192,000 residents. Each district is numbered, with district 1 being in the northeast corner of the state and district 33 being in Tennessee's southwest corner.

In Tennessee, Senators serve

four-year terms. Senators who represent even-numbered districts will be up for re-election in 2014, while those who represent odd-numbered districts will be up for re-election in 2016.

Currently, 26 Tennessee Senators are Republicans, and seven of them are Democrats. This is almost a complete reversal from ten years ago, when 19 were Democrats and 14 were Republicans.

The leader of the Senate, or Speaker, is also the state's Lieutenant Governor. Tennessee's Lieutenant Governor is Ron Ramsey; he is from Blountville and represents the 4th district. Ramsey is a Republican and

Lieutenant Governor Ron Ramsey presiding over the state Senate (TN Photographic Services photo)





Senator Reginald Tate of Memphis with a young guest (TN Photographic Services photo)

became the Lieutenant Governor when he was elected by his peers in January 2007.

The second highest ranking person in the Senate is the speaker pro tempore (pro tempore is a Latin term meaning “for now,” so the speaker pro tempore is the speaker of the Senate when the Lieutenant Governor isn’t there). Bo Watson of Chattanooga, a Republican who represents the 11th district, is the speaker pro tempore.

There are also leaders within each political party (a group referred

to as a caucus). Mark Norris of Collierville, who represents the 32nd district, is the Republican leader. Jim Kyle of Memphis represents the 30th district and is the Democratic leader.

The most experienced member of the Tennessee Senate is Douglas Henry of Nashville, a Democrat from the 21st district. Senator Henry was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1955 and has served continuously in the Senate since 1971.

Do you know who your Tennessee Senator is? If not, the directory and map on the next four pages should help you.

Senator Ken Yager of Harriman
(TN Photographic Services photo)



THE MEMBERS

Here are the 33 members of the Senate, listed by district with their profession and with the number of years each has served in the Tennessee General Assembly in parentheses:



District 1: Steve Southerland of Morristown (R), mortgage broker (10)



District 2: Doug Overbey of Maryville (R), attorney (12)



District 3: Rusty Crowe of Johnson City (R), vice president of a healthcare company (22)



District 4: Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey of Blountville (R), auctioneer and real estate broker (20)



District 5: Randy McNally of Oak Ridge (R), pharmacist (34)



District 6: Becky Duncan Massey of Knoxville (R), director of a non-profit organization (1)



District 7: Stacey Campfield of Knoxville (R), real estate redeveloper (8)



District 8: Frank Niceley of Strawberry Plains (R), farmer (12)



District 9: Mike Bell of Riceville (R), small business owner and farmer (6)



District 10: Todd Gardenhire of Chattanooga (R), senior vice president of wealth management (0)



District 11: Bo Watson of Hixson (R), physical therapist and business development (8)



District 12: Ken Yager of Harriman (R), educator and real estate broker (4)



District 13: Bill Ketron of Murfreesboro (R), insurance executive (10)



District 14: Jim Tracy of Shelbyville (R), insurance agent (8)



District 15: Charlotte Burks of Monterey (D), farmer (14)



District 16: Janice Bowling of Tullahoma (R), retired teacher (0)



District 17: Mae Beavers of Mt. Juliet (R), retired (18)



District 18: Ferrell Haile of Gallatin (R), pharmacist and farmer (1)



District 19: Thelma Harper of Nashville (D), entrepreneur (24)



District 20: Steve Dickerson of Nashville (R), anesthesiologist (0)



District 21: Douglas Henry of Nashville (D), attorney (44)



District 22: Mark Green of Clarksville (R), physician and healthcare administrator (0)



District 23: Jack Johnson of Franklin (R), banker (6)



District 24: John Stevens of Huntington (R), attorney (0)



District 25: Jim Summerville of Dickson (R), an adjunct instructor (2)



District 26: Dolores Gresham of Somerville (R), farmer and retired military officer (10)



District 27: Lowe Finney of Jackson (D), attorney (6)



District 28: Joey Hensley of Hohenwald (R), physician (10)



District 29: Ophelia Ford of Memphis (D), funeral home practitioner and insurance agent (8)



District 30: Jim Kyle of Memphis (D), attorney (30)



District 31: Brian Kelsey of Germantown (R), attorney (8)



District 32: Mark Norris of Collierville (R), attorney and farmer (12)



District 33: Reginald Tate of Memphis (D), designer (6)

