



## NEWS AFFECTING STATE EMPLOYEES

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### *Third Party Should Study Privatization*

TSEA, News Release

*Last month, the Haslam administration issued a Request for Information which involves outsourcing the facilities management for every state building not already contracted through Jones Lang LaSalle. This would include National Guard facilities, prisons, hospitals, higher education buildings, and any other building run by the state.*

*"Once again the Haslam administration wants to sell off state services to a private company, which will result in job losses for state employees," TSEA President Bryan Merritt said. "Before we lay off more workers and relinquish more taxpayer control, maybe we need a third party to study and prove these privatizing efforts are really saving money. We simply do not believe any company can provide the same level of services, with profit as a motive, and do it at a lesser cost than state employees."*

*Since FY10-11, according to the Tennessee Fact Book, 3,311 state employee positions have been eliminated in Tennessee. During that same time period, Tennessee's population has increased by approximately 200,000.*

*"It seems strange to me, Governor Haslam touts the amount of jobs the administration has created through attracting businesses to Tennessee; meanwhile thousands of state jobs have been eliminated under this administration," Merritt said. "State employees are hardworking people who pay mortgages, buy cars, and send their kids to college. When state workers are laid off, their spendable income is also removed from Tennessee's economy. Jones Lang LaSalle isn't even a Tennessee company."*

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### *Is state's role to provide a service or turn a profit?*

Sam Stockard, The Nashville Ledger

*Haslam, the former mayor of Knoxville and a principal in the family's Pilot Flying J, a massive travel center company with stops across the United States and Canada, clearly thinks the private sector should have a bigger hand in government, though he notes no final decision is made on this latest round of outsourcing.*

*Under his leadership, a \$1 million contract in 2013 for Jones Lang LaSalle to assess the condition of state buildings transformed into a multimillion dollar contract to outsource state office building operations statewide.*

*"We feel like it's our obligation to make certain we're providing the very best service at the lowest cost. But we haven't made any decision on if we're definitely going to do this piece or that," Haslam says. "We just think we owe it to people to run it the best way we can."*

*...Legislators are working already to be "responsible stewards" of taxpayers' money, and Rep. John Ray Clemmons, a Nashville Democrat, says "selling off the state to private entities" is not the way to do it.*

*"The governor's failed to identify a problem that he's trying to solve here. They don't even know if this grand privatization scheme is going to save the state any money," Clemmons explains.*

*"But what we do know is that our National Guardsmen's safety will be compromised, and all the services at our state parks, state colleges and universities, hospitals will be compromised in favor of higher profit margins."*

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## *Haslam's plans to privatize most state facilities drawing protests*

Richard Locker, Memphis Commercial Appeal

*Gov. Bill Haslam's exploration of plans to privatize the management, operation and maintenance of virtually all state buildings - including college and university facilities, state parks, hospitals, armories and prisons - prompted a request Wednesday by the state employees association for a third-party review and a planned protest Thursday by University of Tennessee workers.*

*...Last month, the governor's administration posted a "Request for Information" for contractors interested in running virtually every state facility not already managed by JLL, including college and university campuses, prisons, hospitals, National Guard armories and parks. The RFI - the first stage in the contracting process - says that all responses are confidential and state officials refused to say even how many responses were filed by the Aug. 21 deadline.*

*Haslam told reporters that no decisions have been made regarding whether to proceed with any or all of the privatization proposals. But a confidential state timeline for the facilities management contract process calls for the state to issue a "Request for Quotes," or bids, on Oct. 19, with responses due Jan. 22, a notice of the state's intent to award a contract on Feb. 16, the opening and scoring of bids on June 22, the issuance of a contract on July 13 and the start of privatization contract next Aug. 1. The timeline was obtained from TSEA Wednesday but first reported by Nashville's Channel 5 last Friday.*

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## *Outsourcing plan helps Trump's rise*

Frank Cagle, Knoxville News Sentinel

*Don't be surprised if we discover that the state privatization plan will be done by Jones Lang LaSalle. Or that Jones Lang LaSalle determines the state ought to outsource and, amazingly, Jones Lang LaSalle is the best company to do it. The Chicago company already has made millions on state contracts since Haslam took office. The State Building Commission raised questions about one deal, where the company was recommending moving state offices and would also get commissions on finding new office space.*

*What the Legislature needs to ask Haslam is, "Where's the crisis?" We had a \$600 million surplus at the end of this fiscal year on June 30. Where is the necessity of putting hundreds of Tennesseans out of work in order to exploit immigrants and return profits to a private company? Even if the plan saves the state money, how does it help the state's economy when there are fewer*

*paychecks to be spent and fewer taxes paid?*

*Here's what's happened to state employees under Haslam: Longevity pay has been eliminated, with no more raises for length of service; Civil Service has been abolished; new state employees can no longer keep their health insurance when they retire, even though they pay the full premium; pay raises are less than the inflation rate.*

*But Haslam isn't always for reducing benefits for state workers. When he hired his cabinet he upped the salary of some of them by up to \$50,000 each. And he arranged for his departing chief of staff, Mark Cate, to get a \$10,000-a-month contract with a nebulous job description with the state museum board.*

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## *Lawmaker questions impartiality of state prison audit*

*Jeremy Finley, WSMV*

*Rep. Mike Stewart, D-Nashville, released documents showing how prisons get advance warnings about ACA inspections and how another trade organization teaches prisons to win over ACA auditors.*

