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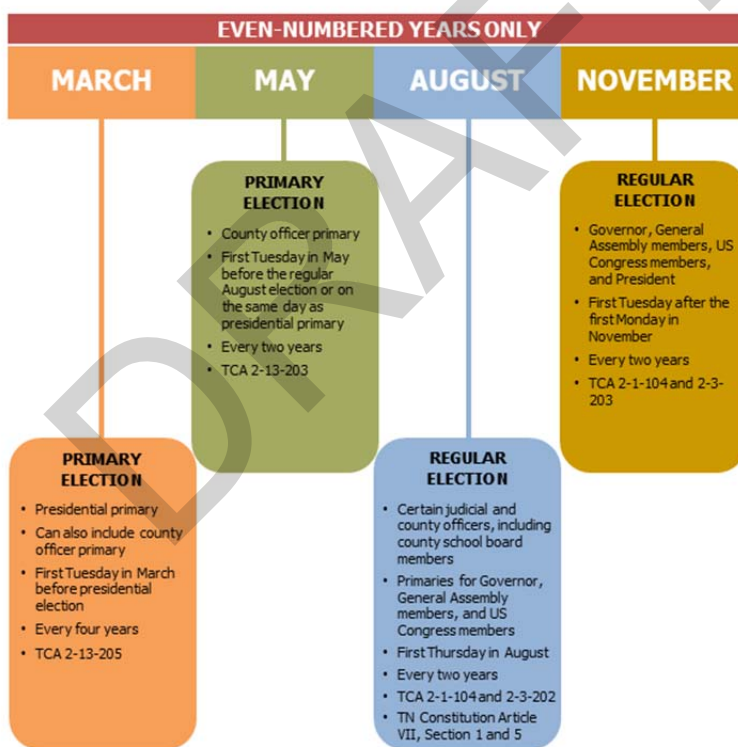
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## Summary and Recommendations: Tennessee Should Continue to Authorize, Not Require, Election Consolidation

Voter turnout is vital in a representative democracy—voting in elections is how citizens voice their preferences about their governments and leaders. According to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Elections Performance Index, which assesses election administration in every state, Tennessee ranked 49<sup>th</sup> in voter turnout in 2016, compared to 46<sup>th</sup> in 2012 and 43<sup>rd</sup> in 2008. And according to the Tennessee Secretary of State’s office, turnout in municipal elections on dates that don’t coincide with countywide elections in Tennessee is much lower than most countywide elections. Figure 1 shows the schedule of countywide elections in Tennessee, which include the presidential primary, county primaries, and regular August and November elections in even-numbered years.

Figure 1. Schedule of Countywide (County, State, and Federal) Elections in Tennessee



Note: This schedule does not include special elections.  
Sources: Tennessee Code Annotated and Tennessee Constitution.

Similar trends in voter turnout have been found in national studies. A 2011 study in the *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* concluded that even when considering the great variance in when local elections are held in the US, “one widely known and well

accepted fact is that turnout in local elections is notably higher when those elections are held concurrently with major national or state races.” Although many factors affect voter participation, such as the weather, competitiveness of races, and get-out-the-vote efforts, election timing is a factor that policy makers can influence and change.

In response to concerns about low voter participation and the cost of municipal elections, which cities pay for when they don’t coincide with countywide elections, House Bill 2265 by Representative C. Sexton and its companion bill, Senate Bill 2146 by Senator Gardenhire, were introduced in 2018. See appendix A for a copy of the bill. As amended, the legislation would have required cities with private act charters to change their election dates to coincide with either the August or November election in even-numbered years—statutorily defined as “regular” elections—by 2022. The House Local Government Subcommittee voted to send the study to the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, while the Senate State and Local Government Committee deferred it to summer study, with the committee chair later saying the committee’s intent was for the Commission to conduct the study. According to national studies and local officials in Tennessee, aligning municipal elections with countywide elections usually improves turnout and saves cities money. However, local government representatives, as well as representatives of the Tennessee Municipal League and the University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service, are concerned about mandating combining city elections with county, state, and federal elections. Local government representatives say they understand their communities’ unique needs and issues and should be able to decide when they hold their own elections.

The US Constitution gives Congress authority to enact laws affecting federal elections, including establishing the dates that members of Congress and the president and vice president are elected and to broadly prohibit discriminatory election practices. However, the “Elections Clause” of the US Constitution, Article I, Section IV, gives states the responsibility to conduct elections, and other than laws prohibiting discrimination, Congress generally does not have authority to enact laws affecting how state and local elections are conducted. States conduct these elections according to their own constitutions and laws. The timing of federal primary, state, and local elections is decided by state and local governments and is one key factor that can affect voter turnout.

In Tennessee, dates for federal primary elections, all state and county government elections, and judicial elections are set by the Tennessee Constitution or by state statute. While the state constitution establishes the date for electing judges and county officers as the first Thursday in August in even-numbered years, it authorizes the General

Assembly to set dates for electing state officials and for all federal, state, or county primary elections. The establishment of municipal election dates and the processes and restrictions for changing them depend on the city's type of charter.

There are six different types of city charters in Tennessee: three "general law" charters (mayor-aldermanic, city manager-commission, and modified city manager-council), private act, home rule, and metropolitan government charters. Prior to 2010, cities with home rule, metropolitan government, private act, or mayor-aldermanic charters could set any date for their elections, but home rule charter and metropolitan government charter cities could change their dates only by referendum. However, private act charter cities could change theirs only by private act, and mayor-aldermanic charter cities could change theirs only by ordinance. Cities with city manager-commission or modified city manager-council charters were also authorized to change the dates of their elections by ordinance alone but only to the date of the regular November election. See table 1.

Public Chapter 1008, Acts of 2010, authorized cities with private act charters and cities with any of the three types of general law charters to change the dates of their elections by ordinance to either the August or November election in even-numbered years (see table 1). The law allows the legislative body of the municipality changing its election date by ordinance to change back to the original date, but it may only do so once. Cities with home rule and metropolitan charters still have to change their election date by referendum without any restrictions on the dates chosen. Private act charter cities are also still authorized to choose any date for their elections if they change them by private act rather than by ordinance. When an election date is changed, municipalities are required to extend the terms of elected officials by up to two years beyond their original expiration date to align with the new election dates because shortening terms is prohibited by the Tennessee Constitution.

**Table 1. Process to Change Election Date by City Charter Type Before and After 2010**

Charter Type		Prior to Public Chapter 1008, Acts of 2010	After Public Chapter 1008, Acts of 2010
General Law	Mayor-Aldermanic (66 cities)	could set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by ordinance	can change the date for their elections to <b>either the regular August or November election</b> —only by ordinance
	City Manager-Commission (47 cities)	could change the date for their elections to <b>only the date of the regular November election</b> —only by ordinance	can change the date for their elections to <b>either the regular August or November election</b> —only by ordinance
	Modified City Manager-Council (2 cities)	could change the date for their elections to <b>only the date of the regular November election</b> —only by ordinance	can change the date for their elections to <b>either the regular August or November election</b> —only by ordinance
Private Act (212 cities)		could set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by private act	can set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by private act; or can change the date to <b>either the regular August or November election</b> —only by ordinance
Home Rule (15 cities)		could set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by referendum	can set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by referendum
Metropolitan Government (3 cities)		could set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by referendum	can set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by referendum

Source: Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 6-3-104, 6-20-102, 6-31-102, 6-53-105, 6-54-138, and 7-2-108; and the 2009 versions of Sections 6-3-104, 6-20-102, and 6-31-102.