SENATE DISTRICTS



Members by district

District 1: Steve Southerland (R), Seat 23

District 2: Doug Overbey (R), Seat 34

District 3: Rusty Crowe (R), Seat 6

District 4: Ron Ramsey (R), Seat 12

District 5: Randy McNally (R), Seat 29

District 6: Becky Duncan Massey (R), Seat 7

District 7: Stacey Campfield (R), Seat 26

District 8: Frank Niceley (R), Seat 5

District 9: Mike Bell (R), Seat 8

District 10: Todd Gardenhire (R), Seat 9

District 11: Bo Watson (R), Seat 31

District 12: Ken Yager (R), Seat 1

District 13: Bill Ketron (R), Seat 22

District 14: Jim Tracy (R), Seat 30

District 15: Charlotte Burks (D), Seat 32

District 16: Janice Bowling (R), Seat 25

District 17: Mae Beavers (R), Seat 28

District 18: Ferrell Haile (R), Seat 4

District 19: Thelma Harper (D), Seat 17

District 20: Steve Dickerson (R), Seat 14

District 21: Douglas Henry (D), Seat 15

District 22: Mark Green (R), Seat 11

District 23: Jack Johnson (R), Seat 27

District 24: John Stevens (R), Seat 3

District 25: Jim Summerville (R), Seat 2

District 26: Dolores Gresham (R), Seat 24

District 27: Lowe Finney (D), Seat 19

District 28: Joey Hensley (R), Seat 10

District 29: Ophelia Ford (D), Seat 16

District 30: Jim Kyle (D), Seat 20

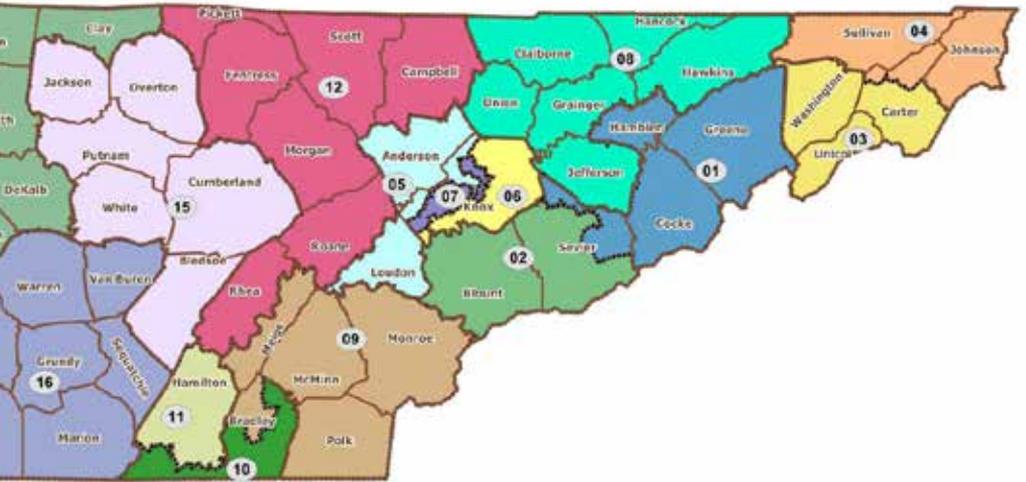
District 31: Brian Kelsey (R), Seat 33

District 32: Mark Norris (R), Seat 21

District 33: Reginald Tate (D), Seat 18

Here are the chairmen of the Senate standing committees:

- Commerce and Labor: Sen. Jack Johnson
- Education: Sen. Dolores Gresham
- Energy, Agriculture and Natural Resources: Sen. Steve Southerland
- Finance, Ways and Means: Sen. Randy McNally
- Health and Welfare: Sen. Rusty Crowe
- Government Operations: Sen. Mike Bell
- Judiciary: Sen. Brian Kelsey
- State and Local Government: Sen. Ken Yager
- Transportation and Safety: Sen. Jim Tracy



The Senate Chamber, with each seat number shown (TN Photographic Services photo)

WHAT THE SENATE DOES

If you happen to be visiting the State Capitol when the Senate is in session, you are in for a treat.

When the General Assembly is in session (typically from January until May), the Senate meets frequently in its second-floor chamber. During those months, the Senate usually convenes in the chamber Monday at 5 p.m., Wednesday at 8:30 a.m., and Thursday at 9 a.m. The rest of the week, the legislature has a full schedule of committee meetings, which take place in Legislative Plaza, an underground building across Charlotte Avenue from the Capitol.

If the Senate is in session, there is a place on the second floor known as the gallery where you can watch it. Be aware that there are some strictly

enforced rules for visitors in the gallery. Visitors aren't allowed to eat, drink, smoke, use flash photography, or talk or text on a cellular phone while in the gallery. If you are in the gallery, you are expected to pay attention to what is happening in the Senate Chamber.

So what does the Senate do? Along with the Tennessee House of Representatives, it makes laws. Every law in Tennessee was once a bill (draft of a proposed law) that was proposed by a Senator and debated and passed by the Senate.

These laws are about everything. The law that requires your school system to have 180 days of school every year was passed by the Senate. The law requiring you to wear a seat

The Senate meets in session (TN Photographic Services photo)





Senator Brian Kelsey of Germantown
(TN Photographic Services photo)

belt was passed by the Senate. The law that set the sales tax you pay when you buy something was passed by the Senate.

You name it: if it's a law, the Senate once passed it.

The process under which a bill makes its way through the Senate and House of Representatives is explained in the next chapter. If you are watching the Senate in the chamber for the first time, it can be a bit confusing. Here are some pointers that might help:

- Typically, Lieutenant Governor Ramsey presides when the Senate is in session. As do all people who run government meetings, he has a wooden gavel which he routinely uses to get everyone's attention in the chamber.
- The people standing in front of him and slightly below him are the Senate Clerk and his staff, who help him run the meeting.

