



**PHIL BREDESEN**  
*Governor*

# OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

*State Capitol*  
*Nashville, TN 37243-0001*  
*(615) 741-2001*  
*Tennessee.gov/governor*

## PHILIP NORMAN BREDESEN (D)

Governor of Tennessee

Phil Bredeesen took office as Tennessee's 48th governor on January 18, 2003, delivering on a promise to leave stale political debates behind and focus on achieving real results for families. In November 2006, he was re-elected in a landslide victory – reportedly becoming the first governor in over a century to win all 95 counties in Tennessee.

Bredeesen's strong voter mandate stems, in part, from his commitment to accountability and open government. During his first year in office, Bredeesen threw open the doors to administrative budget hearings, allowing taxpayers to see for the first time the decisions that are made on how their money is spent. The Governor also established the toughest ethics rules in the history of Tennessee's executive branch.

In year one, Bredeesen worked with the General Assembly to manage the state through a fiscal crisis without raising taxes or cutting funding for education. By Bredeesen's fourth year in office, Tennessee had passed four balanced budgets, received top rankings from national bond rating agencies, and raised its Rainy Day Fund to a record high.

Bredeesen set clear priorities for the state, beginning with Tennessee's number one priority – education. He raised teacher pay above the Southeastern average and expanded the state's pilot Pre-K initiative into a program for four-year-olds across the state.

He also created the Governor's Books from Birth Foundation, a statewide expansion of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library that offers children free books monthly in all 95 counties. In his fourth year, Bredeesen worked with the General Assembly to increase education funding by a record \$366.5 million.

To recruit new industry and jobs, Bredeesen led reform of Tennessee's workers' compensation system and invested in retraining programs to help laid-off employees develop new skills. Since he took office, 2,889 companies – including Nissan and International Paper – have expanded in or moved to Tennessee, bringing more than 104,000 jobs and \$12.8 billion in new business investment to the state.

Bredeesen launched the statewide war on methamphetamine abuse with the Governor's Meth-Free Tennessee initiative, which resulted in a 50 percent decline in illegal and toxic meth labs. He also founded the Heritage Conservation Trust Fund, to increase the state's land-buying power. Since the group's creation, Tennessee has worked with public and private partners to preserve nearly 30,000 acres for the enjoyment of future generations.

Additionally, Bredeesen took control of TennCare, the state's once-financially troubled Medicaid expansion program, by preserving full enrollment for children and pursuing innovative care and disease-management initiatives. Even after necessary reductions in adult enrollment, TennCare remains one of the most generous and comprehensive state health care plans in the nation. He continues to build on this

foundation with Cover Tennessee, a new initiative to provide access for affordable health care for severely ill Tennesseans who have been denied health insurance, for uninsured children, and for uninsured working adults.

Now, Bredeesen begins his second term as Governor with a focus on raising high school and college graduation rates, boosting the economies of Tennessee's smaller and mid-sized communities, strengthening public education at every level, and promoting access to health care and healthier lifestyles for all citizens, especially young Tennesseans.

Before serving as Tennessee's governor, Bredeesen served as mayor of Nashville from 1991 to 1999, working with community leaders to chart a course that made Music City U.S.A. one of the best places in America to live, work, and raise a family. Under his leadership, Nashville invested nearly \$500 million to build new schools and hire new teachers. The city developed a state-of-the-art library system, redeveloped downtown, expanded its park system, and drove down the crime rate. Also during Bredeesen's tenure, Nashville enjoyed record economic growth by recruiting high-quality jobs and companies such as Dell Computer Corp. and HCA Inc. He led the city's efforts to recruit two professional sports teams: the NFL's Tennessee Titans and the NHL's Nashville Predators.

Before entering public service, Bredeesen worked in the health care industry. Between research trips to the public library, he drafted a business plan at his kitchen table that led to the creation in 1980 of HealthAmerica Corp., a Nashville-based health care management company that eventually grew to more than 6,000 employees and traded on the New York Stock Exchange. The company was sold in 1986.

Bredeesen and his wife, First Lady Andrea Conte, are active members in the community, locally and statewide. He is a founding member of Nashville's Table, a nonprofit group that collects discarded food from local restaurants and distributes it to the city's homeless population. He also founded the Land Trust for Tennessee, a nonprofit organization that works statewide to preserve open space and traditional family farms. Conte is founder and president of You Have the Power – Know How to Use It, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to raising awareness about crime and justice issues.

Phil Bredeesen was born on November 21, 1943. He grew up in rural Shortsville, N.Y., and earned a bachelor's degree in physics from Harvard University. He and Conte moved to Nashville in 1975. Bredeesen, an avid hunter and outdoorsman, is a licensed pilot and enjoys painting as a hobby. Bredeesen and Conte have one son, Ben.

## Duties of the Governor

“The supreme executive power of this state shall be vested in a governor.”

This one sentence in the Tennessee Constitution perhaps describes the awesome responsibility of the governor better than any other ever written. The governor, more than any other individual, is responsible for the operation of state government. His duties, responsibilities, and authority are defined in the Tennessee Constitution, from the qualifications of the governor to his right to convene the General Assembly in extraordinary session.

Through his Cabinet, which is made up of the commissioners of the various departments and the governor's personal staff, he is responsible for the enforcement of the laws, the collection of taxes, and the general well-being of the state and its citizens.

The constitution provides that the governor "shall be at least 30 years of age, shall be a citizen of the United States, and shall have been a resident of this state seven years next before his election."

He is the recognized leader of all the citizens in the state, and in addition, is the state leader of his political party. As a result of this latter responsibility, the governor has a strong voice in shaping the policies of the national party of which he is a member.

Intangible qualities which the governor should possess include: the ability to lead and create an atmosphere of unity among the state's citizens; the energy to participate in various functions, both in Nashville and around the state; the compassion to understand problems and to assist in their solutions; the enthusiasm necessary to motivate others; and the ability to communicate with all segments of society. The constitution clearly defines his tangible responsibilities. For example, "He shall be commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy of the state, and of the Militia, except when they shall be called into the service of the United States."

