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## **The Key Three: Concerning Gun Bill Removed from Consideration, Tax Increases Introduced, Lee Administration Workers' Compensation Bill**

### **Concerning Gun Bill Removed from Consideration:**

[SB1037\(Stevens\)/HB746\(Barrett\)](#) would remove the authorization for an individual, business, or local, state, or federal government entity to prohibit the possession of weapons by a person who is at a meeting conducted by or on property owned, operated, or managed or under the control of the individual, business, or government entity. In other words, this legislation would no longer allow a business to exercise their personal property rights when it comes to prohibiting firearms at their business. The bill also would remove the criminal offense of possession of a weapon in a building or on property that is properly posted. The Chamber and business community believe businesses need the right to control their personal property and be able to post any restrictions that they believe is best for their business. Some businesses have certain hazardous materials onsite and are required to prohibit firearms for safety purposes by federal and state occupational health standards.

The legislation was first introduced in 2023 and the sponsor decided to defer the legislation to the 2024 session after hearing many concerns. The Chamber and members of the business community met with the sponsor again this year and he agreed to take the bill off notice. Therefore the bill will not move forward this legislative session.

### **Two Major Business Tax Hikes Introduced:**

Freshman Representative Aftyn Behn (D-Nashville) and Senator Charlane Oliver (D-Nashville) have introduced two bills that are deeply problematic for business. The first, [HB 2234\(Behn\)/SB 2065\(Oliver\)](#), would create a "new data transaction privilege tax" of 9.5% imposed on annual gross revenues "derived from data transactions from digital advertising services in the state." Revenue from the new tax would be used to fund a universal pre-K program. Regardless of the merits of creating universal pre-K education in Tennessee, the bill's new tax would be a massive burden on business and cost the state jobs.

The second bill, [HB 2043\(Behn\)/SB1934\(Oliver\)](#), creates a new Business Enterprise Tax of 0.75% of a business' taxable enterprise tax base and makes the entire worldwide net earnings of a business subject to apportionment for tax purposes. Enactment of this new tax on business would pay for the elimination of the state's grocery tax. Like the first bill, this proposal would raise the cost of doing business in Tennessee.

### **Workers' Compensation Administration Bill:**

[SB2094\(Johnson\)/HB1694\(Lamberth\)](#) initiated by the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) makes various changes to workers' compensation statute. The bill does four things. First, makes uniform a 14-days for electronic filing purposes for filing the First Report of

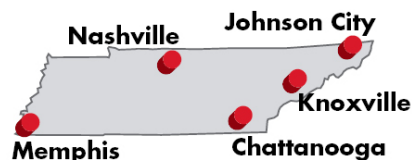
Injury FROI electronically with BWC. Second, this will result in a deletion of Notice of Controversy form since it no longer exists in paper format. Third, the bill clarifies that uninsured employer penalties may apply to construction and non-construction. Lastly, the Bureau of Workers Compensation seeks to extend the sunset of PC 189 (2021) for 5 years to July 2029, to continue to enforce worker's compensation insurance coverage laws. The legislation passed out of the Banking & Consumer Affairs Subcommittee and is currently placed on the Commerce Committee calendar for Tuesday, February 6 at 9 AM. The Chamber met with the Bureau of Workers' Compensation on this legislation and is supportive of the bill.

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## ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY UPDATE



**Environment & Energy Committee to Meet February 6:** The Chamber's Environment and Energy Committee will meet Thursday, February 6 from 1:00 PM-2:00 PM CST in a hybrid format to form policy positions on pertinent legislation. We will likely be joined by TDEC Deputy Director of Field Operations Evan Spann.

Please contact [RJ Gibson](#) for more information.

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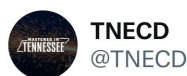
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In 2023, TNECD launched the Transportation Network Growth Opportunity (TNGO) initiative, a tool designed to connect and provide solutions to the state's mobility issues.

The deadline to participate in phase one of discovery is 2/2. Visit [tngo.tnecd.com](https://tngo.tnecd.com) to learn more. 🚗



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### **News and Notes....**

--**Tennessee Workers' Comp Rates Will Decline** for Eleventh Consecutive Year in 2024. [\[MORE\]](#)

--**Secretary of State Tre Hargett Issues New Warning** to Tennesseans About Uniform Commercial Code Scam. [\[MORE\]](#)

--TNECD **Transportation Network Growth Opportunity**. [\[MORE\]](#)

--Here's how **Tennessee ranks** among **top states to start a business in 2024**. [\[MORE\]](#)

--Tennessee Announces **Awards for Statewide Electric Vehicle Charging Stations**. [\[MORE\]](#)

--**Governor Lee, Commissioner McWhorter Announce Snap-on** to Expand Manufacturing Operations in Carter County. [\[MORE\]](#)

--**Gov. Lee to Deliver Sixth State of the State Address** on February 5. [\[MORE\]](#)

--December **Unemployment Rates Down** in Nearly Every County. [\[MORE\]](#)