- As you face the speaker, Republicans generally sit on the right side of the chamber and Democrats sit on the left.
- The people sitting behind the glass barrier on the left and right sides of the Senate Chamber are reporters from newspapers, radio and television stations, and internet publications.
- Many of the people in the gallery and the hallway are lobbyists, who are people whose job it is to influence legislation. There are hundreds of paid lobbyists in Tennessee. Some represent individual companies, such as Federal Express or Walmart. Others represent groups of companies; for instance, a lobbyist might represent all the hospital companies or all the construction companies. Others represent people who all have certain occupations, such as teachers or farmers.
- Every bill has at least one original sponsor, a Senator who has guided it through the committee system. The primary sponsor is the Senator who first speaks on behalf of a bill when it comes to the Senate Chamber. However, it is not unusual for a popular



Senator Thelma Harper of Nashville with Russell Humphrey, Chief Clerk of the Senate
(TN Photographic Services photo)

piece of legislation to acquire sponsors as it works its way through the committee system.

- The Tennessee Constitution requires a bill to pass on three readings before becoming law, which means it must be passed by each legislative body three times. What typically happens, however, is that all bills are routinely and without discussion passed on first and second reading before they are sent to the appropriate committees. Bills that have been passed by the appropriate committees come to the chamber for “third and final

consideration,” at which time they are put to a full debate and vote of the entire Senate.

- The Tennessee General Assembly passes hundreds of bills every year, but state law only requires that it pass one, that being the state’s budget. The budget bill, which directs how the state spends the money it raised through taxes, is hundreds of pages long and is usually passed on the last day, or second to last day, that the legislature is in session.
- When a bill is considered, the Senate Clerk announces its bill

number, the part of Tennessee law that the bill would change, and a clause that summarizes the bill. But he usually does not read the entire bill out loud. The Senators do, however, have the content of the bill on papers in front of them and on laptop computers at their desks, and many of the people watching the proceedings have the specific words that make up the actual bill.

- In the old days, Senators would vote on a bill verbally



Senator Douglas Henry (TN Photographic Services photo)

by saying “aye” for yes, or “nay” for no. To save time, the votes are now taken electronically, and you can see the “ayes” and “nays” up on a big board.

Arguments and debates about bills don’t always make it to the Senate floor; often, those have taken place when committees consider bills. But if a debate does occur on the floor, take notice of what Senators say and do (and don’t say and do). Regardless of how much they disagree about a matter, Senators generally speak respectfully to each other. They don’t lose their temper or use vulgar language. They don’t insult each other. After all, two Senators who disagree about one bill might agree on the next one.

This degree of civility is one of the things that makes the United States a great country and Tennessee a great state. For 36 years, from 1971 until 2007, the speaker of the Tennessee Senate was a man named John Wilder. He used to say that it was his job to let “the Senate be the Senate,” and the high degree of civility is part of what he meant by that. Today, the Senate remains that way.

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

For a bill to become law in Tennessee, it has to be passed in identical form by both the House of Representatives and Senate, then either signed into law by the Governor, passed by the legislature over the Governor's veto, or automatically passed in 10 days if the Governor does not sign the bill.

Getting a bill passed may sound like a simple process, but it's not.

Let's say that you are a Senator and want to pass a bill that provides new civics books to eighth-grade students. What do you have to do?

- First you go to the General Assembly's Legal Services office, which helps you write the bill.

Legal Services has to decide what part of Tennessee law (also known as the "Tennessee Code Annotated") your proposal would change. You see, there are so many laws in Tennessee that they are organized into 32 separate hardback books – copies of which you can find in the offices of most Tennessee lawyers.

As it turns out, the proposal to provide new civics books to eighth-grade students would change Title 49 of the Tennessee Code Annotated (the 1,500 pages of state law that addresses education). Within Title 49, your civics book proposal would fall under Chapter 6 (which concerns elementary and secondary educa-

tion). Within Chapter 6, your proposal would fall under Part 10 (which concerns curriculum).

Therefore, Legal Services writes a bill that "requires local school systems to provide new civics books to eighth-grade students in Tennessee," changing Tennessee Code Annotated Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 10.

- Now you take your bill to the Senate Clerk's office, which assigns it a number. Depending on how early in the session you filed your bill, your number might be a small number (like Senate Bill 45) or it might be as high as Senate Bill 3240. The number is there merely for organizational purposes, and its size does not affect how likely the bill is to pass.
 - Next you find a House of Representatives member to sponsor the bill. This is a very important step. After all, your bill has to pass both chambers to become law. You have to find a Representative who is willing to devote time to it and who is skilled and influential enough to get people to vote his or her way.
- By the way, the House Clerk's office will assign its own number to the House version of the bill. The House and Senate bill numbers are almost never the same.
- The proposal to provide civics



The Senate Government Operations Committee (THFK photo)

books to eighth-grade students is going to cost money (after all, books aren't free). Because of this, both the House and Senate versions of the bill are reviewed by a legislative staff member, who researches bills and finds out about how much money each bill would cost. In the case of your proposal, the staff member might calculate that civics books would cost \$50 each and have to be assigned to 80,000 students. That makes the cost of your proposal somewhere in the range of \$4,000,000; this \$4 million price tag becomes known as the bill's "fiscal note."