While the General Assembly has the sole authority to pass laws and the courts of the state have the sole authority to try cases, the governor has considerable influence in both areas. The governor is expected to recommend legislation and has the authority to veto bills which have been passed and which, in his judgment, are not in the best interest of all the citizens. He has the authority to appoint judges and chancellors to fill vacancies which occur in the courts, the right to grant executive clemency, and the power to grant post-conviction reprieves and pardons, except in cases of impeachment.

The governor is the people's spokesman in national matters and their representative when a single voice is needed in matters of concern outside the boundaries of the state. He is the representative of labor and management, of industry, of the farms, of the business community, and of urban and rural areas.

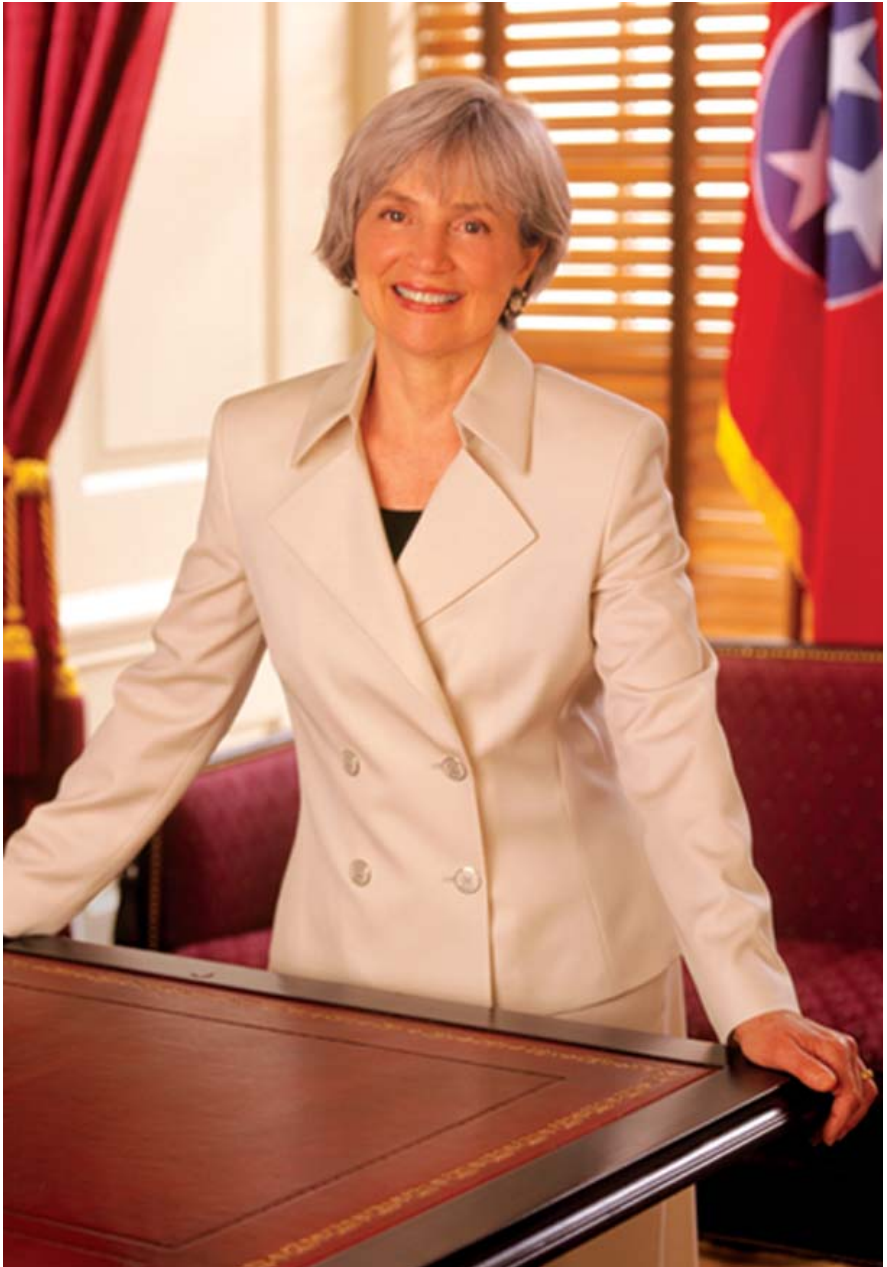
To assist him in the operation of the government, the governor appoints commissioners to head the various departments. They report directly to him or through one of his staff members. While the commissioners are situated in offices, generally near Capitol Hill, the governor and his staff occupy offices in the Capitol. The executive offices are on the first floor and the legislative chambers are on the second floor of the Capitol.

Also, to assist in the operation of the government, the governor appoints members to boards and commissions, many of which regulate personal services performed in the state. Some of the boards and commissions are official agencies of the state, while others are semiofficial.

Among the boards and commissions on which the governor serves are: State Funding Board, State Building Commission, Board of Equalization, Tennessee Local Development Authority, School Bond Authority, and Tennessee Industrial and Agricultural Development Commission. He also chairs the Board of Regents and the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees.

A candidate for governor must first obtain his party's nomination in a primary election in August, then must run against the nominees of the other parties in a general election in November. Elected to a four-year term, the governor may succeed himself one time. He may receive an annual salary of \$155,000, as well as an official residence and funding for its operation.

The Tennessee Constitution provides that, in the event of a vacancy in the office of governor, the speaker of the Senate assumes the office. Next in the line of succession are the speaker of the House of Representatives, the secretary of state, and the comptroller.