The trend in Tennessee is towards consolidating municipal elections with the regular August or November elections, which along with county primary elections and presidential primary elections are considered countywide elections. Since 2010, at least 20 Tennessee cities have moved their elections by ordinance to one of the two optional dates, and a few more are considering it. As of March 2019, 280 of Tennessee’s 345 cities (81%) have set their municipal elections to coincide with either the regular August or November election. Four other cities hold their elections at the same time as the

presidential primary or county primary elections. The remaining 61 hold their elections separate from any countywide election.

The two main reasons cities choose to consolidate with the countywide elections are to save money and improve voter participation. National studies show that when city elections coincide with other elections, the cost per voter decreases, and in some jurisdictions, turnout doubles. Moreover, in Tennessee, cities reimburse counties for the cost of pure or stand-alone municipal elections. The cost of these elections in Tennessee varies widely depending on the size of the city and the type of election, ranging from about a thousand dollars to a few million dollars. Counties pay for countywide elections, including county primaries, with the exception of the presidential primary election, which the state pays for. When a city election coincides with a countywide election, the city pays only for any expense that would not otherwise have been incurred in conducting the election. For small to medium size cities this is usually a small amount for printing or programming, less than 10% of the cost of the stand-alone city election and as little as a few hundred dollars.

Furthermore, while voter turnout in countywide elections varies depending on the election, it is usually higher than in stand-alone municipal elections. According to data provided by county election commissions to the Tennessee Secretary of State's office, voter turnout in regular November elections is typically the highest—in 2018 the average turnout in Tennessee was 54.5 %, and in 2016 it was 61.9%. Average turnout in regular August elections is usually lower than in November—in 2018 it was 30.3%, and in 2016 it was 14.1%. Average turnout in the March 2016 presidential primary was 31.9%. The Secretary of State's office does not regularly collect voter turnout data for county primary elections, but in interviews, local government representatives said turnout in those elections is typically low. By comparison, turnout in 56 local stand-alone elections in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 ranged from 1.2% to 46%; thirty-one of the 56 had turnout less than 15%. Turnout in eight of the 56 was over 30%.

Although most Tennessee cities have moved their elections to coincide with the regular August or November election, during interviews and testimony to the Commission in May 2018, local government representatives expressed concerns about mandating that city elections be combined with county, state, and federal elections. With different types of issues and races in the same election, including different levels of government and partisan and nonpartisan races, ballots could become long, complicated, and confusing, especially in more highly populated areas of the state that have precincts with overlapping voting districts and multiple ballot styles as a result. Local issues that are important for communities and are debated during stand-alone elections would not receive the same attention during state or national elections when the focus is on

broader issues. Additionally, campaigning and fundraising could be more challenging for local candidates than for state or federal candidates running in the same election. The literature reflects that these are issues discussed by local election officials across the US and reasons many oppose consolidating elections. According to one 2003 study in the *Urban Affairs Review*, “historically there have been real objections to holding local elections concurrently with national contests, and many of these normative concerns remain today.”

Members of municipal legislative bodies base their decisions about when to hold their elections on their city’s unique history, circumstances, and needs. Examples from two cities in particular illustrate this. About 30 years ago, a consent decree mandated that the city of Chattanooga rewrite its charter and in the process established its election date. The mayor of Chattanooga is concerned that changing the date of the city’s election might violate the terms of the consent decree. The City of Dickson experiences its own unique circumstance—because the city is located in Dickson County, local officials worry that combining city and county races on one ballot would add to existing voter confusion about the difference between the local governments and the distinction between city and county races and initiatives on the ballot. They may be confused about which Dickson is which. Because of circumstances like these, many local officials say they know their communities and what works best for them, and if they are willing to pay for their own elections, they should be able to decide when to conduct them.

Although other states are also slowly moving towards consolidating elections, many continue to give cities varying degrees of flexibility for election dates. During testimony to the Kansas Special Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government in 2014, a representative of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) said, “the national trend is toward moving local and school elections to coincide with larger elections, but the trend is slow and incremental; most states have relied on their current election schedules for decades.” In one comprehensive study of election timing, the 2014 *Timing and Turnout: How Off-Cycle Elections Favor Organized Groups*, author Sarah Anzia found that the timing of municipal elections varies widely in the United States. Twenty-six states hold all municipal elections on the same day statewide—five of the 26 hold municipal elections on the same day as the even-year November general election, while 21 have a statewide municipal election date other than the general election in November of even-numbered years. Hawaii doesn’t hold municipal elections because it does not have incorporated cities. In the other 23 states, including Tennessee, the timing of municipal elections varies. In some states, cities have been required to consolidate and choose an election date from a list of options in the state’s statutes. In other states, like Tennessee, cities have not been required to consolidate, but if they choose to do so, some are limited to certain dates. There are many exceptions to the



provisions specific to certain cities in each of the 23 states, and each year states introduce legislation and enact laws that further modify or restrict when elections are held.

In most situations voter turnout would improve and costs would decrease when elections are consolidated. However, because local officials understand the needs of their communities and when elections work best for them, **the Tennessee legislature should continue to authorize, rather than require, municipalities with private act or general law charters to change their election date by ordinance to either the August or November general elections in even-numbered years. The legislature could consider adding one additional even-year election date—the presidential primary election in March—as an option for municipalities to move their election date.** Although the presidential primary is held every four years, not every two years, including it as an option for municipal elections in Tennessee might encourage city leaders to move their election dates to coincide with another countywide election. This could help balance municipal governments' authority and flexibility to decide what works best for their communities with the cost savings and increased voter turnout that usually result from aligning municipal elections with countywide elections.

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## Tennessee's Election System and Election Timing

Voter turnout is vital in a representative democracy—voting in elections is how citizens voice their preferences about their governments and leaders. The “Elections Clause” of the US Constitution gives both Congress and states authority over elections. Congress is responsible for regulating congressional and presidential elections, while states have authority over local elections and are responsible for conducting all elections—federal, state, and local.<sup>1</sup> Congress generally does not have authority to affect how state and local elections are conducted but does have broad authority to enact laws prohibiting discriminatory practices in all elections. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is the major law that Congress passed prohibiting states from enacting discriminatory election practices and laws. Congress also passed the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 and the Help America Vote Act of 2002, two federal election laws affecting voter registration and voting equipment systems used by states. Otherwise, states regulate their state and local elections, including the timing of these elections, according to their own constitutions and laws.

