



GREATER MEMPHIS CHAMBER



Government Affairs Committee

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# 2025 Tennessee Legislative Recap

The General Assembly approved a **\$59.8 billion dollar budget** for the upcoming fiscal year. Big ticket items include:



EDUCATION  
FREEDOM ACT



HURRICANE  
HELENE RELIEF



TRANSPORTATION  
INFRASTRUCTURE



GRANT POOL FOR  
COMMUNITY PROJECTS



## 1st Session of the 114th General Assembly

- GMC team read all 2987 bills filed in the 114th Tennessee General Assembly
- Tracked 187 pieces of legislation
- Met with over 95% of the 132-member legislature – met with many of these legislators on a weekly basis
- MEM2NASH brought over 70 greater Memphis business leaders to Nashville
- Leaders met with over 25 members of the Tennessee General Assembly, 7 members of the governor's cabinet, and Governor Lee

## Memphis' **BIG** Budget Wins



**\$119 Million +**  
EDUCATION

- Code Crew
- Memphis Teacher Residency
- Teach for America
- MSCS Audit
- University of Memphis
- Tech 901
- Pure Youth Academy
- TCAT Aviation Campus
- UTHSC



**\$23 Million**  
OVERTON PARK

- Memphis Zoo
- Overton Park Shell
- Metal Museum



**\$100 Million**  
DOWNTOWN

- Public Safety Grant Pool
- Rock N' Soul Museum

# Statewide Economic Development Budget Wins

- **\$1,000,000,000** for Roads
- **\$10,000,000** in GIVE Grants for Nuclear Energy Sector Development
- **\$2,000,000** (recurring) and **\$628,000** (non-recurring) for a regulatory framework for Nuclear Fusion
- **\$10,000,000** Nuclear Industry Initiative Grants
- **\$50,000,000** for a Small Modular Reactor Grant Fund
- **\$25,000,000** for FastTrack Infrastructure and Jobs Training
- **\$53,000,000** for Research and Development (R&D) and Innovation Grants
- **\$5,000,000** for Workforce Development Grants
- **\$3,500,000** for Direct International Flights
- **\$5,000,000** for West Tennessee Planning Services for BlueOval City
- **\$3,000,000** (recurring) and **\$2,000,000** (non-recurring) for the Tennessee Entertainment Commission

**“ While some members may see dark clouds on the horizon for the state of Tennessee... this budget looks forward and I believe puts us in a position to handle any storms that might come our way. ”**

**- Bo Watson, Chairman of the Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committee**

## 2025 Legislative Agenda

### 1 Economic Development

The delivery of business services that help existing Memphis businesses thrive and grow, and that attract new businesses with high-quality jobs to the region.

**Maintaining business-friendly state policy**

**Defense against bills that make it harder to do business in Tennessee**

**Tennessee  
Ranked No. 3  
Best State for  
Business –  
5 Years in a Row**

Chief Executive Group

### 2 Diversified Human Capital

Workforce development and educational alignment that fosters a labor force diverse in the skills our employers need and is inclusive of all races and demographics.

**Strengthening Tennessee's Teacher Workforce**

*Legislative Action: SB 1311 / HB 1323 (Johnson, Lamberth)*

Creates a limited occupational teaching license, making it possible for experienced tradesmen and women to teach their craft without having to jump through all the hoops of extra coursework.



### 3 Infrastructure Development

Direct support to improve and expand regional physical infrastructure and illuminate infrastructure needs that are critical for Memphis businesses.

**\$1 Billion**

**for TDOT to build and maintain roads and bridges all across Tennessee**



**TDOT**  
Department of  
Transportation



# Public Safety: An Economic Development Priority



## Constitutional Amendment on Bail

- Will remove the right to bail for capital offenses including: an act of terrorism, second degree murder, aggravated rape of a child, aggravated rape, and grave torture.
- Second passage of this resolution and will now appear on the November 3, 2026 ballot.



## Cargo Theft

- Increase the offense of burglary of a conveyance from a Class E felony to a Class D felony.
- Bill was not successful due to a recurring financial cost.



## Tennessee Bureau of Investigation

- 22 positions and \$3,467,400 (\$2,676,200 recurring and \$791,200 non-recurring) are recommended for victim services, intelligence analysis, aviation, security, Medicaid fraud enforcement, and administration.



## Troopers

- Sate budget includes funding to establish 117 positions, including 100 troopers, 12 supervisors, and five administrative positions. Of this total cost, \$23,577,600 is recurring and \$14,332,200 is non-recurring.

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## Getting Involved

- Session lasts 4-5 months, but legislative advocacy is a year-long process
- Get involved by developing relationships
  - Your policymakers
  - The Chamber's Government Relations team
  - Members of the Government Affairs Council
- New State Priorities Survey
- Attend next year's MEM2NASH



Greater. 



# Thank you

**Courtney Blanchard**

Director of Public Affairs  
[cblanchard@memphischamber.com](mailto:cblanchard@memphischamber.com)

**Bobby White**

Chief Government Affairs Officer  
[bwhite@memphischamber.com](mailto:bwhite@memphischamber.com)



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