**ANDREA CONTE**  
*First Lady*

## ANDREA CONTE

### First Lady of Tennessee

Andrea Conte, First Lady of Tennessee, is founder and President of You Have the Power...Know How to Use It, a nonprofit corporation dedicated to raising awareness about crime and justice issues. The group produces documentary videos and resource guidebooks on topics such as elder abuse, domestic violence and child sexual abuse. The videos are distributed nationwide to law enforcement agencies, schools, civic groups and therapists. In addition, You Have the Power conducts numerous public programs across Tennessee.

In her first year as First Lady of Tennessee, Conte identified three key initiatives. The first of those was to establish a Child Advocacy Center in each judicial district in the state. Child Advocacy Centers are child-friendly places where forensic child abuse interviews can be conducted and the Child Protective Investigative Team can discuss the merits of the case and develop a plan. These Centers also provide ongoing counseling to help children recover from sexual or physical abuse. From September 2004 to April 2005, Conte completed a 600-mile walk across the state, raising awareness about child abuse and raising \$1 million for Child Advocacy Centers.

A second major initiative was the creation of a statewide Commission on Crime Victims Assistance. The citizen Commission, established in August 2003, is responsible for providing recommendations and advice on benefits and other issues associated with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund.

In addition to her work on crime and justice issues, the First Lady has also embarked on a campaign to restore and preserve Tennessee's Executive Residence. She is working with state and private architects on the long range plan, and has formed a statewide, bipartisan Finance Committee to secure private contributions to fund completion of the project.

Conte's early career as a registered nurse included work in Boston and California. She later held management roles, with the former Hospital Corporation of America and the former accounting firm of Ernst & Whinney. Other experience included owning and operating Conte Philips, a retail shop and cooking school, and establishing the Rosalie Conte Foundation, which grants college scholarships to students pursuing higher education.

Conte was born in Massachusetts and attended public schools. She earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Washington at Seattle, and an MBA from Tennessee State University in Nashville.

## Office of the First Lady



**Jody Folk**  
*Deputy  
to the First Lady*



**Beth Thompson**  
*Executive Assistant  
to the First Lady*



**Hilda Pope**  
*Executive Residence  
Chef/Manager*



In 2003, Andrea Conte moved the Office of the First Lady from the second floor of the Tennessee Executive Residence to a Downtown Nashville state office building convenient to the Capitol and to Legislative Plaza. The First Lady made the decision to move locations to be more accessible to the citizens of Tennessee.

The First Lady's Office is comprised of a Deputy, an Executive Assistant, and the Tennessee Residence Chef/Manager. The staff is appointed directly by the First Lady to help her carry out the duties, functions, and operations of her office and the Tennessee Residence, including helping the First Lady develop and implement her programs and initiatives. Day-to-day activities include planning, scheduling, participating in public events, responding to correspondence, and event-planning.



## The Tennessee Residence

Tennessee's Executive Residence, located in Nashville, was originally called "Far Hills" because of the beautiful view.

The home was built for the William Ridley Wills Family in 1929, and it became the third governor's mansion when the state purchased it in 1949 after the death of Mr. Wills. Wills was the founder of National Life and Accident Insurance Company, and his success is displayed in the structural grandeur of the home.

Since that time, eight former governors and their families have resided in the home. Tennessee's First Families have entertained guests such as the Reverend Billy Graham, Elvis Presley, Minnie Pearl, Johnny and June Carter Cash, President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy, President and Mrs. Lyndon Johnson, President and Mrs. Ronald Reagan, President and Mrs. William Clinton, Vice President and Mrs. Al Gore, and numerous governors and royalty from around the world.

Generations of raising children, playing host to the affairs of the governor and numerous civic organizations and the passing of time have taken a toll on the residence. Moisture within the home, caused by a faulty heating and cooling system, has caused interior walls, covered with lead-based paint, to peel and crack. The original windows of the home provide inadequate resistance to UV rays, putting the collection of historic artifacts, art, furniture, fabrics and carpet within the home at risk. The electrical wiring in the home is not grounded, and bathroom and kitchen outlets are not equipped to protect against electric shock. The home has

no lightning protection. Additionally, since the home was built before the days of the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is inaccessible to disabled Tennesseans.

The Restoration and Preservation of Tennessee's Residence was spearheaded by First Lady Andrea Conte in 2003, and is the first restoration of the property since the home was built more than seventy years ago. It is her goal to restore the Tennessee Residence's architectural features and provide contemporary updates, while at the same time preserving the historic integrity of the house and property. The Tennessee Residence symbolizes the proud heritage of our state, and its restoration and preservation are important to ensure that all Tennesseans may take pride in the home for generations to come.

## Inaugural Address Governor Phil Bredesen

January 20, 2007

Lieutenant Governor Ramsey... Speaker Naifeh... Chief Justice Barker... Members of the General Assembly... Constitutional Officers... Justices... Distinguished Members of Tennessee's Congressional Delegation... Former Governors... Family and Friends... Fellow Tennesseans... Welcome.

I stand before you, having just taken my oath of office for the second time. Our journey together is far from over, but today is a milestone, and on such an occasion I want to speak plainly, and I want to speak from my heart.

As I begin, please allow me a personal moment to thank a few special people: First, my wife, Andrea Conte. Andrea told me after our first inauguration that she wanted to do something to call attention to and help abused children. At first I thought she had in mind a luncheon or two at the residence; perhaps a press conference. I was wrong. What she had in mind - and did - was to spend 49 hot, cold, rainy - and always long - days walking more than 600 miles across our state, visiting churches and schools and courthouses along the way. Andrea, thank you - not only for 32 years of love and friendship, but for being an amazing and compassionate First Lady of Tennessee.

I want to recognize our son Ben and his new wife Dru—their five month anniversary will be coming soon; we are both so proud of the two of you as you start your own adventure together. And I want to acknowledge my mother, Norma Bredesen. It's been a tough year, Mom, but one in which you continued to teach me your strength and your common sense. And to my father, Phil Bredesen Senior, thank you for your help over the years and for being here today.