Although the Tennessee Constitution gives the General Assembly authority to enact laws affecting elections in Tennessee,<sup>2</sup> it also places some limitations on lawmakers. For example, it prohibits shortening the terms of state or local elected officials, and municipal or county incumbents can't be removed by any law passed by the General Assembly.<sup>3</sup> It may also enact only general laws, not private acts, affecting home rule and metropolitan governments, including elections laws.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to enacting all laws related to elections in Tennessee, the General Assembly decides who administers elections in the state. The Secretary of State, the top election official, is elected by the members of the General Assembly every four years and oversees elections,<sup>5</sup> like in most other states. The Secretary of State appoints the state coordinator of elections, the chief administrative election officer who heads the state division of elections, promulgates rules and regulations to carry out state laws, and supervises all elections in the state.<sup>6</sup> In addition, every four years the General Assembly

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<sup>1</sup> United States Constitution, Article I, Section 4 and Article II, Section 1. See also United States General Accounting Office 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Tennessee Constitution, Article IV, Section 1, and Article VII, Section 4.

<sup>3</sup> Tennessee Constitution, Article VII, Section 1, and Article XI, Section 9.

<sup>4</sup> Tennessee Constitution, Article XI, Section 9.

<sup>5</sup> Tennessee Constitution, Article III, Section 17.

<sup>6</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 2-11-201 and 2-11-202.

elects the seven members of the State Election Commission,<sup>7</sup> who work closely with the coordinator of elections “toward the common goal of maintaining uniformity in elections as well as preserving the purity of the ballot.”<sup>8</sup>

The county election commission in each county in Tennessee, under the supervision of the coordinator of elections, is responsible for conducting all elections for public office in its county, including federal, state, county, and municipal elections.<sup>9</sup> The State Election Commission appoints and monitors the five members of each county election commission, who serve two-year terms,<sup>10</sup> and when making appointments must consult with the General Assembly members representing those counties.<sup>11</sup> Each county election commission appoints an election administrator who is responsible for executing all elections in that county.<sup>12</sup> Although county legislative bodies are not responsible for conducting elections, they are responsible for funding their county election commission.<sup>13</sup> Tennessee’s election system is illustrated in figure 2.

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<sup>7</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 2-11-101 and 2-11-104.

<sup>8</sup> Tennessee Secretary of State, “State Election Commission.”

<sup>9</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 2-11-202; 2-12-109; 2-12-116; and 6-53-101.

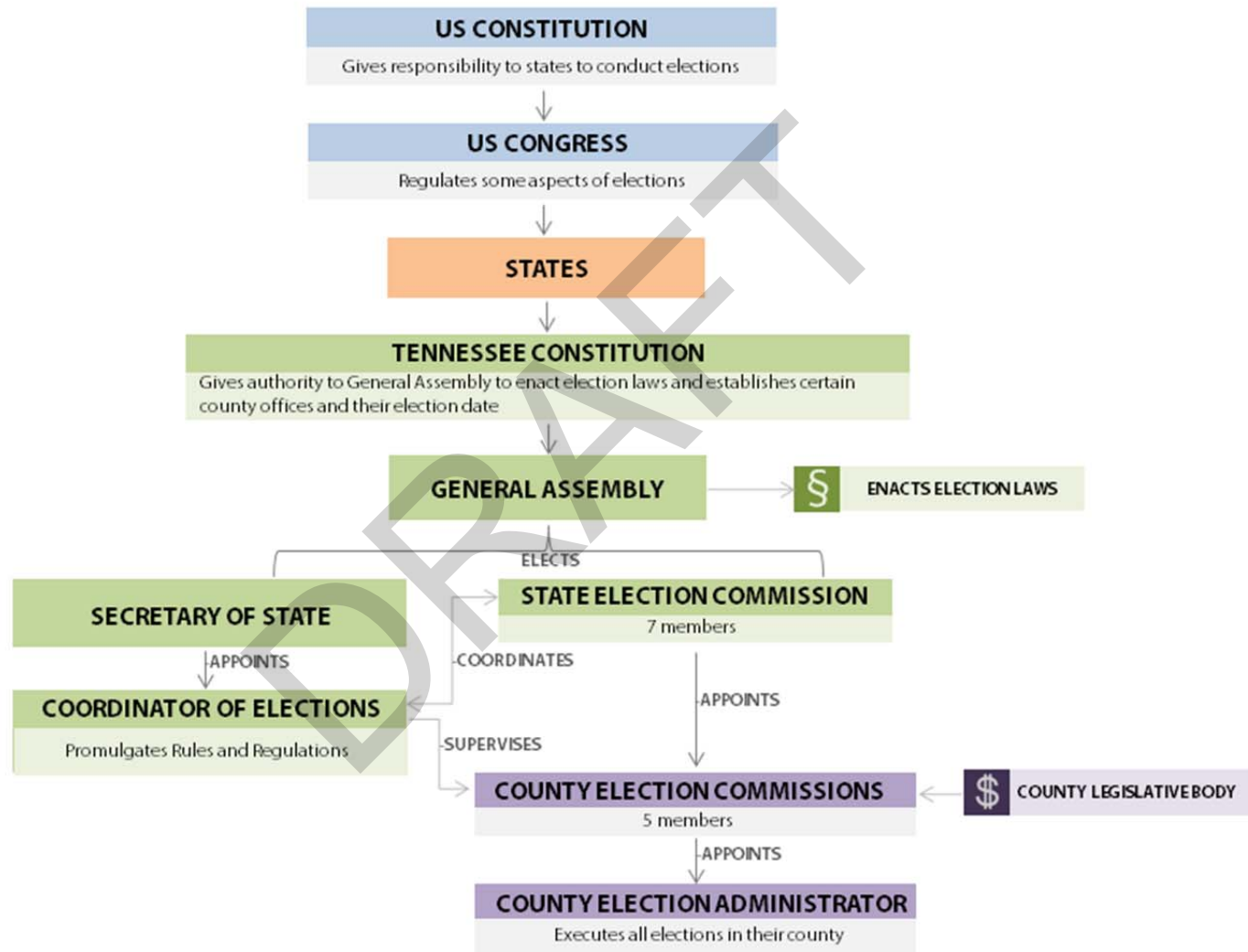
<sup>10</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-12-101.

<sup>11</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-12-103.

<sup>12</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-12-201.

<sup>13</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-12-109.

**Figure 2. Tennessee's Election System**



Sources: US Constitution, Tennessee Constitution, and Tennessee Code Annotated.