- Now that your bill has a fiscal note, the Senate Clerk's office assigns it to the appropriate committee. Your proposal is related to education, so it would be assigned

to the Senate Education Committee, which generally meets on Wednesday afternoons in Legislative Plaza, Room 12, when the General Assembly is in session.

Unfortunately, the Senate Education Committee has many bills to consider, so it might take a few weeks for your proposal to be considered by the committee. If you go visit the Senate Education Committee, or any other standing committee, you will find that most of the people in the audience are waiting patiently for their bill to come up for consideration.

When the committee finally considers your bill, you'll be asked to explain what the bill does and why it is needed. This is when those public speaking classes and debate team practices

come in handy. The important thing is to speak clearly and directly; get to the point, and remember that the committee in front of you has the power to move your bill along or defeat it right then.

Committees often make changes to bills, and these changes are known as amendments. Amendments to the bill that the sponsor agrees with are known as “friendly” amendments; changes the sponsor does not want are known as “unfriendly” amendments.

For example, if a committee changed your bill requiring the state to buy new civics books to a bill requiring the state to buy new math books, you might be opposed to that change, so you would refer to that amendment as “unfriendly” (especially if you don’t like math).

However, let’s say that the committee loves your bill and, after your persuasive speech on its behalf, passes it unanimously in its original form.

- Does that mean it is ready to go to the chamber for a full Senate vote? Not yet. You see, since your bill will cost state government \$4 million, it has to go to the Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committee, which meets on Tuesday mornings when the

General Assembly is in session. As a general rule, bills that cost taxpayer money aren’t passed by the Finance, Ways and Means Committee until after the bill containing the Governor’s proposed budget is passed (usually in the final days of the legislative session).

Again, we’ll say theoretically that, after passing the budget, the Finance Committee passes your bill regarding civics books.

If you stack all the books together that make up Tennessee law, you have quite a few books. (THFK photo)





The hallways of Legislative Plaza during session (THFK photo)

- The bill then goes before the full Senate. When the time comes, the Speaker calls on you to explain your bill, and then calls on the chairmen of the education and finance committees to summarize the amendments added to your bill by their respective committees. Then the full Senate would get to debate your bill, after which there would be a vote on it. Any bill needs a Constitutional majority to pass the Senate – which means it needs 17 “aye” votes, regardless of how many Senators are in the chamber at that time.

Imagine the joy and relief of looking at the voting board and seeing your proposal has enough votes to pass!

- So does your bill now become law? Not yet. Remember that the House of Representatives also has to pass its version of the bill. If the House version of the bill is different, there might have to be a conference committee authorized to work out the differences in the two bills, after which each chamber would have to pass the bill in its amended version again.
- Now that it has passed, the bill will go to the Governor. If he wants it to pass, he will sign it into law. If he disagrees with the bill, he might veto it (which doesn't happen very often in Tennessee).

If the Governor vetoes a bill, the House of Representatives and Senate can “override” that veto – referred to in Tennessee as “re-passing the bill” – with a Constitutional majority vote in each chamber. (This is different than in Washington D.C., where the Congress must have a two-thirds majority to override a presidential veto.)

In any case, you can see why it takes a long time for a bill to become law. You may also begin to understand why bills that make it all the way to the Senate Chamber usually pass. If a bill is going to fail, it usually does so in the committee system.

PARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE

The way things operate in the Senate is dictated by what is known as parliamentary procedure. This procedure traces its origins to ancient Greece and was further developed in Rome and England. One of the best places to read about parliamentary procedure is a book called *Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure*.

Parliamentary procedure has its own rules and its own language. Here are some phrases and words you will hear when the Senate is meeting:

- When the Senate begins in session, the Chief Clerk will take a roll call to verify that there is a “quorum” (that means there

are at least 22 Senators in the room). The Senate Clerk used to do this by calling every name. These days, roll call is done electronically on the voting board.

- After roll call, the Speaker of the Senate routinely goes through a series of procedures that include “Introduction of bills,” “House bills on first consideration,” “House bills on second consideration,” and so on. This doesn't take very long and involves a lot of hitting of the gavel. After a couple of minutes of this, the Senate works its way to the “calendar,” which means the list of bills to be considered on that day.

Senator Jim Kyle of Memphis (TN Photographic Services photo)





Senators Bowling, Massey, Gresham and Beavers (TN Photographic Services photo)

- The first item on the calendar is the “consent” calendar, which includes all the bills that passed through committee with no dissenting votes and no amendments. Many of the bills on the consent calendar do things such as recognize a Tennessee citizen for doing something worthy of praise. After the consent calendar, the Senate moves onto the regular calendar of bills.
- You know how a teacher asks students to raise their hands and wait to be called upon before talking? Lieutenant Governor Ramsey does much the same thing. When a Senator raises his hand, Ramsey tells the rest of the room that he or she is “recognized,” which means that it is alright for him or her to address the rest of the Senate. Unless a Senator is recognized, he or she can’t legally address the Senate. When recognized by the Speaker, a member must stand and use a microphone.
- If a Senator is accused of being “out of order,” that means he or she is doing or saying something that is not according to parliamentary rules and procedure. Being “out of order” doesn’t necessarily mean that the Senator is in trouble; sometimes a Senator might say that he is doing something “out of order,” then welcome some guests from his district that are in the chamber that day.