Andrea and I had between us two brothers and a sister who were with us on this platform four years ago, but have since passed away - my brother Dean, and Andrea's sister Carol, and her brother, Nick. We miss you today, and you remind us at milestones like this that our time on this earth is limited and precious.

I stood before you four years ago, on a cold day, and spoke about a different approach to governing. I spoke about putting aside stale and predictable debates, and instead finding new ways to reach common ground and move our state forward. I called it a "third way." I'm here today to say to you: that approach has worked. We've solved some tough problems together and we've started some fine new things together as well. Four years ago, my mandate from Tennessee's voters was modest; today I stand before you with a far stronger one. I believe voters expressed confidence in my leadership, but not in my always having all the answers. As I begin my second term as Governor, I will lead in the way that has proven successful already;



to seek not conflict but common ground, to reach out and embrace good ideas from whatever quarter they come; to be the Governor of all of the people of Tennessee.

I've been your Governor for four years now, and some of the things about the job were what I expected. I knew there would be budget issues, I knew TennCare would be a challenge, I knew I wanted to accomplish big things in education and job growth and in protecting our environment. I knew that problems would come to light and have their moment of fame and get solved and go away. I expected all this. What I didn't expect was the ever-present sense of being a part of the flow of Tennessee's history. I go to work every morning in that beautiful and historical building behind me. I walk down the corridor hung with portraits of former governors, and I feel a part of the flow of things that have happened, and that will happen, there. In that respect, this work is unlike any other thing I've ever done. What that sense of history does is help keep you focused on the real stuff, on what is actually important, in the clutter of the day. That building says to me every day: "Phil, you're not here all that long, you're called "governor" for a few years and then your portrait's up on the wall with the others and you're gone. But right now, it is your turn; what are you going to do with it?"

I have a simple political—and personal—philosophy: I believe that the most important work of every adult is to make things a little better for the next generation. When you're grown, and out of school, and established—and I'm all of those things—then you turn your attention to helping the ones coming behind you. My mother, sitting right over there, taught me that. It's been a part of the genius of our nation: each generation standing on the shoulders of the one before, and in turn providing shoulders of their own. To do this, the place you start is family. Families are the building blocks - the atoms of our world. I believe that God made us to come into full being, to come closest to Him, through our families. There is an often-quoted African proverb that says, "It takes a village to raise a child." Perhaps. I'd say it differently though; at the heart of things, it takes a family to raise a child.

Government can't, Tennessee can't raise our children, or for that matter, provide fulfillment to adults. Even if it could, who would want to live in a world like that? But neither can we just leave every family to fend for itself. We don't live on self-sufficient plots of land with a rifle over the mantel anymore; we live in a complex and interrelated society, and there are things that are vital to families that are also beyond their individual reach. That's what government at its best does: it works every day to help strengthen families. We work to create a world in which families can prosper. We work to create communities in which they are safe, to help them if they fall ill, to improve their choice of jobs. And most important—our biggest responsibility—we work to help them make things better for the next generation by doing our part to educate children.

Education: We usually talk about it in terms of getting a good job; I do that myself. Education is in part about jobs, without question. There's hardly anyone who doesn't know that with each passing year a good education becomes more and more the key to a good job. I want to say to you today, though, that public education is also about a lot more than jobs; it's also about citizenship and it's about the future of our nation. Thomas Jefferson believed that democracy could not survive without an educated citizenry, and that is even truer today than it was over two centuries ago. Whether standing to speak in a local community meeting, or casting your vote for President, knowledge and context and the ability to think critically are what allow us to govern ourselves.

Hear me now: I am rolling up my sleeves. I want these next four years to be the time when we set Tennessee on the path of truly putting our children and their education at the head of the list. Lots of things are important: health care and jobs and social services, but education needs to head the list because it is the most important way government pulls its weight to make things a little better for the next generation. To do this, we are going to have to be bold ... but that has never been a problem for Tennesseans. There is a story about the old man and the boy walking in the woods. One day, they come upon a huge, old oak tree. They stop a moment and the boy looks up with dreams in his eyes, and says, "Someday, I'd like to get to the top of a tree like that." The old man looks down at him and smiles and says, "Son, there are two ways of getting to the top of that old tree. One way is when your time comes to climb to the top—it's really hard, you might fall, you'll certainly get scratched up some. The other way is to sit on an acorn and wait for it to grow." I want Tennessee to count itself among the tree climbers and not the acorn sitters. I want us to take some chances, I don't mind getting scratched up some, but when it comes to educating our children, I want us to climb to the top of that tree.

I've learned a lot about leadership these past four years. The most important lesson—and this is a change for me—has been that leadership is not about other people coming to you for ideas, it is about making ideas come to life in other people. I'm just beginning my second term, and there is a great deal I want to accomplish in education, in healthcare, in creating jobs, in preserving our environment. But when I'm asked what I want my real legacy to be, my answer lies in that view of leadership—that leadership is helping others bring great ideas to life. When my time as governor is up, and my portrait goes up on the wall, I want most of all for us to expect more ... expect more of our leaders, expect more of ourselves, expect more for our children. I want our reference point to change. I don't want it to be what we did last year or what some neighboring state does; I want our reference point, our expectations, to be nothing less than the old dream of what is possible in America.

Inaugurations are a milestone where we pause, where we recommit and renew our purpose. My fellow Tennesseans, I call on you today to join me in rededicating ourselves to big dreams for our children. We live in a world of day -to- day skirmishes and criticism and egos and setbacks. But underneath that all, I want you to know that I believe. I believe in that future. I believe in the strength and the peace of family ... I believe in America ... and I believe that Providence smiles on big dreams and on boldness in reaching for them. Come believe with me.

Thank you and Godspeed.

