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## **The Key Three: Gun Bill Calendared, Tech Bills on the Move, and Problematic Foreign Ownership Bill**

Legislative activity has picked up significantly over the past couple of weeks. For the upcoming week, House and Senate committee calendars are filling up with a variety of bills scheduled for hearing. Please see the following Key Three items below that we have highlighted.

### **Concerning Gun Bill Calendared for Next Week:**

Proposed legislation [HB2032](#) introduced by [Representative Jody Barrett \(R-Dickson\)](#), scheduled to be heard on Tuesday, February 20 at 1:30 PM CST in the House Civil Justice Subcommittee, would substantially limit the ability or effectiveness of a business to post limits on the possession of firearms on their property. Current law allows an individual, corporation, business entity, or government entity at any level (local, state, or federal) to prohibit or limit the carrying of weapons by individuals on their owned or controlled premises with any violation constituting a Class B misdemeanor, punishable by a \$500 fine. This proposed legislation would remove the offense and penalties and decriminalize the violation of possessing the weapon on the property, making the postage meaningless. Businesses frequently note this importance of maintaining this ability especially after legislation that passed in 2009 that required businesses to allow firearms in parked vehicles on company property.

The Chamber and business community believe businesses need the right to control their personal property and should be able to post restrictions that they see fit. Some businesses have certain materials onsite that require them to prohibit firearms for safety purposes according to federal and state occupational health standards. Businesses have always had the right to determine posting policies and this is an unnecessary and potentially dangerous precedent. Businesses have noted the ability to control their private property without government intervention.

[Click here to view and reach out to members of the subcommittee.](#)

### **House Subcommittee Mulls Technology Bills:**

This year the Chamber has noted over 20 bills have been filed dealing with business practices of artificial intelligence (AI) and technology. The House Banking and Consumer Affairs Subcommittee engaged in lively debate and discussion on two technology focused bills this week. The first, the Protecting Children from Social Media Act ([SB2097/HB1891](#)), is an administration bill carried in the House by [Majority Leader William Lamberth \(R-Portland\)](#) and in the Senate by [Majority Leader Jack Johnson \(R-Franklin\)](#). It would require social media companies to first verify the age of all users in the state and then get parental consent for

users under eighteen. The obligation for figuring out methods for complying with these requirements is placed wholly on social media companies. Any mistake, even ones induced by creative work arounds by minors, would result in civil liability for the offending company. Subcommittee members indicated broad support for the general concept of the legislation, but many members want to see changes in the details before moving the bill forward, which was ultimately rolled, or delayed, for two weeks.

The subcommittee also considered the ELVIS Act ([SB2096/HB2091](#)), another administration bill carried by Leader Lamberth and Leader Johnson. The ELVIS Act was designed with musicians in mind but would provide protections to all Tennesseans from having their voice and likeness used for commercial gain without their consent. With the rise of AI, it has become easy to produce fake images, videos, and sounds that can be passed off as being genuine. The purpose of this legislation is to ensure that artists are compensated if their likeness is used for commercial purposes. Opponents noted concerns about unconstitutional speech restrictions that could possibly result if the legislation is enacted in its current form.

### **Chamber Works to Fix Problems with State Contracting Bill Limiting Purchase of Items with Foreign Components:**

This week, Representative John Ragan (R-Oak Ridge) put legislation on notice in the House Public Service Committee that would have sweeping ramifications for companies with global operations and supply chains. As introduced, [SB2859/HB1841](#) would bar companies that have contracted with any company based in China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela, or Syria in the past five years from bidding on state contracts, as well as those with ownership based in any of those countries. If the goal of the bill is to ensure the security of Tennessee's procurement process, the current language is overly broad, as many American and other globally based companies that source components and make sales across the globe are likely to be implicated.

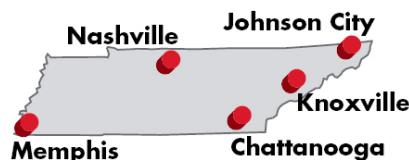
After meeting with the Chamber and other stakeholders, Representative Ragan (R-Oak Ridge) agreed to roll the bill to allow time to work on amendment language that is narrower and targets truly actual bad actors without barring companies that present no security concerns from bidding on state contracts. Senator Kerry Roberts (R-Springfield) is the Senate sponsor of the bill.

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