- The podium on the floor of the Senate Chamber is known as “the well.” If a Senator wants to make a speech, he or she might request permission from the Speaker to “approach the well,” and make a speech from there.
- If a Senator asks that a bill be “rolled,” that means that he or she wants to have the vote on that bill postponed to another time. A Senator might ask that it be rolled to the “heel” of the calendar, which means that it will come up after all the other bills have been considered that

day, or ask that it be rolled to another day entirely. This happens with some regularity, since the sponsor of a bill will often delay a vote on it until it seems fairly certain it will pass.

- Often, after a long debate, you might hear a Senator “move for the previous question.” This means that he or she wants to end the debate and call for a vote on the bill. It takes two-thirds of the Senate (22 Senators) to pass a motion “for the previous question” and end the debate. Then, of course, it takes a Constitutional majority (17 Senators) to pass the bill.

- Every bill has two versions: a House version and a Senate version. If the House version of a bill passes before the Senate version, the sponsor of the Senate bill will “move to substitute and conform” as his bill comes up on the senate floor so the Senate and House versions will be identical. If, however, two different versions of the bill pass the House and Senate, the speakers of the House of Representatives and Senate will appoint the members of a conference committee to try to work out the differences between the two versions.



Senator Mark Norris of Collierville with guests from his home district
(Office of Sen. Mark Norris Photo)



Senator Rusty Crowe of Johnson City (speaking) with Senators Frank Niceley of Strawberry Plains and Steve Southerland of Morristown in the background (TN Photographic Services photo)

- After a bill is passed, the Speaker hits the gavel against his desk and says that “having received a Constitutional majority, I hereby declare it passed” and “the motion to reconsider goes to the table.” What this parliamentary language means is that the vote is effectively “locked in.”
 - When the Senate is done for the day, it “adjourns” until the next time it meets.
- Senators are required to be somewhat formal on the floor. You will often hear them refer to each other as the “gentleman from Rutherford County” (Senator Ketron) or the “gentle lady from Putnam County” (Senator Burks). They are more likely to do this, rather than call each other by their real names, when they are debating, to reduce the tension of the debate.

THE CAPITOL



The Tennessee State Capitol (THFK photo)

The Tennessee State Capitol is one of the most amazing buildings you will ever visit.

Here are some reasons why:

- It's old. This building is 160 years old. It was begun in 1845, and wasn't finished until 1859! In all of downtown Nashville, there are only a handful of buildings older than this one.
- It's one of many buildings in Nashville built in an architectural style known as Greek Revival – other examples being the Parthenon, War Memorial Building and the Nashville Public Library.
- This is one of the oldest state capitols still used for the purpose

for which it was built. Tennessee governors and legislatures have been meeting continuously in this building for more than 150 years.

- The Tennessee State Capitol is an active, working building, with a lot going on inside. The office of Governor Bill Haslam is on the first floor (keep an eye out for him; you might see him walking around). On a typical day, he, the Secretary of State, Comptroller, Treasurer, and other officials of state government come and go and hold meetings in this building. There are also press conferences in the building, usually in the old

Supreme Court Chambers on the first floor.

- The building is made of solid rock. Most of the buildings you've been in are made of concrete, brick, or wood. This one is made of limestone that was mined about a hundred yards from here, chiseled into rectangular blocks and hauled up the hill. In fact, the walls of the State Capitol are so strong that, after World War I, the General Assembly considered adding several stories to the building.
- It is huge. The Tennessee State Capitol is 232 feet high from base to the top of the tower.
- Two people are buried in the Capitol walls. The architect of the building, William Strickland, is buried in a crypt that is within the walls at the north end of the Capitol, while Samuel

Morgan, the long time chairman of the building commission, is buried within the walls at the south end.

- The State Capitol is so old that it originally had no electric lights and no heating system; there were wood fireplaces all over the building. In its early years, the Capitol made use of rainwater both for drinking and for sewage. All bathrooms were in the basement, at that time known as the crypt, and the crypt smelled awful!
- There was, originally, an escape hatch under the Governor's office. Today, no one knows exactly why the escape hatch was put there in the first place, and in modern times flooring has been put over it, rendering it unusable. But there is a place on the ground floor of the Capitol where you can look up and see the bottom of this escape hatch.



Governor Bill Haslam at a press conference
(TN Photographic Services photo)

As you walk through the Capitol, you may have questions about the paintings, statues and other things you will see. We recommend you direct these questions to the tour guides found on the first floor. They work for the Tennessee State Museum and have a huge amount of knowledge to pass on!