***In Tennessee, federal, state, and county election dates are set by law; city election dates are set by city charters.***

The timing of elections in Tennessee varies by the type of election. The US Congress sets the election date in all states for the president, vice president, and members of Congress as the Tuesday after the first Monday in November of even-numbered years, every four years and two years, respectively.<sup>14</sup> Tennessee also establishes these dates in state law.<sup>15</sup> State legislatures and political parties decide when to hold their primary elections for these offices. In Tennessee, along with several other states, the presidential primary is held the first Tuesday in March before the presidential election.<sup>16</sup> The primary election for members of Congress is held the first Thursday in August of even-numbered years.<sup>17</sup>

The Tennessee Constitution and state statutes set election dates for statewide and county offices. Elections for members of the General Assembly and Governor coincide with the November federal election every two and four years, respectively.<sup>18</sup> Primary elections for these statewide offices are held the same day as the primary elections for US Congress on the first Thursday in August of even-numbered years.<sup>19</sup> Both the state constitution and state law set the date of elections for county officers—in Tennessee commonly known as “Constitutional officers”—including county school board members and judges, on the first Thursday in August of even-numbered years.<sup>20</sup> The statewide political parties choose whether to hold county primary elections in each county in any given election year. If they choose to hold them, they can either be held the first Tuesday in May before the August election in even-numbered years or the same day as the presidential primary election.<sup>21</sup> Figure 1 (reposted) shows the schedule of county, state, and federal elections in Tennessee.

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<sup>14</sup> 3 United States Code Service Section 1; 2 United States Code Service Section 7.

<sup>15</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 2-1-104 and 2-3-203.

<sup>16</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-13-205.

<sup>17</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 2-1-104 and 2-13-202.

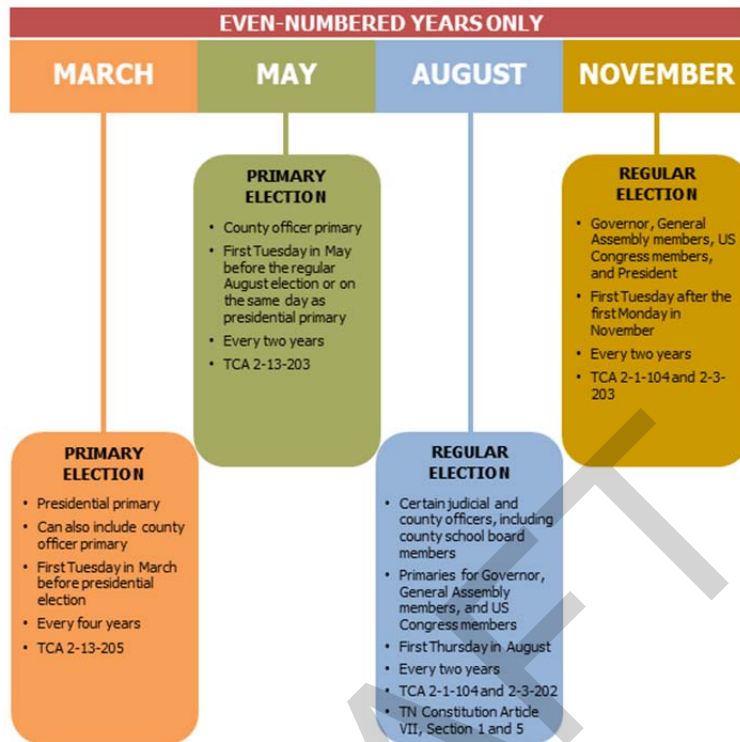
<sup>18</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 2-1-104 and 2-3-203.

<sup>19</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 2-1-104 and 2-13-202.

<sup>20</sup> Tennessee Constitution Article VII, Sections 1 and 5; Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 2-1-104 and 2-3-202; and email correspondence with Jeff Metzger, legal consultant, County Technical Assistance Service, October 16, 2018.

<sup>21</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-13-203.

Figure 1 (reposted). Schedule of Countywide (County, State, and Federal) Elections in Tennessee



Note: This schedule does not include special elections.  
Sources: Tennessee Code Annotated and Tennessee Constitution.

Most other states hold state and county elections in November of even-numbered years. All but five states—Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Virginia—hold their statewide elections in November of even-numbered years. There is more variance in the timing of county elections:

- thirty-eight states hold their county elections in November of even-numbered years,
- ten states, including Tennessee, hold their county elections at a different time, and
- Connecticut and Rhode Island don't hold county elections.<sup>22</sup>

Appendix B shows other states' election schedules, including state, county, municipal, and school board elections, as of 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Anzia 2014.

## **Tennessee city election dates are established by city charters.**

Although municipalities in Tennessee are subdivisions of the state and are required to follow state laws, their governments are structured and operate according to their specific incorporating charter. Unlike county, state, and federal elections, the dates of city elections are not established by the state Constitution or statute, but depend on their type of charter and whether the date has been changed either by private act, ordinance, or referendum. Tennessee's 345 cities are each incorporated under one of six different types of city charters: three "general law" charters (mayor-aldermanic, city manager-commission, and modified city manager-council), private act, home rule, and metropolitan government charters. Although the original charter determines the election date, under state law, cities have authority to change the original date by private act, ordinance, or referendum, depending on the charter type. As a result, city elections happen at different times—most are aligned with county, state, or federal elections, but some are not.

In 2010, the General Assembly passed a law that affected the way most cities are allowed to change the date of their elections. Prior to 2010, cities with home rule, metropolitan government, private act, or mayor-aldermanic charters could set any date for their elections, but home rule charter and metropolitan government charter cities could change their dates only by referendum, while private act charter cities could change theirs only by private act, and mayor-aldermanic charter cities could change theirs only by ordinance. Cities with city manager-commission or modified city manager-council charters were also authorized to change the dates of their elections by ordinance alone but only to the date of the regular November election. See table 1 (reposted).

Public Chapter 1008, Acts of 2010, authorized cities with private act charters and cities with any of the three types of general law charters to change the dates of their elections by ordinance to either the August or November election in even-numbered years, which are statutorily defined as "regular" elections (appendix C). The law allows the legislative body of the municipality changing its election date by ordinance to change back to the original date, but it may only do so once. It does not apply to cities with home rule and metropolitan charters, which still have to change their election date by referendum without any restrictions on the dates chosen.<sup>23</sup> Private act charter cities are also still authorized to choose any date for their elections if they change them by private

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<sup>23</sup> According to representatives of the University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) and the Tennessee Municipal League (TML), the law applies only to cities with private act or one of the three general law charters. Email correspondence with Melissa Ashburn, legal consultant, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, March 6, 2019; and Chad Jenkins, deputy director, Tennessee Municipal League, March 12, 2019.



act rather than by ordinance. See table 1 (reposted). Regardless of the process used to change an election date, municipalities are required to extend the terms of elected officials by up to two years beyond their original expiration date to align with the new election dates because shortening terms is prohibited by the Tennessee Constitution.<sup>24</sup> Table 2 shows a summary of municipal election timing by charter type in Tennessee, and appendix D shows the election dates and charter types for all 345 Tennessee cities.

