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## THE INFORMANT NEWSLETTER

A biweekly newsletter for the Tennessee constituent

# TN Bills 1/9/2019- 1/23/2019

Informed Subscriber,

Happy New Year! Along with the New Year comes a new legislative session. The 111th Tennessee General Assembly reconvened on Tuesday, January 8th. Since reconvening, numerous bills have been debated at the State Capitol Building in Nashville. From new laws limiting abortions to decreasing penalties for marijuana possession, the 2019 Tennessee State Legislature has begun a session with unprecedented new ideas.

Every other week, *The Informant* will send out a newsletter highlighting and summarizing the most salient bills being discussed in Nashville. In order to receive this information, make sure to subscribe to our newsletter and receive email updates right to your inbox. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter to keep up with new laws that will affect the next generation of Tennessee constituents.

Max Pleban  
Co-Founder/Director  
The Informant

### **TN HB0001-- Legalizing Sports Betting**

Bill Text: <https://legiscan.com/TN/text/HB0001/id/1824405/Tennessee-2019-HB0001-Draft.pdf>

Bill Summary: This bill allows sports betting in Tennessee in specific jurisdictions that allow it. The bill also imposes a 10% tax on the gaming revenue.

Bill Impact: Currently, betting is illegal in Tennessee with a few exceptions: the

Tennessee Lottery, gambling for charitable events, and fantasy sports are all legal under state law. In jurisdictions that allow it, sports betting will become completely legal in Tennessee. The 10% tax will be allocated towards general appropriations and public education funding.

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### **HB0006-- Driver's License Law**

Latest Action: Assigned to s/c Safety & Funding Subcommittee 01/22/19

Bill Text: <https://legiscan.com/TN/text/HB0006/id/1825486/Tennessee-2019-HB0006-Draft.pdf>

Bill Summary: This bill removes the authorization to suspend, restrict, or revoke a driver's license for the nonpayment of fines or court costs if the individual is unable to pay.

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### **SB0001-- Creation of the Green Alert System**

Latest Action: Pending Committee appointment 01/09/19

Bill Text: <https://legiscan.com/TN/text/SB0001/id/1824561/Tennessee-2019-SB0001-Draft.pdf>

Bill Summary: This bill creates a system for the identification and location of a missing veteran at risk. The bureau that will handle the system will be the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

Bill Impact: A "veteran risk" is a "veteran or active-duty member of the armed forces, national guard, or military reserve forces who is believed to have physical or mental health conditions related to his or her service."  
(<https://fox17.com/news/local/tennessee-bill-would-create-green-alert-system-for-veterans>) The notification will be similar to an AMBER alert for a missing child, and will show up on one's phone.

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### **SJR0003-- Prohibiting The State From Instituting A Property Tax**

Latest Action: Pending Committee appointment 01/09/19

Bill Text: <https://legiscan.com/TN/text/SJR0003/id/1825593/Tennessee-2019-SJR0003-Draft.pdf>

Bill Summary: This bill amends the Tennessee Constitution, making it unconstitutional to implement a property tax.

Bill Impact: Although Tennessee does not currently impose a property tax, it has the ability to do so. Tennessee implemented a property tax until 1949. Property tax is currently levied at the local and county levels. This bill will amend the TN Constitution, labeling any state property tax introduced as unconstitutional.

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### **HB0003-- New Rights For Relative Caregivers**

Latest Action: Assigned to Children and Families Subcommittee 01/22/19

Bill Text: <https://legiscan.com/TN/text/HB0003/id/1824802/Tennessee-2019-HB0003-Draft.pdf>

Bill Summary: This bill requires courts to inform “relative caregivers” that funding for custody or guardianship is available through the Department of Children’s Services.

Bill Impact: A “relative caregiver” is defined as anyone within a first, second, or third degree relationship to the parent of a child. Although courts nearly always tell a potential caregiver that financial aid is obtainable through the Children’s Services department, this bill solidifies that a court will consistently inform the individual. For more information on whether you are eligible to be a relative caregiver, visit <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/fca/relative-caregiver.html>

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### **HB0077-- Tennessee Heartbeat Bill**

Bill Introduced: 01/23/19

Bill Text: <https://legiscan.com/TN/text/HB0077/id/1866879/Tennessee-2019-HB0077-Draft.pdf>

Bill Summary: This bill prohibits abortions once a heartbeat is detected. The bill also requires heartbeat testing before an abortion.

Bill Impact: Generally, fetal heartbeats can be detected within 5 1/2 to 6 1/2 weeks (<http://americanpregnancy.org/pregnancy-complications/early-fetal-development/>). This would significantly decrease the amount of abortions that occur later on in pregnancies. The “Heartbeat Bill” has been debated in numerous states. The bill has passed in states such as Arkansas, Iowa, and North Dakota, but a lawsuit was filed in each of those states ruling the bill unconstitutional. Although this is a high-profile bill, the concept has never been implemented into law in any state.

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### **HB0283-- Increase In Punishment for Aggravated Rape**

Bill Introduced: 01/29/19

Bill Text: <https://legiscan.com/TN/text/HB0283/id/1879308/Tennessee-2019-HB0283-Draft.pdf>

Bill Summary: This bill increases the punishment of aggravated rape to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

Bill Impact: According to ABC 13, “Currently, punishment for aggravated rape of a child is 15-60 years in prison with a fine of up to \$50,000.” (<https://wset.com/news/local/proposed-tennessee-bill-wants-life-in-prison-for-aggravated-rape-of-a-child-01-30-2019>) This bill upgrades the punishment to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

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### **SB0256-- Eliminating The Penalty For Small Possession Of Marijuana**

Bill Introduced: 01/29/19

Bill Text: <https://legiscan.com/TN/text/SB0256/id/1878650/Tennessee-2019-SB0256-Draft.pdf>

Bill Summary: This bill legalizes carrying less than one ounce of marijuana in the state of Tennessee.

Bill Impact: Currently nine states have legalized marijuana for recreational use and 33 for medical use (<http://www.governing.com/gov-data/safety-justice/state-marijuana-laws-map-medical-recreational.html>). This would be a major step towards legalization of marijuana in the state. One ounce is equivalent to 28.35 grams.

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***“The liberties of a people never were, nor ever will be, secure, when the transactions of their rulers may be concealed from them.”***

— Patrick Henry  
Founding Father of The United States of America



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