AMAZING THINGS THAT HAVE

This has been the headquarters of Tennessee state government for more than 150 years, so a person could fill a book with all the important and interesting things that have happened here. Here are a few of the high points:

- The Capitol was built just in time for the Civil War, so important chapters in that conflict were played out within these very walls. In 1861, the Tennessee General Assembly authorized the referendum that led to Tennessee seceding from the union in this building. At various times from 1862 until 1865, the Union Army camped out on the grounds of the Capitol and used its interior as a barracks, hospital and army headquarters. In January 1865, delegates at a statewide convention met at the state Capitol and ap-



The Tennessee State Capitol during the Civil War (TN State Library and Archives photo)

proved a measure that abolished slavery in Tennessee. In 1866 the Tennessee General Assembly voted to rejoin the Union, becoming the first of the Confederate states to return to the United States.

- In 1895 a murder took place in this building. John Kirk, who was at that time the superintendent of the

The Tennessee Senate in 1889 (TN State Library and Archives photo)



HAPPENED IN THE CAPITOL

Tennessee prison system, was shot in the treasurer's office on the first floor by a man who was the warden of Anderson County's Coal Creek Prison.

- In 1909, the Tennessee General Assembly voted to ban the sale of all alcoholic beverages (a decade before the U.S. Congress voted for prohibition). It is hard for us to fully understand the series of events that led to the legislature doing this, but it peaked in 1908, when prohibition activist and newspaper editor Edward Carmack was shot and killed two blocks from the Capitol. Today there is a statue of Carmack between the Capitol and Charlotte Avenue.

- Women in the U.S. got the right to vote in this building. On August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution – the one that guaranteed the right of women to vote in the United States. This ratification took place at a special session of the Tennessee General Assembly that was called by Governor Albert Roberts. The amendment was at first believed to have failed, but it passed by one vote when a state representative named Harry Burn surprised everyone by voting “aye.”

- In 1925 the Tennessee General Assembly passed a law that banned the teaching of evolution in the public



This layout, running in hundreds of thousand of newspapers, highlighted the suffrage vote. (THFK photo)

schools. This law became national news a few months later, when a substitute teacher in Dayton, Tennessee, challenged the legitimacy of this law. That case was known as the Scopes Trial and is today considered to be one of the most famous legal cases in American history.

- On April 16, 1998, a huge tornado passed over the Tennessee Capitol, damaging buildings all over downtown Nashville and later tearing up hundreds of houses in East Nashville. Incredibly, the Capitol wasn't dented. About the only thing that was altered was the Tennessee state flag that was flying over the Capitol that day. After the tornado came through, the flag was still flying, but the cloth containing the three stars in the middle of the flag had been torn out, leaving a large hole in it. No one has ever found the three stars that were torn out of that Tennessee flag.

THE GROUNDS AND OTHER

Take time to walk around the Capitol grounds. Generations of Tennessee leaders have made sure the grounds are a wonderful place to visit.

On the northeast side of the Capitol you will find the grave of James K. Polk, the 11th President of the United States, and his widow Sarah Childress Polk. Today, many historians consider Polk to have been the last “strong” President before the



The grave of President James K. Polk
(THFK photo)

Civil War. During his administration, the United States acquired more than a million square miles of land (which now comprises the states of California, Nevada, Arizona, Oregon, Montana and others). Tariffs were lowered, the first U.S. postage stamp was issued, and the U.S. Naval Academy was formed – all during Polk’s one term as president!



The statue of President Andrew Johnson
(THFK photo)

Elsewhere on the Capitol grounds you will find statues of other important Tennesseans, such as President Andrew Jackson, President Andrew Johnson, Alvin York, Edward Carmack, and Sam Davis (the boyhood hero of the Confederacy).

The best view from the Capitol is to the north, where you can see the Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park. Developed to honor Tennessee’s Bicentennial in 1996, this state park is an outdoor museum of



The statue of President Andrew Jackson
(THFK photo)

BUILDINGS IN THE AREA



The Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park (THFK photo)

Tennessee history and geography and contains a 200-foot granite map of Tennessee you can walk across and a “Pathway of History” that tells you the story of the Volunteer State.

Also near the Capitol you will find:

- The Tennessee State Museum, which is in the basement of the James K. Polk Tower. The museum contains thousands of exhibits about the history of Tennessee. Admission is free, and it is open Tuesday through Saturday.
- The Tennessee State Library, one of the two buildings on the west side of the Capitol. People come to the library to research Tennessee history and genealogy; it has, among other things, copies of just about every newspaper ever printed in Tennessee on microfilm. Open Tuesday through Saturday.
- Legislative Plaza, the underground structure where the General Assembly has committee meetings and where about half of the legislators have offices.
- War Memorial Building, the distinguished-looking structure adjacent to Legislative Plaza. Built in the 1920s, about half of the legislators have offices in the War Memorial Building. There is also a 3,000-seat auditorium in War Memorial which, at one time, served as the home of the Grand Ole Opry.

WHAT STATE GOVERNMENT DOES



A tour guide shows visitors around the Senate Chamber. (TN Photographic Services photo)

As you read the name of this section, you may roll your eyes. Surely the things government does don't have to be explained, do they? Well, maybe.