**Table 1 (reposted). Process to Change Election Date by City Charter Type Before and After 2010**

Charter Type		Prior to Public Chapter 1008, Acts of 2010	After Public Chapter 1008, Acts of 2010
General Law	Mayor-Aldermanic (66 cities)	could set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by ordinance	can change the date for their elections to <b>either the regular August or November election</b> —only by ordinance
	City Manager-Commission (47 cities)	could change the date for their elections to <b>only the date of the regular November election</b> —only by ordinance	can change the date for their elections to <b>either the regular August or November election</b> —only by ordinance
	Modified City Manager-Council (2 cities)	could change the date for their elections to <b>only the date of the regular November election</b> —only by ordinance	can change the date for their elections to <b>either the regular August or November election</b> —only by ordinance
Private Act (212 cities)		could set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by private act	can set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by private act; or can change the date to <b>either the regular August or November election</b> —only by ordinance
Home Rule (15 cities)		could set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by referendum	can set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by referendum
Metropolitan Government (3 cities)		could set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by referendum	can set <b>any date for their elections</b> —only by referendum

Source: Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 6-3-104, 6-20-102, 6-31-102, 6-53-105, 6-54-138, and 7-2-108; and the 2009 versions of Sections 6-3-104, 6-20-102, and 6-31-102.

<sup>24</sup> Tennessee Constitution Article XI, Section 9.

**Table 2. Timing of Tennessee City Elections by Charter Type**

Charter Type	Number that Coincide with Regular August or November Election	Percent of All Cities that Coincide with Regular August or November Election	Number that Don't Coincide with Regular August or November Election	Percent of All Cities that Don't Coincide with Regular August or November Election	Total Number of Cities
Private act	169	49%	43	12%	212
General Law Manager-Commission	40	12%	7	2%	47
General Law Mayor-Alderman	57	17%	9	3%	66
General Law Modified Manager-Council	2	1%	0	0%	2
Home Rule	10	3%	5	1%	15
Metropolitan	2	1%	1	0%	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>345</b>

Source: Email correspondence with Gary Jaeckel, municipal management consultant, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, January 14, 2019; University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service "Tennessee Cities by Charter Type."

**Most cities' elections in Tennessee coincide with either the regular August or November elections in even-numbered years.**

Even though Tennessee cities have some flexibility in choosing their election date, most have elections that coincide with countywide elections. As of March 2019, 280 of Tennessee's 345 cities (81%) hold their elections on the same day as either the regular August or November election. The other 65 cities (19%) hold their elections on dates that don't coincide with the regular elections,<sup>25</sup> often called off-cycle or unconsolidated elections. Four of the 65 hold their elections at the same time as the presidential primary or county primary elections,<sup>26</sup> both considered countywide elections. The remaining 61 hold their elections on a separate date, often called pure or stand-alone municipal elections (see table 3). The cities with unconsolidated elections range in population from 267 to 654,723, and include Tennessee's four largest cities:

<sup>25</sup> Information compiled from Tennessee Secretary of State 2017, 2018, and 2019 "Elections by Date"; county election commission websites; county election administrators; city representatives; and email correspondence with Gary Jaeckel, municipal management consultant, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, December 21, 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Berry Hill and Dover elections coincide with the presidential primary election, and Lafayette and Rockford elections coincide with the county primary elections.

Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis, and Nashville. As the map in figure 3 shows, the 65 cities are scattered across the state.

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**Table 3. Tennessee Cities with Elections that Do Not Coincide with Regular August or November Elections as of March 2019**

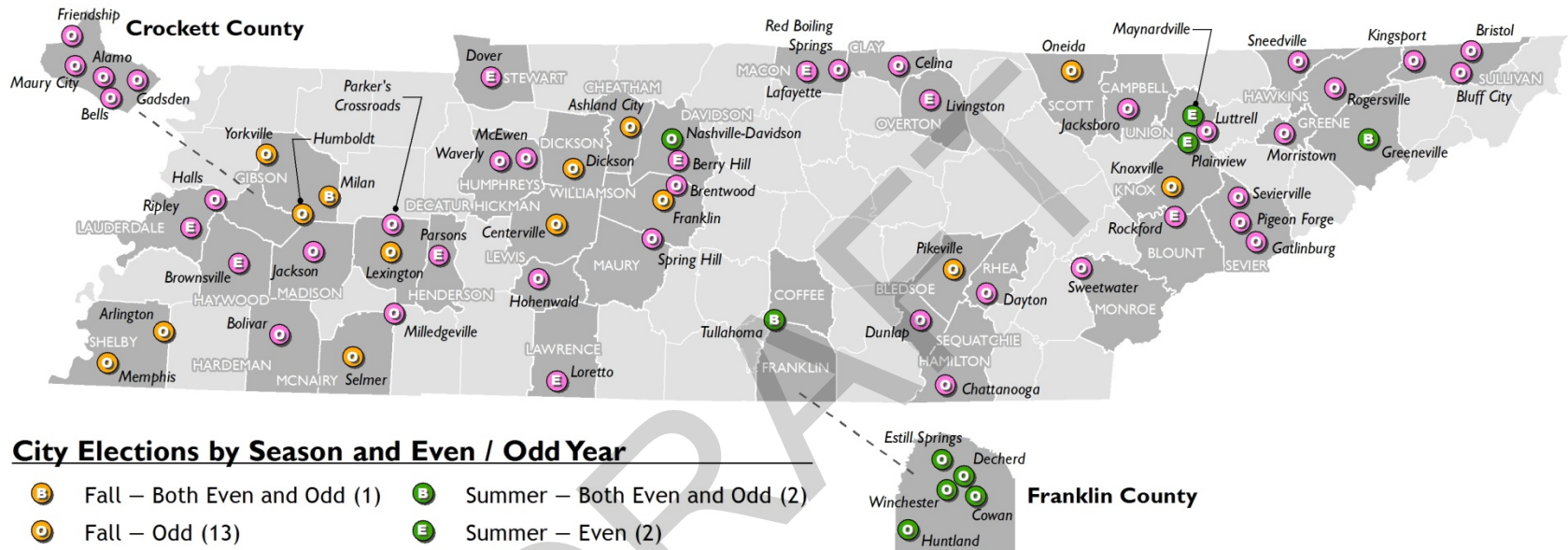
City	Population	Next Election Date	Spring or Fall, Odd or Even Years	County
Alamo	2,221	Saturday, May 1, 2021	Spring, odd	Crockett
Arlington	11,678	Thursday, September 19, 2019	Fall, odd	Shelby
Ashland City	4,599	Saturday, December 7, 2019	Fall, odd	Cheatham
Bells	2,687	Saturday, May 1, 2021	Spring, odd	Crockett
Berry Hill	891	Tuesday, March 3, 2020	Spring, even	Davidson
Bluff City	1,772	Tuesday, May 21, 2019	Spring, odd	Sullivan
Bolivar	5,037	Tuesday, May 21, 2019	Spring, odd	Hardeman
Brentwood	41,524	Tuesday, May 7, 2019	Spring, odd	Williamson
Bristol	26,668	Tuesday, May 21, 2019	Spring, odd	Sullivan
Brownsville	9,829	Tuesday, June 16, 2020	Spring, even	Haywood
Celina	1,763	Tuesday, June 1, 2021	Spring, odd	Clay
Centerville	3,548	Saturday, October 5, 2019	Fall, odd	Hickman
Chattanooga	176,291	Tuesday, March 2, 2021	Spring, odd	Hamilton
Cowan	1,477	Thursday, August 1, 2019	Summer, odd	Franklin
Dayton	7,341	Wednesday, April 17, 2019	Spring, odd	Rhea
Decherd	3,073	Thursday, August 1, 2019	Summer, odd	Franklin
Dickson	15,128	Thursday, September 26, 2019	Fall, odd	Dickson
Dover	2,013	Tuesday, March 3, 2020	Spring, even	Stewart
Dunlap	5,061	Saturday, May 4, 2019	Spring, odd	Sequatchie
Estill Springs	2,125	Thursday, August 1, 2019	Summer, odd	Franklin
Franklin	72,990	Tuesday, October 22, 2019	Fall, odd	Williamson
Friendship	705	Saturday, May 1, 2021	Spring, odd	Crockett
Gadsden	627	Saturday, May 1, 2021	Spring, odd	Crockett
Gatlinburg	4,126	Tuesday, May 21, 2019	Spring, odd	Sevier
Greeneville	14,895	Thursday, August 1, 2019	Summer, odd and even	Greene
Halls	2,424	Tuesday, May 4, 2021	Spring, odd	Lauderdale
Hohenwald	3,651	Thursday, May 2, 2019	Spring, odd	Lewis
Humboldt	8,155	Tuesday, November 2, 2021	Fall, odd	Gibson
Huntland	693	Thursday, August 1, 2019	Summer, odd	Franklin
Jacksboro	2,085	Saturday, April 6, 2019	Spring, odd	Campbell
Jackson	66,977	Tuesday, May 7, 2019	Spring, odd	Madison
Kingsport	52,698	Tuesday, May 21, 2019	Spring, odd	Sullivan
Knoxville	184,465	Tuesday, November 5, 2019	Fall, odd	Knox
Lafayette	4,985	Tuesday, May 5, 2020	Spring, even	Macon
Lexington	7,731	Thursday, September 12, 2019	Fall, odd	Henderson