## State of the State Address Governor Phil Bredesen

February 5, 2007

Lieutenant Governor Ramsey, Speaker Naifeh, Speaker Pro Tem DeBerry, Members of the 105th General Assembly, Constitutional officers, justices, friends, guests and my fellow Tennesseans. I stand before you tonight for the fifth time—tonight is four plus one—and I want first of all to say “thank you” to everyone for having me back.

To our new Lieutenant Governor, Ron Ramsey, I offer my congratulations and my commitment to work with you constructively. To our returning Speaker Jimmy Naifeh, I offer my thanks for your continuing friendship. To the new members of the General Assembly, I offer my welcome, and to all my returning colleagues from last year, I say “Welcome back.”

There is hardly a speech given in Washington these days that doesn't feature “bi-partisanship” as if it were a new idea. As I look out over this chamber tonight, I am proud indeed that bipartisanship is not a new idea in Tennessee; that we have been practicing it and getting results with it for our state for a long time ... and to all of you from both sides of the aisle, I want to say thank you for putting the needs of our state first.

I know that each of us is mindful that while we will finish our business and go home to our families and friends, there are a great many Tennesseans serving our nation in its military services at home and abroad who do not get to go home.

Since I last spoke to you in these chambers, twenty-two more of our fellow Tennesseans have been killed in combat, and thousands of others remain far from their homes and loved ones. I've asked some representatives of these Tennesseans to be with us tonight, and would like to recognize three of them:

- Major Dale Oldham, who served in Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan as a member of Tennessee's 196th Field Artillery Brigade.
- Major Rhonda Keisman, who was deployed to Diyala Province in Iraq with our 278th Regimental Combat Team until July of this past year.
- Captain Darrin Haas, who commands the 269th Military Police Company. He will deploy to the Mexican border in Arizona with 250 troops on the 17th of this month, and he previously served in Iraq.

Please show your appreciation to these soldiers.

There are many Tennesseans who face equally dangerous jobs right here at home. Already this year, one of our law enforcement officers has been killed in the line of duty: state trooper Calvin Jenks ended his watch on January 6th. In memory of Trooper Jenks and to represent all those Tennesseans in law enforcement and emergency services who put themselves in harms way here at home, I have invited Trooper Jenks' mother Jane Whittaker, his father Norman Jenks, and here on the floor of the chamber, his wife Sara Elizabeth Jenks to join us tonight. Would you please stand.

Sixteen days ago, I stood on a stage outside this Capitol with many of you and took my oath of office for the second time. I talked about the future, and about my belief that it is the job of every adult to make things better for the next generation. When you're grown up and out of school and established, then you turn your attention to helping the ones coming behind you. I spoke then about ideals and goals, and tonight I want to speak about strategies to get there.

On this occasion, I report to you on the state of our state, and tonight I tell you that the state of our state can be described in one word: Ready. Tennessee

is ready; we're ready. We're ready to lift our sights even higher. We're ready to look farther down the road. We're ready to take the next steps to seize that future for ourselves, for our children and for our children's children.

I know how much we all believe that, to do this, we must start with education and tonight, I want to start there as well. There are many other issues facing our state, and we'll talk about them and work on them on future occasions. But tonight there's only one subject: educating our children.

I want to begin by speaking directly to the children of our state: "It is our job as grown-ups to help you get ready to take your place in the world. I am going to use my office as Governor of our state in every way I know how, to the very best of my ability, without hesitation, without fear, to do that work. And then it is your responsibility to give your best back in return, and to do the same for your own children when your time comes to do so."

To each of you here tonight: We all know there are problems in education. Within the last week, there was a report delivered to you about our lottery scholarships. Were you as taken aback as I was to read that seventy-five percent of scholarship recipients will lose their scholarships before graduating?

It's tempting to think that there are silver bullets to fix things, a simple solution, a new law or two. I don't believe in silver bullets; I've never seen a complex problem solved with one. And if there were a silver bullet that actually worked, it would have already been used many times over all across America. What I do believe in is rolling up your sleeves and tackling problems one by one and most of all I believe in being willing to try things and to change things. The number one rule of management is to remember that "If you do what you always did, you'll get what you always got."

We need to do four things differently:

- First, we need to make sure that our children are ready to learn; that they're healthy, that they are intellectually and socially prepared to be in the classroom.
- Second, we need to raise standards and expectations, not just for the college-bound but for everyone.
- Third, we have to fund education properly and we have to make sure this funding goes where it makes a difference, in the classroom itself.
- And fourth, we need to make college more accessible and affordable.

With regard to the first--making sure that our children are ready to learn--we are already making significant changes and progress, and I won't dwell on this. Books from Birth is up and running in all 95 counties, and 160,000 Tennessee children ranging in age from birth to five years old look forward to receiving a book each month in the mail. Our effort to offer Pre-K to every child is well underway and is a national leader—widely seen as a blue chip program. The budget this year will include an additional \$25 million to continue to add Pre-K classrooms across our state, and the goal of having a classroom available to every child in Tennessee whose parents want them to attend is within reach on my watch. We are making significant and nationally recognized new investments in children's health to make sure that they are healthy and that any problems that might hinder their schooling are identified and treated early.

Second, something I believe – something I've learned as a father – is that children are very good at responding to expectations. If we set them low, they respond low, if we set them high they respond in kind. I spoke at my inaugural about wanting Tennesseans to expect and demand more; what better place to start than with our schools and the children they teach. We need to raise standards and expectations in our school systems.

In the budget presentation I will submit in two weeks, you'll see I've included resources for all eighth and tenth grade students to take the appropriate ACT test; this benchmarking will allow us to make individual plans for each student so that they make the best of their high school years.

Where a young man or woman needs help, we give it. Where they are strong, we challenge and push them even more. We have to look at our children less as statistics and more as the individuals they are.

It is hard to imagine any career in today's world in which a strong foundation in math would not be a plus. While the details might be different depending on a student's plans, I want every high school student in Tennessee to begin taking four years of high school mathematics.

