



RAMSEY FARRAR RUSSELL & SMITH  
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

## **Tennessee Weekly Legislative Update, 4/1 – 4/5, 2024**

### **Judge Boyd's Resignation**

On April 2, 2024, suspended Shelby County Judge Melissa A. Boyd sent her resignation letter to Governor Bill Lee avoiding ouster by the Tennessee General Assembly. The General Assembly had called a joint convention for April 4, 2024 to take a removal vote. With Governor Lee's acceptance of the resignation letter, the joint convention was called, and the resignation letter was read into the record. The joint convention quickly adjourned, and the bodies went into their own respective sessions.

### **Senator Southerland Hospitalized**

Our thoughts and prayers are with Senator Southerland (R-Morristown), who was rushed to the hospital during the Senate floor session on Monday night. Southerland, 69, had put his head on his desk while seated, whilst several senators fled to his aid. Shortly after, the legislator was removed from the chamber and taken to the hospital. News outlets have reported he is stable as of April 2, 2024; we hope he has a speedy recovery.

### **Passing of Mayor Matheny**

Coffee County Mayor Judd Matheny, 53, passed away this past Tuesday. He was found deceased in his vehicle outside his house, but there were no signs of foul play. Matheny had been mayor of Coffee County since September 2022. Prior to that, he was a former House member for the districts of Coffee, Grundy, and Warren counties. Our hearts and prayers go out to his friends, family, and constituents during this devastating time.

### **Aftermath of the Tornado**

A tornado ripped through the towns of Sunbright and Huntsville and did some serious damage to several properties in the area. Thankfully, everyone in these communities is safe, and they are in our thoughts as the communities rebuild.

### **Timeline Updates**

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The Senate Judiciary Committee and Health Committee closed this week. Starting next week, Wednesday floor sessions will begin – and a Tuesday floor session in the Senate - which means the end is near! Talk around Cordell Hull Building is an April adjournment; start placing your bets on which day in April.

The biggest question mark remaining is Governor Lee's school voucher bill, SB 0503/HB 1183, which was rolled in the Senate Finance Committee last week. It will be heard in Finance committees for both chambers this week. However, the two versions of the bill remain very different.