

# Weekly Legislative Report

Week of January 14, 2019

Events on Capitol Hill were calm this week, and although members continued to submit legislation before the Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> filing deadline, the legislature was largely out of session, convening only on Friday afternoon to begin special proceedings regarding the inauguration of Governor-Elect Bill Lee. The inauguration of Governor-Elect Lee will take place during a joint session of the legislature, and is set for January 19<sup>th</sup> at 11am in the War Memorial Auditorium. Lee, a conservative business-owner who won election in November, will serve as the 50<sup>th</sup> Governor of the State of Tennessee and will be taking over from two-term Governor Bill Haslam, whose tenure was marked by strong economic growth and substantial gains in education. Lee says he hopes to continue those trends, while also enacting crucial criminal justice reforms and improving access affordable healthcare. With Lee's cabinet, which is listed below, now fully announced, he is ready to get to begin as Governor and work to make Tennessee a better state for all residents.

## Commissioners/Cabinet Members



### Dr. Charlie Hatcher – Department of Agriculture

Since 2009, **Dr. Hatcher** has served as the State Veterinarian for the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. Dr. Hatcher serves as the general managing partner of Hatcher Family Dairy which was established in 1831. He also serves as general managing partner for Williamson County-based Rock-N-Roll Farms and Battle Mountain Farm. Dr. Hatcher is the practice owner of Rock-N-Country Veterinary Services in College Grove. Dr. Hatcher received his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and a B.S. in Animal Science from Middle Tennessee State University.



**Jennifer Nichols – Department of Children’s Services**

**Jennifer Nichols**, of Shelby County, currently serves as the chief homicide prosecutor in the Shelby County District Attorney’s Office. Previously, Nichols served the Criminal Court Judge of Division 10 in the 30th Judicial District. In addition to her service as the Shelby County Deputy District Attorney, Nichols served as the Chief Prosecutor of the Special Victims Unit where she handled child homicides, child physical abuse, child sexual abuse, elder abuse and other special projects. In her capacity as Chief Prosecutor over the Special Victims Unit, Nichols met daily and worked closely with Department of Children’s Services staff.



**Julie McPeak – Department of Commerce and Insurance**

**Julie McPeak** currently serves as the Commissioner of the Department of Commerce and Insurance and she will continue in this role in the Lee Administration. Before leading the department, she practiced as Counsel to the Insurance practice group of law firm Burr & Forman LLP. She also served as the Executive Director of the Kentucky Office of Insurance (KOI). Before her appointment as Executive Director, McPeak spent nine years as an attorney for KOI, the final five as general counsel. She also served as general counsel to the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet. McPeak, who brings more than 20 years of legal and administrative experience in state government, is the first woman to serve as chief insurance regulator in more than one state.



**Tony Parker – Department of Corrections**

**Tony Parker**, of Obion County, currently serves as the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Corrections. With more than 35 years of experience in the field of corrections, Parker previously served as the Assistant Commissioner of Prisons where he was responsible for the oversight of the department’s security operations as well as offender management. He is nationally recognized for his research regarding de-radicalization of prisons and was recently elected President-elect of the American Correctional Association.



**Bob Rolfe – Department of Economic and Community Development**

**Bob Rolfe**, of Davidson County, currently serves as the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. During his tenure at ECD, Rolfe worked to land the Amazon expansion, a \$230 million investment to Tennessee that is slated to create 5,000 jobs and is considered the single-largest jobs announcement in Tennessee history. He is the former Chairman and CEO of Medical Reimbursements of America, Inc. and the co-founder of West End Holdings. From 2005 to 2011, he was Chairman and CEO of MyOfficeProducts, Inc. Rolfe spent the first 18 years of his career as an investment banker at J.C. Bradford and Co.



### **Penny Schwinn– Department of Education**

**Penny Schwinn** has served as the Texas Education Agency chief deputy commissioner of academics since 2016. She began with Teach for America — working in both Baltimore and Los Angeles — before founding a charter school for low-income students in Sacramento, California in 2009. In 2012, she briefly served on Sacramento's county school board but then resigned to take a job with the city school district. A year after that, in 2014, she became the chief accountability and performance officer for the Delaware Department of Education.