We need a statewide curriculum that is rigorous and is aligned to the real demands of higher education and the workplace. I will ask our State School Board and the Department of Education to undertake a top to bottom review of the Tennessee's school curriculum to make it more specific, more rigorous, and better aligned with what our children really need to succeed in college or the workplace.

We have some great teachers and great students in Tennessee; it is our responsibility to tell them clearly what we expect them to teach, what we expect them to learn, and then to fairly measure what happens. We need to and we are going to start raising standards and expectations.

First of all, children ready to learn. Second, higher standards and expectations.

Third, and please listen carefully to this, we need to provide enough money to do the job. This is usually the rub: we're quick to criticize, we're quick to philosophize, we're quick to give tests, but we're slow to pull out the checkbook.

Tennessee is ready to step up to the plate here, and I'd like us to begin in three areas: full funding for all the costs of at-risk students, full funding for school systems with rapid student growth, and meaningful help with financing school construction and renovation.

Let me take these one at a time.

Every school system has students for whom we have both legal and moral obligations to give additional help; the shorthand description of such students is "at-risk", although I dislike that phrase because I believe it over-simplifies and that in fact every child is "at-risk". About half of all of our students in Tennessee are categorized this way, and with remedial programs and other help, we spend about sixteen percent more on such students. This is not just an urban issue; some of the largest percentages of "at-risk" students are in our rural school districts.

Today, we leave most of the extra costs associated with extra help to local government, to handle as best they can. Too often, local school systems are forced to shortchange other students in the process.

A great deal of the debate in Tennessee, a great deal of the friction involving local school systems, centers around the funding for our "at-risk" students. I want to put that debate behind us tonight. I want a public education system where students are not put into bins based on their parent's finances, but in which there is sufficient money to meet the needs of each and every student as an individual. If you need remedial reading, we'll help; if you can handle an advanced placement course, we'll help there too. No school should have to choose between its students.

It's time—we're ready—to address this: I have placed in this year's budget full state funding for a school's additional responsibilities to "at-risk" students, all students, all grades. This has a price tag of about \$120 million annually. This



will help the students who need extra, and it will help other students as well by stopping the robbing Peter to pay Paul that goes on now.

Each year we have school districts that experience strong growth in the numbers of students attending their schools. This is particularly a problem in some of our suburban areas, because the state doesn't pay its full share of that growth as it occurs. Those new students have to be taught, and once again it falls on local school districts to accommodate this extra expense in some way.

Tennessee is ready to address this too: I have placed in this year's budget full state funding for all student growth, in the year in which it occurs. This has a price tag of approximately \$27 million annually.

Tennessee calculates how it funds education through a set of formulas developed as a part of the Basic Education Program, the BEP you hear about. This approach has worked well over the years to ensure that the growth of state funding realistically reflects the real costs of running our schools, and the concept of "fully funding" the BEP formulas has had strong and persistent bipartisan support for many years. These two items—money for at-risk students and money for growth—are intimately tied up with the BEP formulas, and I want to address this issue head on here.

We all believe that there are issues that have arisen over the years that need to be addressed in the BEP; this has been pointed out by members of the General Assembly and by various local officials across our state. Early in my term as governor we addressed one of them—the disparity in teacher pay in rural school districts. The proposals I have just laid out address two other significant shortcomings.

While there have been calls for a radical overhaul of the BEP, I don't think this is wise. We are litigation-free at the moment, we're evolving the formulas as conditions change, and I believe—and the BEP Review Committee has independently come to the same conclusion—that it is a better strategy to build on and improve what we have—to continuously identify specific needs and shortcomings, both urban and rural, and address them.

The proposal I have set before you—full funding for both at-risk students and growth—is a major step forward for our state. It helps resolve inequities in state funding between school districts, and it is also simply the right thing to do.

I want to move on now and discuss school construction and renovation. There is an opportunity, as allowed for in our constitution, to leverage some of the surplus that has been built in our lottery to jump start renovation of older schools and construction of new ones.

This session, I will ask the General Assembly to pass legislation to enable us to set up a state-wide bond pool which will give individual school districts access to capital at the lowest possible cost—the lowest possible transaction cost and the lowest possible interest cost. This will particularly help smaller rural districts. In order to give that pool the credit it needs to borrow as inexpensively as possible, I will ask you to transfer \$100 million from the lottery reserves—about a quarter of the total—to this bond pool for use in enhancing credit; getting the best possible bond rating and interest rate.

I understand there are districts and local governments who may prefer to finance school construction in other ways; in the bond markets directly, or through pools set up by others. The Tennessee Municipal League has offered a pool to local governments and school boards for years, for example. I intend that this credit enhancement be offered for those other financing approaches as well, so long as they meet the basic requirements of long term, competitively bid, fixed rate debt.

Like any financing transaction, this is complicated. The bottom line is that we will create a level playing field among school districts in building schools, and we will use the lottery reserves and the state's ability to consolidate financings to reduce costs and increase the availability of capital. When you approve this approach, it will facilitate about \$1.1 billion of school construction.

I described to you a four part strategy for education: make sure children are ready to learn, raise standards, adequately fund, and make higher education more accessible and affordable. I have addressed the first three; let me now talk about higher education.

I have spoken previously about offering free tuition at community colleges for all students who demonstrate a reasonable level of readiness – including our “C” students. Every student who wants and is ready to go to college deserves some help, not just the students with the highest GPA. I will ask you to fund those community college scholarships, out of the lottery, which is an appropriate place for it. I will also ask you to increase the original lottery scholarships to \$4000 annually to reflect the rising cost of tuition.

I want to say to students and parents alike, I know how difficult it is to finance a college education—I couldn't have gone to college myself without help from a lot of sources—and I know how important it is to keep tuition under control. It has been tempting to minimize the state's contribution to higher education over the years because we know colleges can always get the money they need through tuition increases. I have placed in this year's budget full funding for the state's share of the growth, a total of about \$48 million annually.

