



## *NEWS AFFECTING STATE EMPLOYEES*

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### *No raise if under one year of service on September 30* TSEA Staff

*TSEA is concerned about the impact on overall pay for employees who will have completed - or will very soon complete - a full year of employment but began state employment after October 1, 2014. Some of these workers will have received at least one performance evaluation, but will not have completed twelve consecutive full months of employment by September 30, 2015.*

*Denying the opportunity for a salary adjustment to these employees is punitive for the duration of their state career. This also impacts the retirement benefit of career employees upon their retirement.*

*As it stands, this would mean some employees will never have a chance to receive the 2016 performance increase. For example, the first available opportunity for a performance raise for an employee who began employment with the State of Tennessee on October 2, 2014, will be January of 2017, and only if raises are funded and approved in the budget by the legislature.*

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### *Outsourcing concerns GOP lawmakers representing UT campuses*

Dave Boucher, The Tennessean

*Rep. Andy Holt, R-Dresden, and Sen. Richard Briggs, R-Knoxville, said they've heard from public university employees in their districts who are scared and nervous. Both lawmakers agree it's important for the governor to make sure the state is spending its money wisely. But at this time, they're not sure privatization would offer any benefits to their constituents at the University of Tennessee at Martin or the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.*

*"I think the taxpayers are getting their money's worth, at least at the University of Tennessee," Briggs said Monday.*

*...Employees at UT-Martin are confused, Holt told The Tennessean. When they come to ask him questions about what's going to happen and whether any decision will affect their jobs, he's not certain what to tell them.*

*In an Oct. 22 letter to Haslam senior advisor Leslie Hafner, Holt asked for guidance from the administration and expressed frustration with what he considers a lack of information about any*

*possible privatization plan.*

*"I don't know a lot about this decision. In fact, none of us do. However, I know how every contact that I have had with my office feels about it; they think it's horrendous," Holt wrote in the letter obtained by The Tennessean.*

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## *Bipartisan Brakes for Governor Haslam's Privatization Push*

Sam Stockard, Memphis Daily News

*A master of downplaying big issues, Haslam says he's simply looking for ways to make government run more efficiently and save money.*

*But with a 75-page report surfacing and the media obtaining a raft of emails about the need to "build momentum" and "compress" the timeline for privatization, state lawmakers are taking a jaded approach to the governor's efforts to de-emphasize all things outsourcing.*

*As a result, when the General Assembly reconvenes in 2016, Haslam is likely to run into bipartisan roadblocks for turning more buildings and jobs over to private entities.*

*State Sen. Bill Ketron, a Murfreesboro Republican who co-chairs the Fiscal Review Committee, points out the governor previously said nothing was in writing. But with this comprehensive report circulating, he notes, "it's one step after another, so we're going to have to monitor this very closely."*

*"We'll see very quickly once we get back into session what his plan's going to do and how he's going to try to bring it without approval from the different committees," Ketron says. "I think we need to be involved in this. It affects too many people."*

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## *Ramsey springs to Haslam's aid on the Tennessee outsourcing talk*

Erik Schelzig, Associated Press

*"Obviously we as senators are going to hear from that squeaky wheel, the 10 people who work at the golf course - who may be hired back," the Senate speaker said. "That's who we hear from. But 6.5 million in Tennessee say thank you for doing that.*

*"We're going to hear a little bit from those people in higher ed or whatever," he said. "But if we're operating more efficient, why would we not want to do that?"*

*Haslam has touted "facilities management outsourcing" to bond rating agencies, hired a set of high-priced consultants and set the early stages of procurement into motion. But the Republican governor insists that no final decision on privatizing the management of state buildings or parks has been made.*

*"The question is just: are we the most effective people to do that work?" Haslam told the lawmakers at the retreat on Tuesday. "And I would think as conservatives that would be something that we believe in."*

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## *ETSU president: Too early to speculate about how outsourcing will impact Tennessee*

David Floyd, Johnson City Press

*"At this point it's too early for me to speculate where the governor's due diligence will take the state," said ETSU President Brian Noland. "But I am confident our chancellor (Tennessee Board of Regents Chancellor John Morgan) will continue to ensure that we have the opportunity to either opt in or opt out."*

*Haslam's exploration of privatizing the management of state buildings or parks has drawn opposition from state employees and concern from Republican state senators.*

*The Associated Press reported that Haslam said at a Senate GOP retreat this week that the outsourcing won't be forced on universities, but said cost-cutting measures shouldn't be ignored.*

*"Their arms are not going to be twisted," Haslam said. "But remember: how many of you like it when tuition goes up at schools 8 percent? Nobody, right?"*

