



RAMSEY FARRAR RUSSELL & SMITH  
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

## **Tennessee Weekly Legislative Update, 2/05 – 2/09, 2024**

### **Bills are Officially In and Accounted For**

All bills have been documented into the system and will be included on bill reports. Feel free to contact us if any questions or concerns arise regarding these legislative developments.

### **State of State Breakdown**

In the State of State address on February 5th, Governor Bill Lee proudly proclaimed Tennessee's achievements. Tennessee was awarded the title of having the best roads in America, along with having the fastest growing economy. Distinguished as the most fiscally responsible state, Tennessee maintains a low unemployment rate with poverty rates below the national average. Charting historic success, Tennessee only has eight distressed counties which is down from fifteen counties since 2019.

Governor Lee outlined his \$52.6 billion state budget proposal to lawmakers during the address. Big-ticket items in the proposed budget include \$410 million in recurring funding and \$1.2 billion in nonrecurring funding to simplify the franchise tax in Tennessee. The proposed budget also includes a \$141 million appropriation to establish Education Freedom Scholarships. Governor Lee plans to use \$208 million for initiatives promoting apprenticeships and skilled training, to expand greater access to rural health support. Another notable allocation is \$100 million over five years for community mental health centers. Additionally, \$17 million is dedicated to augmenting 60 State Troopers and support staff to promote public safety, while \$68M will also be used to create eight new state parks in Tennessee.