First, the simple things: If you go to a public school, your school is owned by the government and the teachers are paid by the government. Your city or county library system is run by government employees. The police officers that patrol the streets work for the government.

The government does all sorts of things you may have never thought about. It makes sure the gasoline pump is giving you a gallon of gas

when it says it does. It checks the quality of the water that comes out of your faucets at home. It runs the post office.

Do you like to hike? Chances are, the park at which you hike is owned and operated by the government.

And who do you think paved the roads on which you drive? You guessed it: the government.

Now for a more complicated question: Which government does what? Which things are run by the federal government, which things by the state government, and which things by county and city governments?

Let's address this question with the following points:

- **Parks.** Usually you can tell which government runs it from the title of the park. The federal government runs national parks, such as the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Cherokee National Forest. The state runs state parks, such as Fall Creek Falls State Park and Norris Dam State Park. County and local governments run places such as Overton Park in Memphis, Percy Warner Park in Nashville and Lakeshore Park in Knoxville.
- **Roads.** Every road in Tennessee is designated as a local road, a state highway or a federal highway. The only thing this really tells you is which government (and which type of tax) paid for its construction. National interstate highways such as I-65 and I-40 and federal highways such as Highway 70, 431 and 411 were mostly funded by federal tax dollars. State highways were funded by state tax dollars. Local roads (the ones that go through neighborhoods, for instance), were generally built by local governments and paid for by local tax dollars.

- **Law enforcement officers.** State troopers (brown uniforms) work for the state. Police officers (blue uniforms) work for local governments.
- **Schools.** The state government is generally not in the business of running public schools, but is in the business of regulating Tennessee's public schools and making sure each county knows the state laws related to schools and is enforcing them. Each county is required to run a public school system, something that each county does through an elected school board and an appointed school superintendent (or director). Some counties have only one school system. Some have as many as six!

Finally, one more point about the separation of powers between federal, state and local governments. For the most part, the laws that tell citizens when they have to go to school, how fast they can drive their cars, and what the penalty is for littering are written and passed by the Tennessee General Assembly (the Senate and House of Representatives).

BEING A GOOD CITIZEN

We hope that the experience of visiting the Senate inspires you to be a good citizen.

And what does it mean to be a good citizen?

To be a good citizen means to help others. It means to do something good for the community. It means to do what our system of government expects you to do and needs you to do. And if asked, it means to help preserve our way of life.

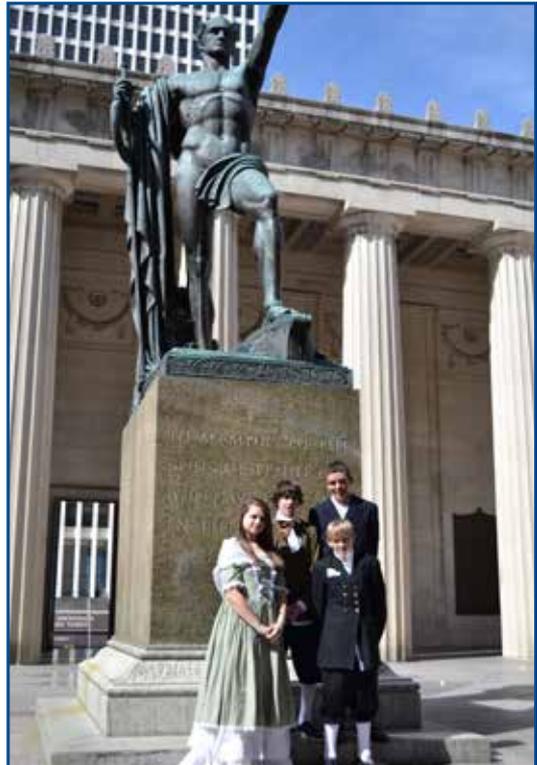
Here are some ways to show you are good citizen:

- **Vote.** When you turn 18, you will be allowed to register to vote. From that point onward, you will have a direct say in the election of the mayor of your town, your city council members, your county executive, your state Senator and Representative, the Governor, your U.S. Representatives and Senators, and the President of the United States.

There are many countries where people are not allowed to vote. The people in those countries have no say as to how their government runs or who their leaders are. Where would you rather live – a place like that, or a place like the United States?

- **Stay informed.** You should know enough about your city, your state, and your country to cast your vote wisely. After all, how will you know who to vote for if you don't know the facts? It is your duty to know what is happening in your community, state and country.

- **Jury Duty.** At some point in your life you may be called to sit on a jury, which is a group of citizens who are called to a courtroom to



Students taking part in the annual Tennessee History Day at the War Memorial Building (THFK photo)



Students at West End Middle School in Nashville enjoy the fruits of a garden they helped plant at their school. (West End PTO photo)

hear and decide a legal case and determine whether someone is innocent or guilty of a crime of which they have been accused.

Jury duty is a big deal. When the time comes, take it seriously.