City	Population	Next Election Date	Spring or Fall, Odd or Even Years	County
Livingston	4,042	Wednesday June 3, 2020	Spring, even	Overton
Loretto	1,906	Tuesday, April 28, 2020	Spring, even	Lawrence
Luttrell	891	Thursday, June 6, 2019	Spring, odd	Union
Maury City	731	Saturday, May 1, 2021	Spring, odd	Crockett
Maynardville	2,611	Tuesday, June 23, 2020	Summer, even	Union
McEwen	1,694	Saturday, May 18, 2019	Spring, odd	Humphreys
Memphis	654,723	Thursday, October 3, 2019	Fall, odd	Shelby
Milan	7,715	Tuesday November 5, 2019	Fall, odd and even	Gibson
Milledgeville	288	Saturday, May 25, 2019	Spring, odd	McNairy
Morristown	29,446	Tuesday, May 7, 2019	Spring, odd	Hamblen
Nashville	654,187	Thursday, August 1, 2019	Summer, odd	Davidson
Oneida	3,682	Saturday, November 2, 2019	Fall, odd	Scott
Parkers Crossroads	363	Tuesday, May 7, 2019	Spring, odd	Henderson
Parsons	2,403	Tuesday, June 9, 2022	Spring, even	Decatur
Pigeon Forge	6,147	Tuesday, May 14, 2019	Spring, odd	Sevier
Pikeville	1,968	Saturday, December 7, 2019	Fall, odd	Bledsoe
Plainview	1,837	Tuesday, June 23, 2020	Summer, even	Union
Red Boiling Springs	1,659	Saturday, April 27, 2019	Spring, odd	Macon
Ripley	8,148	Thursday, April 2, 2020	Spring, even	Lauderdale
Rockford	746	Tuesday, March 3, 2020	Spring, even	Blount
Rogersville	4,326	Saturday, June 5, 2021	Spring, odd	Hawkins
Selmer	4,446	Tuesday, November 5, 2019	Fall, odd	McNairy
Sevierville	16,387	Tuesday, May 2, 2019	Spring, odd	Sevier
Sneedville	1,347	Saturday, May 1, 2021	Spring, odd	Hancock
Spring Hill	35,995	Tuesday, April 11, 2019	Spring, odd	Maury
Sweetwater	5,842	Thursday, June 13, 2019	Spring, odd	Monroe
Tullahoma	19,037	Thursday, August 1, 2019	Summer, odd and even	Coffee
Waverly	4,070	Wednesday, May 8, 2019	Spring, odd	Humphreys
Winchester	8,467	Thursday, August 1, 2019	Summer, odd	Franklin
Yorkville	267	Tuesday, November 5, 2019	Fall, odd	Gibson

Note: Ripley is in the process of moving to August of even-numbered years. Interview with Cinda Tillman, election administrator, Lauderdale County, December 27, 2018.

Sources: Tennessee Secretary of State 2017, 2018, and 2019 "Elections by Date"; county election commission websites; county election administrators; city representatives; email correspondence with Gary Jaekel, municipal management consultant, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, December 21, 2018; and United States Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, five-year estimate, 2017.

Figure 3. Tennessee Cities with Elections that Do Not Coincide with Regular August or November Elections as of March 2019



Note: Ripley is in the process of moving to August of even-numbered years. Interview with Cinda Tillman, election administrator, Lauderdale County, December 27, 2018.

Sources: Tennessee Secretary of State 2017, 2018, and 2019 "Elections by Date"; county election commission websites; county election administrators; city representatives; and email correspondence with Gary Jaeckel, municipal management consultant, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, December 21, 2018.

The timing of these cities' elections varies by whether they are held in odd or even years, time of year, and frequency.<sup>27</sup> Most—51 of the 65—are held in odd years only, and 23 of those are in May of odd years. Eleven are held in even years only. Three cities hold both odd and even-year elections. Two of these—Greeneville and Tullahoma—hold elections every year on the first Thursday in August. As a result, in even-numbered years their elections coincide with the county elections. Milan holds elections on a four-year cycle in both even and odd-numbered years on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Therefore, every four years its even-numbered year election coincides with the regular November election. Most city elections are held every two years, but a few are every four years. Red Boiling Springs is an example of a city that moved its election date to coincide with the regular November election and then moved it back to its original date.<sup>28</sup> Figure 4 shows the timing of the 65 cities with elections that don't coincide with the regular August or November election.

