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HASLAM CALLS ON GOVERNMENT TO TRANSFORM HOW IT DOES BUSINESS
Governor Gives State of the State Address, Delivers His State Budget Proposal to Legislature

NASHVILLE – Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam tonight delivered his first [State of the State](#) address to a packed House Chamber, calling upon legislators and other state officials to join him in transforming how government sets priorities and makes choices.

“Ten years from now we will not – and cannot – be doing government the same way we did 20 years ago,” Haslam said. “The time is right to go on a rigorous diet that consumes less and exerts more energy.”

Last year’s state budget totaled \$32 billion, and tonight Haslam delivered a \$30.2 billion [budget proposal](#) to state legislators, a sensible proposal making tough choices with a \$1.4 billion budget gap to fill.

The proposal puts money back into the state’s Rainy Day Fund, gives state employees a much-deserved raise and focuses reductions on administrative areas rather than direct services to minimize any impact felt by Tennessee taxpayers.

“State government does a lot of good things,” Haslam said. “We have worked hard to try and continue funding many of those things. The reality is that there are a lot of things I would like to do, that each member of the Legislature would like to do, but that we simply cannot afford.”

Being realistic about the state’s financial situation does not, however, limit any of the Governor’s expectations that the state needs to improve its educational ranking – and potential to attract new businesses and grow jobs.

“Every discussion we have about education should always begin and end with what is best for the child in the classroom,” Haslam said.

“In education we are blessed with the tools to be game changers for all students,” he added. “Better teachers; improved school leadership with great principals; standards of academic excellence; parental involvement and students who are challenged to learn – that can and will happen in Tennessee.”

“If we strive to be more, we will achieve much more,” he concluded.

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