I am also asking that we review the entire lottery scholarship program this year. Our lottery has been a great success, which gives us some options. I'm concerned that we are being too narrow in who qualifies for help, and I'm concerned that we are being too quick to jerk that help away when a student stumbles—remember the three out of four students who will lose their scholarship. The reality is that many—most—students have their ups and downs in college, and we need to find ways to support them through those times rather than pulling the plug on them. Let's open the doors to college a little wider here in Tennessee.

Tennessee is ready to take the next steps with its schools and colleges. Among other strategies, I have proposed significant increases in our funding for education. I'm certain it is obvious to you that I have proposed more than can be accommodated in a normal budget, about \$200 million annually more, to be specific.

Because of the importance of doing these things, I propose to you tonight also a way to pay for these improvements—an increase in the cigarette tax by forty cents. Over 90% of this increase will go directly into the classroom and into our colleges and the remainder – about \$21 million – will go into support for agriculture and anti-smoking programs. Since this is the first time I have proposed any kind of a tax increase to you, I want to be clear: I am not saying that this is needed for the continuing operation of our government; I am committed to the discipline of living within our means even if it means tough cutting, and I have shown my willingness to do this.

I am not proposing this with our backs against the wall: with or without these investments, the underlying budget is sensible and balanced; today's BEP is fully funded, TennCare and Cover Tennessee growth is accommodated, our employees are supported, and a number of new initiatives—including the next \$25 million for PreK classrooms and the community college scholarships—are proposed and funded.

The argument for a cigarette tax is straightforward: Our schools need more money. We all talk the talk about public education; we need to walk the walk as

well. Our cigarette tax is among the lowest in the nation, it has room to grow, and even after such an increase, will still be well below the national average. And not least, higher prices for cigarettes definitely reduces teenage smoking.

I know there will be other thoughts about where new money might go. Health care will come up, but I ask you to remember that for a decade now health care has shouldered aside education, and we now spend a quarter of our state budget on TennCare alone; health care has eaten well at our table. I know there are many on both sides of the aisle who would like to reduce the sales tax on food; so would I. But our job is to choose among good things. Our state is already one of the very lowest tax places in America—among the states it is number 48 in combined state and local taxes. Our future is vastly more tied to good schools than in trying to become number 49.

I have struggled so much these past four years with entitlements and how to find the money for them—you know how agonizing TennCare was for us all. Sometimes I think to myself, “Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we could turn that upside down so that the number one entitlement in Tennessee, the first place our money went, the number one entitlement in America, is that every child is entitled to the best education we can give them?”

In my inaugural address sixteen days ago, I told the story of the old man and the boy who were walking in the woods and come upon a big old oak tree. The boy says he’d like to get to the top of a tree like that some day, and the old man tells him there are two ways to do that: “You can climb to the top,” he says, “you might fall, you will certainly get scratched up. Or you can sit on an acorn and wait for it to grow.”

I ended the story by saying that, when it comes to getting our kids ready for the world they will live in, I want us to be tree climbers and not acorn sitters. We are ready to start climbing, and these proposals I’ve presented tonight are my way of grabbing for the first branch.

My message tonight has been about educating our children, and at its heart has been simple: Tennessee is ready—ready to lift its sights, ready to look farther, ready to seize the future. Tennessee is ready; the question is, are we?

Four years ago, I asked Alf Sharp, who is a Tennessee woodworker who lives in Woodbury, to make a new desk for my Governor’s office. I wanted him to carve in that desk some thought for me to leave to the future. Here is what I wrote, what I had translated into Cherokee, and what is carved in that desk in my office: “Remember the land of undiscovered shores, where the world is young and dreams are new, and the night wind brings visions of great deeds.”

I’ve talked tonight about lifting our eyes to the future. When we leave here we’ll be back in the land of the present; of egos and lobbyists and posturing. I ask you as we navigate that land together to remember with me that there are far deeper and more profound truths in this world than the politics and pressures of the moment:

“Remember the land of undiscovered shores, where the world is young and dreams are new, and the night wind brings visions of great deeds.” I ask you to remember with me that Tennessee is still a land of undiscovered shores, that our world is still young, that God blesses every child with brand new dreams, and that in the real America the night wind still brings visions of great deeds.

Thank you, and may God continue to protect the children of Tennessee and the land in which we all live.

## The Governor's Staff



### Stuart Brunson

#### Deputy to the Governor

The Deputy to the Governor assists the Governor in his day-to-day duties and acts as a liaison between the Governor's office and the various departments and agencies in state government. Before joining the Governor's Office, Stuart Brunson led Governor Bredesen's 2002 campaign and his 2006 re-election effort as his campaign manager. Following the 2002 election, Brunson served as Deputy Director of Governor Bredesen's transition team. He has worked on the staffs of former Vice President Al Gore and Nashville-based McNeely Pigott and Fox Public Relations. Brunson also started and ran his own small business, a consulting firm based in Nashville that specialized in government relations, political affairs, and strategic business development. A Moscow, Tennessee native, he holds a bachelor's degree in English and history from

the University of Mississippi, Oxford, a law degree from the University of Memphis, and he attended Vanderbilt University Divinity School.



### Robert Gowan

#### Senior Advisor for Legislation and Policy

The Senior Advisor to the Governor for Legislation and Policy assists the Governor in forming his legislative agenda. As the chief liaison to the General Assembly, he helps communicate Governor Bredesen's policy priorities to lawmakers. Before becoming Senior Advisor for Legislation and Policy, Robert Gowan served as an assistant commissioner in the Department of Commerce & Insurance. Before joining state government in July 2003, Gowan served as policy advisor to Mayor Phil Bredesen of Nashville and as executive director of the Metropolitan Port Authority. Gowan, a native of Giles County, graduated with a bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University and holds a law degree from Nashville School of Law.