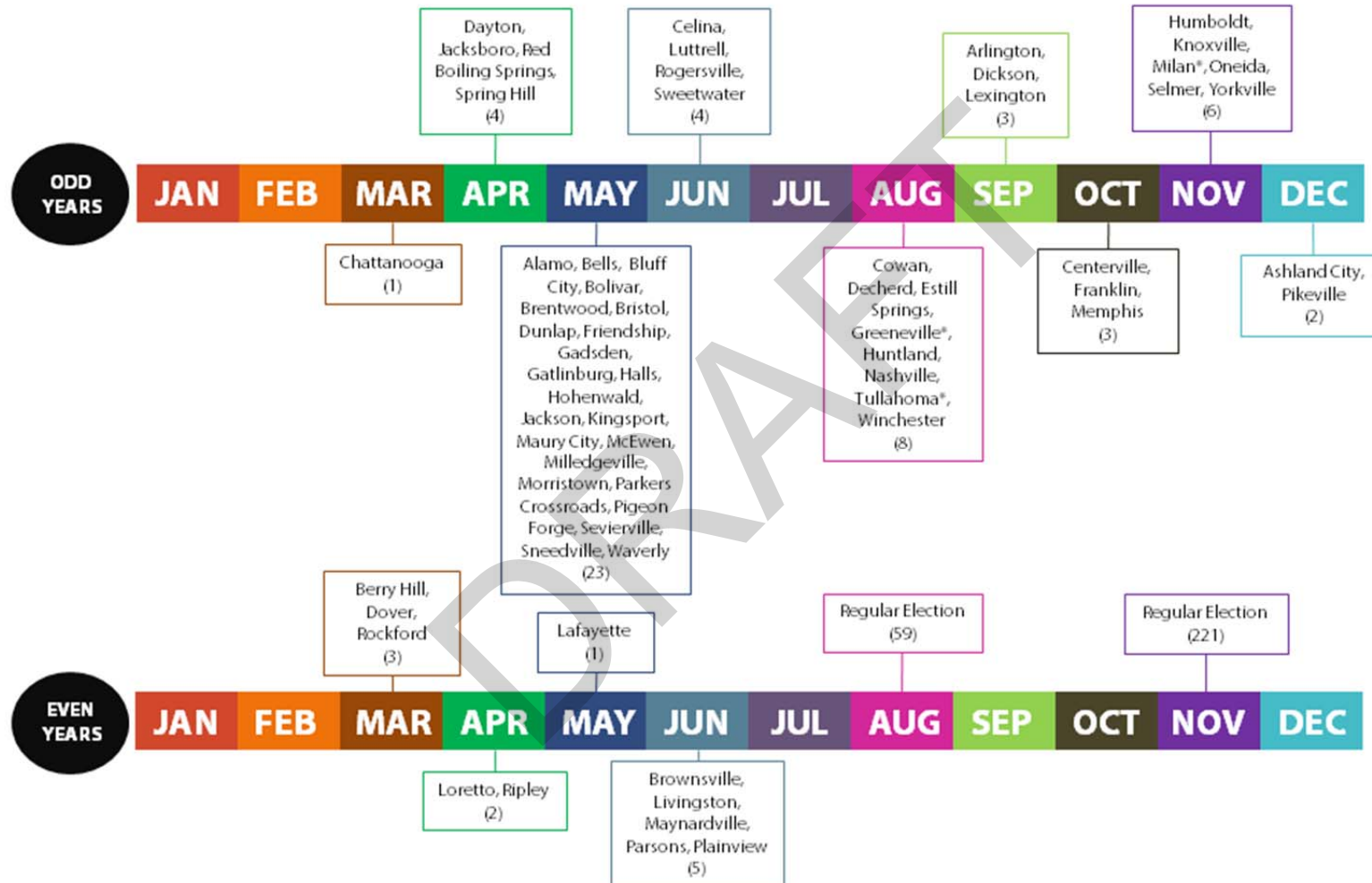
Two of the three metropolitan governments, Lynchburg/Moore County and Hartsville/Trousdale County, hold both their municipal and county elections on the date of the regular August election. The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, however, as required by its charter, holds its city and county elections at different times. As required by the state constitution and state law, its election for county offices is held on the first Thursday in August of even-numbered years, the regular August election, but its city elections are held on the first Thursday in August of odd-numbered years.

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<sup>27</sup> Tennessee Secretary of State 2017, 2018, and 2019 "Elections by Date"; county election commission websites; county election administrators; city representatives; and email correspondence with Gary Jaeckel, municipal management consultant, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, December 21, 2018.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Jessica Miller, deputy clerk, Red Boiling Springs, January 28, 2019.

Figure 4. Tennessee Municipal Elections Not Coinciding with Regular August or November Elections



\*Greeneville, Milan, and Tullahoma have elections in both even and odd years, but only their odd year, off-cycle elections are shown in the table.

Sources: Secretary of State 2017, 2018, and 2019 "Elections by Date"; county election commission websites; county election administrators; city representatives; and email correspondence with Gary Jaeckel, municipal management consultant, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, December 21, 2018.



## **Like Tennessee, other states are considering the timing of their elections.**

The trend in Tennessee is towards consolidating municipal elections with the regular August or November elections, which along with county primary elections and presidential primary elections are considered countywide elections. Since 2010, at least 20 Tennessee cities have moved their elections by ordinance to one of the two optional dates, and a few more are considering it.<sup>29</sup> Although the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and the literature agree that the subject of election timing needs more study, they also agree that the national trend is to consolidate local elections with larger elections,<sup>30</sup> although it is happening slowly. During testimony to the Kansas Special Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government in 2014, a NCSL program manager said, “the national trend is toward moving local and school elections to coincide with larger elections, but the trend is slow and incremental; most states have relied on their current election schedules for decades.”<sup>31</sup> Some national leaders take the position that consolidating elections is the best choice. For example, the director of the Local Elections in America Project at Rice University said “The habit of holding local elections on separate dates has ‘outlived its usefulness. . . . It doesn’t make sense.’”<sup>32</sup> The main issues debated in other states and among national experts are also being debated in Tennessee: local government authority, election cost, and voter turnout.

Although the trend is towards consolidation, most states have cities with elections that do not coincide with the general election in November of even-numbered years and give cities varying degrees of flexibility for election dates.<sup>33</sup> In one comprehensive study of election timing, the 2014 *Timing and Turnout: How Off-Cycle Elections Favor Organized Groups*, author Sarah Anzia summarizes the variation among the states. Twenty-six states hold all municipal elections on the same day statewide—five of the 26 hold municipal elections on the same day as the even-year November general election.<sup>34</sup> Cities in the other 21 of those 26 states have a statewide municipal election date other

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<sup>29</sup> Email correspondence with Mark Goins, coordinator of elections, Division of Elections, Tennessee Secretary of State, March 14, 2019; and interviews with city and county representatives.

<sup>30</sup> Greenblatt 2015.

<sup>31</sup> Underhill 2014.

<sup>32</sup> Greenblatt 2015.

<sup>33</sup> Anzia 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Arkansas, Kentucky, Nebraska, Oregon, and Rhode Island.

than the general election in November of even-numbered years.<sup>35</sup> Hawaii doesn't hold municipal elections because it does not have incorporated cities. In the other 23 states, including Tennessee, the timing of municipal elections varies. In 12 states, cities must choose an election date from a list of options in the state's statutes.<sup>36</sup> The other 11 have a little more flexibility like those cities in Tennessee that are not required to consolidate, but if they choose to, at least some are limited to certain dates (see table 4).<sup>37</sup> There are many exceptions to the provisions specific to certain cities in each of the 23 states, and each year states consider legislation and enact laws that further modify or restrict when elections are held. Appendix B shows when state, county, municipal, and school board elections are held in other states as of 2014.