### **David Salyers – Department of Environment and Conservation**

**David Salyers**, of Madison County, currently serves as the executive director of the West Tennessee River Basin Authority, a division of the Department of Environment and Conservation. Salyers is a registered professional engineer, geologist and certified professional hydrologist who has worked with WTRBA for more than 20 years to develop conservation solutions for West Tennessee streams and rivers. During Salyers' tenure, he has helped secure millions in federal grants for Tennessee and was also instrumental in developing the statewide water plan known as TN H2O



### **Stuart McWhorter – Department of Finance and Administration**

**Stuart McWhorter** currently chairs inauguration planning efforts. He served as Finance Chairman for Governor-elect Lee's gubernatorial campaign. McWhorter serves as Chairman and President of Clayton Associates, founded in 1996, an investment management company primarily focused on the early stage investment cycle in the healthcare and technology industries.



**Gabe Roberts – Division of TennCare**

**Gabe Roberts**, of Davidson County, currently serves as the Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer of TennCare. Previously, he served as General Counsel. During his tenure at TennCare, Roberts was instrumental in the design and implementation of many of the agency's initiatives including the Tennessee Health Care Innovation Initiative, the Employment and Community First Choices program, and the agency's strategy to combat the opiate epidemic in Tennessee. Before joining TennCare, he practiced law at the Nashville law firm Sherrard, Roe, Voigt & Harbison where his focus was corporate and business law.



**Greg Gonzales – Department of Financial Institutions**

Putnam County native **Greg Gonzales** currently serves as the Commissioner of the Department of Financial Institutions and he will continue on in this role. Gonzales is a past Chairman of the

Conference of State Bank Supervisors (CSBS), which is the professional organization of state banking commissioners in the United States. Commissioner Gonzales, for a number of years, served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Money Transmitter Regulators Association (MTRA), an organization of a majority of the states that regulate funds transfer companies. He serves as Chairman of the State Liaison Committee that incorporates the state supervisory perspective into the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council. He served on the U.S. Treasury's Bank Secrecy Act Advisory Group. Commissioner Gonzales currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Financial Literacy Commission. Gonzales also currently serves on a national task force studying how new technologies are affecting the U.S. payment systems.



**Christi Branscom– Department of General Services**

**Christi Branscom** currently serves as the chief operating officer and general counsel at Partners Development. Previously, Branscom served as the chief operating officer and deputy mayor for the City of Knoxville, where she was the first female in Knoxville history to serve in this role. She has also served the City of Knoxville as the senior director of public works and was also the first female in Knoxville history to serve in this role.



### **Dr. Lisa Piercey– Department of Health**

**Dr. Lisa Piercey** is executive vice president of West Tennessee Healthcare, where she oversees a roster of hospitals with an emphasis on rural hospitals in Bolivar, Camden, Milan, Dyersburg and Martin. She has a clinical background in pediatrics, specializing in child abuse pediatrics. She also serves as the medical director for the Madison County Child Advocacy Center, as well as a faculty member at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

### **Juan Williams– Department of Human Resources**

**Juan Williams**, of Davidson County, currently serves as the operations manager for the Duke Energy Nashville Resource Center where he advises managers, supervisors and employees on matters including operations and workplace culture. Previously, Williams served as the Director of Change Readiness for Duke Energy, with focuses on business process, talent management and restructuring. In addition to nearly 17 years of human resources and operations experience, Williams is an active member of the community and serves on the Pencil Foundation Board of Directors.



### **Danielle Barnes – Department of Human Services**

**Danielle Barnes** currently serves as the Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Human Services, and she will continue in that role. Prior to joining DHS, she served as Deputy Commissioner & General Counsel for the Tennessee Department of Human Resources. In her capacity, she had oversight over all legal issues within the Department, offering counsel and advice to her agency, other state agencies and individuals on employment law matters. Commissioner Barnes grew up in the Knoxville area. She received her undergraduate degree from Spelman College and her law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law.



**Brad Turner – Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

**Brad Turner** currently serves as the director of client services at HealthStream, Inc. Turner has worked with the State Interagency Coordinating Council to serve infants and toddlers with disabilities through early intervention programming connected to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. He also works closely with special needs volunteer organizations including Project Help and Rising Above Ministries. Turner has served as a Rutherford County Commissioner for District 10 since 2010.