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## *Hafner email gives legislators 'big picture' on privatization*

Tom Humphrey, Knoxville News-Sentinel

*Leslie Hafner, senior advisor to Gov. Bill Haslam who has served as his chief legislative liaison, has sent all state legislators her reply to an email she received from Rep. Andy Holt, R-Dresden, on the governor's outsourcing efforts - which one report described as "blistering." (Previous post [HERE](#).)*

*It's passed along by a recipient who notes it does not address Holt's asking of the question "where are the independent, third-party reports showing that this actually saves the state money?"*

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## *Lawmakers call for new investigation into TDOC*

Jeremy Finley, WSMV

*Rep. Mike Stewart, D-Nashville, a frequent critic of TDOC, and Rep. Sherry Jones, D-Nashville, held a news conference Wednesday.*

*The lawmakers presented documents showing how female correctional officers were assaulted in prison. Jones said they found at least 21 assaults on female corrections officers that were not properly documented.*

*"If you have all of these obvious sexual assaults that don't even show up in the statistics, how can you even know what's going on in your prison? Unfortunately because the job that was supposed to be done has not been done and not been done correctly," Stewart said.*

*Earlier this month, lawmakers held hearings with TDOC Commissioner Derrick Schofield. They scrutinized the commissioner about an audit of TDOC that found major issues with a prison program.*

*Days ago, the editorial board for the Tennessean called on Schofield to resign.*

A spokesperson for Gov. Haslam issued the following statement:

*"An independent review this month said the state was running a safe, effective prison system, and the governor has no intention of asking the commissioner to resign."*

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## *Amid criticism, Haslam defends TN prison chief*

Dave Boucher, The Tennessean

*Gov. Bill Haslam has defended the commissioner and the operation of the prison system, arguing factors outside the prison are as much to blame for staffing vacancies as factors inside prison walls. He doubled down on that defense Wednesday after an event in Washington, D.C., saying he "100 percent" believes Schofield is the right man for the job.*

*"The reality is that Derrick has actually been making changes, and when you do that there are certain people that like that and certain people that don't," Haslam said.*

*"The result is we're running a prison system that is safe and effective and that is our main task. It's a difficult job. But do I think Derrick is the right person? I sure do."*

*Despite Haslam's defense, Republicans and Democrats have called for changes. Most notably, Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey, R-Blountville, recently said the state can't keep "burying your head in the sand" when it comes to problems in the prison system. Ramsey, who has a prison in his district, also said recently he believes the governor is starting to take a different approach to addressing problems in the prison system.*

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## *Excerpt from this week's Tennessee Journal*

**Prisons.** *Sen. Ed Jackson (R-Jackson), who chaired Senate State and Local Government subcommittee hearings on prison issues Oct. 7 and 14, briefed the caucus on an American Correctional Association review and its recommendations, including that definitions of disciplinary offenses for inmates be revised, with the "staff/inmate provocation" category eliminated. That offense, often specified when there is no injury, frequently should be classified as assault, correctional officers have argued.*

*Correction Commissioner Derrick Schofield says the department is in the process of making the recommended changes, some of which will require reviews by attorneys because of the implications for punishments.*

*The day after the Senate retreat, two House Democrats held a press conference to denounce staff/inmate provocation designations. This wasn't the first such news conference, but this time the focus was on offenses involving women.*

*House Democratic Caucus Chairman Mike Stewart and Rep. Sherry Jones, both of Nashville, released summaries of 22 incidents in which male inmates grabbed female officers' buttocks, breasts, or groin areas and were written up for provocations. Jones said that "in the real world . . . that is sexual assault."*

*During the caucus discussion, Jackson said there may be a need for legislation related to prisons. He did not offer anything specific.*

*Meanwhile, the **Tennessee State Employees Association** has been lobbying to make all state contracts related to prison privatization, even indirect ones that are with counties, subject to review*

by the legislature's joint Fiscal Review Committee. Some Democratic and Republican lawmakers are interested in the issue.

A state law - TCA 41-24-103(c) - limits the Department of Correction's contracting for privatized prison operations to one facility, which may be either minimum- or medium-security. The medium-security South Central Correctional Facility in Wayne County is operated by Corrections Corporation of America.

But CCA also operates two prisons for Tennessee inmates in Hardeman County - the Hardeman County Correctional Facility and the Whiteville Correctional Facility. In both cases, the state contracts with Hardeman County, which contracts with CCA.

Early next year, a new prison is set to open in Trousdale County, which built the facility under an arrangement with the state. The county has contracted with CCA to operate it. The prison will house 2,500 inmates.

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- Brad Henry

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