*Stewart, a frequent critic of TDOC, said he believes an ACA audit is not what the state's prison system needs.*

*"There's no reason for the public to believe that an ACA inspection is anything other than a rubber stamp for business as usual," Stewart said.*

*Monday, Stewart released internal documents from West Tennessee State Penitentiary that show how prisons are given heads up before ACA inspections.*

*"We have had ample time to get ready," one memo read. "Make sure your staff knows when the inspections are."*

*Stewart also released a 2010 newsletter from the Correctional Accreditation Managers Association, an offshoot corrections association that TDOC routinely pays, that tells prisons how to get ready for an audit from ACA.*

*The newsletter said auditors should be taken to dinner and offers suggestions for gifts for auditors.*

*"This is not, as the commissioner suggested, an outside organization coming in to conduct a rigorous review of our prison system," Stewart said.*

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## *Prisons Are Reforming in TDOC Head's Old Territory* *Amanda Haggard, Nashville Scene*

*Under Republican Gov. Nathan Deal, who was elected right as Schofield left, Georgia is now undergoing complete prison reform. According to New Republic:*

*Overall, since he was elected at the end of 2010, Georgia's incarcerated population dropped from an estimated 56,432 to 53,383 at the start of this year. That reduction virtually slashed the state's backlog of inmates in county jails who were waiting to be transferred to a prison or probation detention center. Keeping inmates in local jails typically cost the state \$20 million annually. Without the backlog, the cost associated with transferring inmates "plummeted to*

\$40,720," per the Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform February 2015 report.

*The same Criminal Justice Reform report said the first step toward reforming prisons in the state was the creation of the council who would go on to create the report itself: the Special Council on Criminal Justice Reform for Georgians, which was approved by the Georgia General Assembly in early 2011.*

*Oddly enough, a similar oversight group was done away with in Tennessee in 2012, a year after Schofield entered the picture. State House Majority Leader Gerald McCormick sponsored the 2012 bill that abolished the Tennessee General Assembly's Corrections Oversight Committee along with a few other similar committees. (McCormick recently told the Chattanooga Times Free Press he regretted that legislation.)*

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## *TN prison audit includes 3 sites; more attacks reported*

Dave Boucher, The Tennessean

*Commissioner Derrick Schofield announced his plans for the review during a recent state Senate hearing, where lawmakers discussed reported issues with staffing, scheduling and violence in Tennessee prisons. While the commissioner and Gov. Bill Haslam have denied any increase in violence or systemic issues in the system, both have said an outside review could help.*

*"As an administration we're always looking for ways to be more efficient and effective, and an independent review can be a good management tool in this process," Haslam spokesman Dave Smith recently said in an emailed statement.*

*...The news also comes amid a steady stream of assaults and attacks reported to The Tennessean. Most recently, an officer at the Turney Center Industrial Complex in Hickman County was hospitalized Aug. 29 after being struck by an inmate in the cafeteria. The department also confirms an inmate from West Tennessee State Penitentiary in Henning was hospitalized Aug. 25 after he was assaulted.*

*Both injuries were characterized as "non-life threatening" by Taylor, who did not provide additional information as to what precipitated either attack. A source told The Tennessean the officer at Turney was attacked after interfering with an inmate's food and that the inmate at West Tennessee was hospitalized because of a stabbing injury.*

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## *New public records fees in Tenn. would choke off citizen oversight*

Deborah Fisher, Columbia Daily Herald

*The change would roll back Tennessee's legal tradition of favoring government transparency and give officials who wish to limit access a new club to use to hinder access to records they don't want anyone to see. In essence, it would create a new exemption to the Tennessee Public Records Act: A government record is exempt from the Public Records Act if a citizen can't pay the price set by the government official to see it.*

*Our great state of Tennessee would have the equivalent of a "poll tax" for public records, opening the door for arbitrary charges that would be nearly impossible to challenge. We know the result of that kind of system.*

*Why is it bad to block society's access to government records?*

*Public records belong to the citizens of Tennessee. They pay for these records through their taxes. Government officials are public servants and should make it a very high priority to honor the right of citizens to information about their government. The right of access to public records long predates the Tennessee Public Records Act. The Act should not become a tool to restrict access to records that clearly ought to be public.*

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## *State looks to rebound from controversial anti-DUI ads*

Natalie Neysa Alund, The Tennessean

*The state last week announced it's seeking a contractor to "procure media marketing/advertising for the design, production, reports and administrative reconciliation services" to assist the Governor's Highway Safety Office's efforts to educate the public about highway safety issues, among other objectives. The move is called a Request for Qualifications, or RFQ.*

*The move comes on the heels of the office apologizing for an anti-DUI campaign and subsequently taking down a part of its website in July after coming under intense criticism for the slogans - including those that referred to girls looking "hotter" to guys under the influence and being "chatty" or "clingy."*

*After an inquiry by The Tennessean, the office sent a statement from Director Kendell Poole that took credit for the scrutinized advertising campaign, saying it was intentionally designed to reach the "young male demographic."*

*The office also cited a lack of adequate oversight in its approval process of the work from the marketing group that created the campaign.*

*The proposed work for the new contract, which was issued on Aug. 25, is estimated at \$11.5 million over a five-year period, Poole said.*

*Of that total, \$2.5 million will come from state transportation department money. The rest is federally funded.*

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educated and informed  
electorate so vital to our  
democracy."

- Brad Henry

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