**Dr. Jeff McCord – Department of Labor & Workforce Development**

**Dr. Jeff McCord**, of Sullivan County, currently serves as the Vice President for Economic and Workforce Development at Northeast State Community College. McCord leads Workforce Solutions, a workforce development program that includes the development of registered apprenticeship programs and the Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing (RCAM), a technical career academy. In addition to organizational leadership for the Adult Education programming for the First Development District, he also serves as the lead administrator for the nationally recognized Kingsport Academic Village. McCord has over 20 years of business and industry experience including a number of leadership positions and specific experience related to organizational effectiveness and corporate education.



**Marie Williams – Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse**

Crockett County native **Marie Williams** currently serves as Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS), and she will continue in that role. She leads the Department and their over 1,800 employees in assisting individuals in securing treatment and recovery services for serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbances, and substance abuse disorders. Prior to assuming the Commissioner role, she served as Deputy Commissioner and as the Assistant Commissioner of Mental Health Services where she worked collaboratively to expand consumer-based recovery services.



**Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes – Department of Military**

**Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes**, of Carroll County, currently serves as the Deputy Commanding General of First Army which provides training and readiness oversight to reserve component units deploying worldwide. He has previously served as the Deputy Adjutant General of the Tennessee National Guard. Holmes has commanded Tennessee National Guard units at all levels and has served in multiple combat deployments. His experience in command at the brigade level includes commanding the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, headquartered in Knoxville, and the 194th Engineer Brigade, headquartered in Jackson. He has also served in several national level

positions serving as Deputy Chief of Engineers at the Pentagon. Holmes is a registered architect and currently resides in Rutherford County.



**David Gerregano – Department of Revenue**

**David Gerregano**, of Jackson County, currently serves as the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue. A 20-year veteran of the department, Gerregano has helped oversee various revenue functions, including the Audit Division, Enforcement and Taxpayer Services. Since starting with the department in 1997 as tax counsel, he has held multiple legal and legislative positions such as administrative hearing officer, general counsel and assistant commissioner. Gerregano currently serves on the Federation of Tax Administrators Board of Trustees and previously served as president of the Southeastern Association of Tax Administrators.



**Jeff Long – Department of Safety and Homeland Security**

**Jeff Long** will serve as the Commissioner of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security. He was elected as the Sheriff of Williamson County in 2008. He has served in the criminal justice field for the past 44 years as an Assistant District Attorney for the 21st Judicial District, Special Agent in Charge with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Investigator for the 21st Judicial District, Arson Investigator with the Tennessee Fire Marshall's Office, Captain with the Williamson County Sheriff's Office and Federal Hospital Police Officer with the Veterans Administration Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. He is Past-President of the Tennessee Sheriffs' Association, a current member of the National Sheriffs' Association and current member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.



**Mark Ezell – Department of Tourist Development**

**Mark Ezell**, a seventh generation Tennessean, will serve as the Commissioner of the Department of Tourist Development. Ezell has worked with Dean Foods since 1998 as a senior executive focused on brand development for Purity Dairies and other southeast dairies. Ezell spearheaded philanthropic efforts to create the Purity Foundation and other Middle Tennessee efforts like the successful Moosic City Dairy Dash. He is a nationally recognized brand developer who coordinated the creation and implementation of the iconic “Milk Mustache – Got Milk?” campaign. His 35 years at Purity Dairies, including time as President and General Manager, helped the former family-owned company receive recognition as a “Brands That Built Nashville” winner from the Nashville American Advertising Federation.



**Clay Bright – Department of Transportation**

**Clay Bright** currently serves as the vice president of Brasfield & Gorrie, one of the nation's largest privately held general contractors. Bright has worked with the company for 36 years and was instrumental in opening the Nashville office of Brasfield & Gorrie. He managed some of the most complex projects in Tennessee including the construction of the AT&T Building. Bright serves on the Leadership Board at the University of Alabama's Engineering Department.



**Ret. Lt. Col. Courtney Rogers – Department of Veterans Services**

**Ret. Lt. Col. Courtney Rogers**, of Sumner County, currently serves as the Director of Recruiting and Retention for the Tennessee State Guard, the all-volunteer arm of the Tennessee Military Department. In addition to her 28 years of military service with the Air Force and the Tennessee Air National Guard, Rogers also served three terms as a State Representative for the 45th district in the Tennessee General Assembly.