### Robert Corney

#### Special Assistant to the Governor and Communications Director

As Communication Director and Special Assistant to the Governor, Bob Corney is responsible for the governor's public affairs and external communications efforts. Prior to his appointment, Corney worked in public relations and political consulting for 15 years. His previous experience includes serving as director of Governor Bredesen's Inaugural Committee. He has served as State Director of the Tennessee Democratic Coordinated Campaign in 2002, Executive Director of the Tennessee Democratic Party and in the Office of the Vice President for Albert Gore Jr.



### Steve Elkins

#### Legal Counsel to the Governor

The Legal Counsel to the Governor coordinates the legal affairs of the Executive Branch for the Governor. He provides legal advice to the Governor on the legal matters which confront the Governor on a day-to-day basis. He assists in the development and implementation of legislation, and coordinates the Governor's relations with the Judiciary, the Attorney General and Reporter, the District Attorneys General, and the Public Defenders. He also assists the Governor in reviewing requests for executive clemency and extradition. Before he was named Legal Counsel to the Governor, Steve Elkins served as Deputy Legal Counsel from 2003-2006. Prior to joining state government, he served as research director and comptroller for Governor Bredesen's successful 2002 campaign. Before that, he served as deputy legal counsel for the Tennessee

Democratic Coordinated Campaign. He is a Smyrna native and he holds a bachelor's degree in finance and a law degree from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

**Tam Gordon**

## Special Assistant to the Governor for Projects

Tam Gordon serves as a Special Assistant to the Governor for Projects, including overseeing the governor's Children's Cabinet and relations with the National Governors Association. Gordon served as Governor Bredeesen's press secretary during his tenure as Nashville mayor. She most recently worked as projects coordinator for the John Seigenthaler Center at Vanderbilt University, which includes the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center and the Freedom Forum Diversity Institute. Gordon is also a veteran newspaper reporter, working for 13 years at the *Nashville Banner*. A Nashville native, Gordon holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee.

**Drew Kim**Policy Chief and Executive Director  
Governor's Office of State Planning and Policy

As policy chief and executive director of the governor's office of state planning and policy, Drew Kim manages an office that serves as an internal think tank and provides a consulting role for the Governor, undertaking analytical review of state and functional issues, initiating proposals to address gaps and opportunities in policy and providing recommendations and alternative courses of action. The office acts as a liaison with non-governmental organizations, the academic community, think tanks and others to exchange expert views on matters relevant to the administrations policies. Prior to joining the Governor's Office, Drew Kim worked in the areas of economic development and technology development for the State Department of Economic and Community Development, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce and the Tennessee Technology Development Corporation before joining Phil Bredeesen's successful gubernatorial campaign as policy director in 2002. He is a native of Martin, Tenn., and he received his bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University. Upon graduating in 1992, he joined the Teach for America program, a national corps of recent college graduates who commit to teach for two years in the nation's most under-served public school classrooms. He received his master's degree in public policy from the Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy at Duke University. Afterwards, he worked in Washington, D.C., with the Public Education Network (PEN), a national non-profit organization working to improve public education through local community engagement.

**Kim McMillan**

## Senior Advisor to the Governor

As Senior Advisor to the Governor, McMillan works with the Governor, the various departments and agencies, and the General Assembly in formulating and implementing policy decisions of the administration. Before joining the Governor's office, McMillan served as the State Representative for the 67th Legislative District in Montgomery County. She was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1994 and was re-elected five times. In 2002, and again in 2004, she was elected by her colleagues to the position of House Majority Leader, becoming the first female in Tennessee history to serve in that position. After graduating from law school in 1987, McMillan practiced law with the Nashville law firm of Boulton, Cummings, Conners & Berry, PLC. She subsequently founded McMillan & McMillan, PLLC in Clarksville and her husband and she practiced law there throughout her twelve year tenure in the General Assembly. A Knoxville native, she received her bachelor's degree and law degree from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.







**Janie Conyers**  
*Chief Administrative  
Officer to the Governor*



**Mary Freeman**  
*Director of Legislation*



**Junaid Odubeko**  
*Deputy Legal Counsel*



**Lydia Lenker**  
*Press Secretary*



**Jason Spain**  
*Legislative Liaison*



**Emily Ogden**  
*Legislative Liaison*



**Dana Coleman**  
*Director of Communications  
Management*



**Lydia Peelle**  
*Speechwriter*



**Bo Mitchell**  
*Director  
of Community Affairs*



**Candace  
Cunningham**  
*Assistant to the Governor/  
Boards & Commissions*



**Patrick Hamilton**  
*Scheduler*



**Tara Tenorio**  
*Deputy Scheduler*



**Jared Brewer**  
*Assistant to the Governor/  
Technology &  
Constituent Services*



**Bill Huskey**  
*Assistant to the Governor/  
Constituent Services*



**Sandy Fletcher**  
*Assistant to the Governor/  
Personnel*



**Daphne Cooper**  
*Assistant to the Governor/  
Administration*



**Jona Coppola**  
*Assistant to  
the Deputy Governor*



**Alix Laurain**  
*Assistant to the Governor*



**Becky Gregory**  
*Assistant to  
the Senior Advisor  
for Legislation & Policy*



**Shiri Anderson**  
*Administrative Assistant/  
Legislation*



**Jennifer Houston**  
*Legal Assistant*



**Rick Casebeer**  
*Assistant  
to the Governor/  
Travel and Advance*



**Matt Ragan**  
*Field Advance*



**Seth Stanger**  
*Assistant to the Governor/  
Projects*



**Carol Fite**  
*Communications  
Staff Assistant*



**Melissa Proctor**  
*Assistant to the Director  
of Community Affairs*



**Dora McCary**  
*Assistant to  
the Senior Advisor*



**Vanessa Hatcher**  
*Assistant to the Governor*



**Vanessa Croft**  
*Assistant to the Governor*