- **Pay Taxes.** You have already been paying taxes, but perhaps you didn't realize it. Every time you buy anything in Tennessee, you pay sales tax, which supports your state and local governments. As you get older, you will pay other kinds of taxes. Remember that those taxes pay for the government that you helped elect.

- **Respond to a Call of Duty.**

There have been many times in the history of Tennessee and the United States when the government asked people to go fight against a foreign enemy, or to serve their country in some other way. We owe all of our freedom to the people who have defended the United States in such times.

By the way, the reason Tennessee is known as the "Volunteer State" is because of how quickly Tennesseans have responded to the government's call to raise an army.



New American citizens are inducted several times a year in Tennessee. (THFK photo)

- **Tolerate.** Tennessee and the United States are based on the idea of tolerance. Not everyone here looks the same, talks the same, thinks the same or believes the same. That’s okay.

In the 1940s, the American Heritage Foundation distributed a civics booklet that described tolerance this way:

“Tolerance is not merely ‘putting up’ with the other fellow. It’s the spirit of trying to understand him. It is judgment of people as people rather than as classes. Intolerance and group prejudice are a resentment of everybody that’s different, a mani-

festation of insecurity and ignorance, and a form of bullying akin to that of chickens picking on the one with part of its feathers already off.”

A great American once said, “I don’t agree with you, but I will defend to my death your right to say it.” This would be a good rule for all of us to follow.

- **Help others.** There are times when people in our country, our state, and our town need help. When Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana and Mississippi in 2005, people helped. When Nashville flooded in 2010, people helped.

If you look around the commu-

nity in which you live, you will find people who need help and causes that need help.

- **Obey the laws.** As you grow older, you will decide whether to be a law-abiding citizen or a person who chooses not to obey the laws. This is a decision no one can make for you.

The things you do are already beginning to indicate whether you intend to be a law-abiding citizen or not. For example:

Do you follow the rules at school?

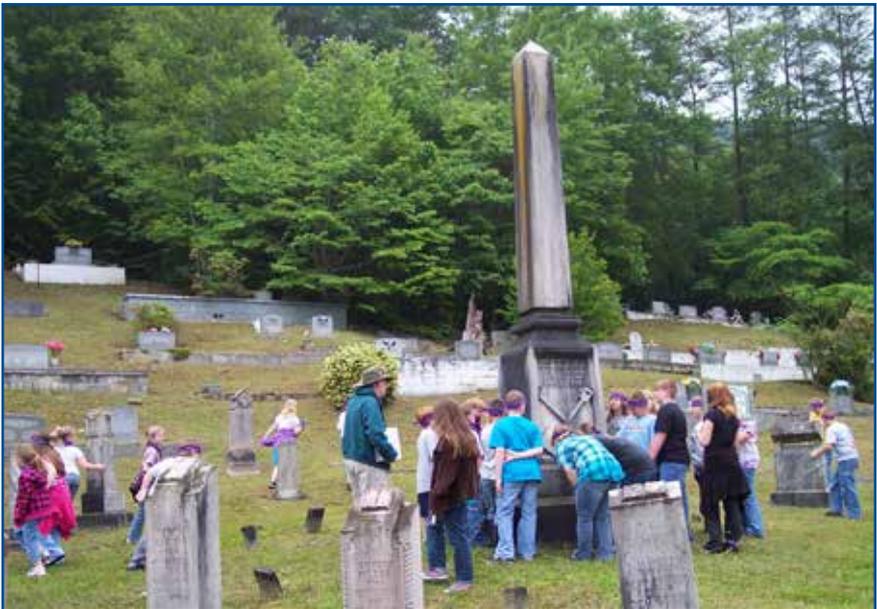
Does it matter to you what types of grades you make?

Are you the kind of person who litters, or the kind of person who picks up trash?

Are you honest with your parents and your teachers?

Do you do things halfway, or do you do your best?

These are questions every citizen should ask themselves.



Students from Briceville Elementary School in Anderson County clean a cemetery.
(Coal Creek Watershed Foundation photo)

ON THE INTERNET

Not only can you learn lots of information about the Tennessee state Senate online, you can even follow what we are doing online and watch us in session.

For the Senate's official website, go to <http://www.capitol.tn.gov/senate/>.

From there, click on **Find Your Senator** to find out who your Senator is.

Click on **Senate Members** to learn more about your Senator and find out how to get in touch with him or her.

Click on **Senate Weekly Calendar** to find out what is taking place this week on Capitol Hill.



Click on **Senate Publications** to learn about booklets that the Senate produces (such as this one!)

Click on **Senate Video** to watch current or archived video of the Senate.

ON TELEVISION

The Tennessee Senate is now live on television!

You can watch committee meetings, floor sessions and joint conventions on public television's "Tennessee Channel," which is run through the state's six public television stations, including:

- WKNO Memphis
- WNPT Nashville
- WKOP Knoxville and WETP Sneedville

- WTCI Chattanooga
- WCTE Cookeville
- WLJT Martin

Up to 60 hours per week are broadcast, depending on the amount of work done by legislators. Live broadcasts alternate between the Senate and House of Representatives, depending on which chamber has a floor session.

Check your local public television station for the weekly schedule.