**Table 4. Summary of Municipal Election Timing in Other States**

Municipal Election Timing		Number of States
All municipal elections on the same day statewide (26)	All municipal elections held on the same day as the even-year November general election	5
	All municipal elections held on a date other than the even-year November general election	21
Timing of municipal elections varies (23)	Cities must consolidate and choose an election date from a list of options in state's statutes	12
	Cities are not required to consolidate, but if they choose to, at least some are limited to certain dates	11
No municipal elections are held (1)		1

Source: Anzia 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Alabama, Alaska, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

<sup>36</sup> Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, Texas, Virginia, and Wyoming.

<sup>37</sup> Delaware, Florida, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, and West Virginia.

Examples from a few other states illustrate that legislatures across the US are debating election timing, and some are considering and enacting legislation related to consolidation of municipal elections with larger elections. Like in Tennessee, while the intent seems to be to improve voter participation and save money, there is often some opposition to the legislation because of concerns about local government authority and voter education and convenience, and some of the legislation narrowly passed. In 2009, Idaho consolidated its elections to four dates per year, including two dates for school district elections. The state overcame the opposition from local jurisdictions by creating a consolidation fund that allocated \$1.5 million to counties for start-up implementation costs; the fund expired on January 1, 2016.<sup>38</sup> Some voters complained about the changes, saying the law made it harder to vote.<sup>39</sup> In 2015, Michigan enacted a law that reduced the number of election dates in the state from four to three,<sup>40</sup> and Kansas narrowly passed a law to move its city, school board, and special district elections from the spring to fall of odd years.<sup>41</sup>

At least two states, Arizona and California, recently enacted legislation that requires municipal election consolidation based on a voter turnout threshold. In 2015, California passed a law, which went into effect in 2018, requiring local governments with turnout “at least 25 percent less than the average voter turnout within that political subdivision for the previous four statewide general elections” to move their election so they overlap with one of four state or federal election dates.<sup>42</sup> Arizona lawmakers passed a law in 2012 requiring cities to consolidate their elections. However, in 2014, the Arizona Court of Appeals returned authority to the cities, ruling unanimously that “local governments should be free of the “influence of partisan issues” that state and federal elections bring during even-number years if they so choose.”<sup>43</sup> In 2018, Arizona passed another law, similar to California’s, requiring all cities to consolidate their elections with one of four statewide election dates if “turnout is less than 75 percent of statewide voter turnout in the most recent gubernatorial election.”<sup>44</sup> The intent of both Arizona and California’s laws is to improve voter turnout and reduce the cost of elections.

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<sup>38</sup> 2009 Idaho HB372; Idaho Legislative Services Office 2014.

<sup>39</sup> Russell 2011.

<sup>40</sup> Michigan Act No. 101, Public Acts of 2015; Oosting 2015.

<sup>41</sup> Kansas House Bill 2104; Lowry 2015.

<sup>42</sup> California Senate Bill 415; California Election Code Section 14051.

<sup>43</sup> Coiner 2018.

<sup>44</sup> 2018 Arizona House Bill 2604; Fischer 2018.

***The Tennessee General Assembly has proposed requiring cities to move their elections to coincide with either the regular August or November election.***

Although cities in Tennessee have authority to move their election date, and most of their elections coincide with either the regular August or November election, the General Assembly has proposed requiring election consolidation. In response to concerns about low voter participation and the cost of municipal elections, Representative C. Sexton and Senator Gardenhire introduced House Bill 2265 and Senate Bill 2146 in 2018. As amended, the legislation would have required private act cities to change their election dates to coincide with either the regular August or November election by 2022 (appendix A). The House Local Government Subcommittee voted to send the study to the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR), while the Senate State and Local Government Committee deferred it to summer study, with the chair later indicating the intent for the Commission to conduct the study.

Similar legislation was introduced in 2007. Senate Bill 1040 by Senator Kyle and House Bill 1929 by Representative Rinks, would have required all municipal elections to be held in conjunction with either the regular November or regular August election (appendix E). The language in the 2007 bill clearly included all municipal charter types except metropolitan government charters. The House bill was sent to TACIR; no formal report was issued, but TACIR's executive director gave a presentation on the issue. The fiscal notes for both the 2007 and 2018 bills estimated that recurring expenditures for local governments would decrease by more than \$100,000, and expenditures would not increase for the state.

**Continuing to have authority to decide when they hold their own elections is important to many local government leaders in Tennessee.**

Local government representatives say they understand their communities' issues and needs, and if they are willing to pay for their elections, they should be allowed to decide when to hold them. In interviews and testimony to the Commission in May 2018, a few city and county government representatives said they prefer that election consolidation be mandatory, mainly to improve turnout. But most, including representatives of the Tennessee Municipal League and University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service, strongly believe the decision should be made at the local level.<sup>45</sup> The Wilson County election administrator said even though all the city elections in his

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<sup>45</sup> Interviews with city and county representatives and Chad Jenkins, deputy director, Tennessee Municipal League, September 26, 2018; and email correspondence with Margaret Norris, executive director, University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service, April 12, 2019.

county coincide with the regular November election and consolidation saves administrative work, every city is different, and election consolidation might not work well for all cities and counties.<sup>46</sup> The mayor of Sweetwater in Monroe County said it is fine if a city chooses to move its election date, but he is strongly opposed to mandating cities to move their election dates. He noted that Sweetwater usually spends less than \$3,000 on its stand-alone election in June of odd-numbered years for a population of about 5,800. Although the other municipalities in the county have moved their election dates to coincide with August or November to save money, he said he has heard they regret doing it, mainly because it takes the “localism” out of the election.<sup>47</sup>

Each city has specific history, circumstances, and needs that affect decision-making and the reasons for its election timing. As one mayor summed it up, “One size does not fit all.”<sup>48</sup> Examples from two cities in particular illustrate this. Approximately 30 years ago, a consent decree mandated that the city of Chattanooga rewrite its charter and, in the process, established its election date. The mayor of Chattanooga is concerned that changing the date of the city’s election might violate the terms of the consent decree.<sup>49</sup> The date of Chattanooga’s election is specific to the history of the city. Because the City of Dickson is located in Dickson County, combining city and county races on one ballot would add to existing voter confusion about the difference between the local governments and the distinction between city and county races and initiatives on the ballot.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, it is better for the City of Dickson to hold its election at a different time than the county election. Local leaders are elected to make local decisions, balancing needs with costs to do what is best for their communities.

### **Consolidating elections has advantages and disadvantages.**

Why have most Tennessee cities chosen to consolidate while some haven’t? Holding municipal elections that coincide with county, state, and federal elections has advantages and disadvantages. There are tradeoffs that need to be considered and balanced with benefits, mainly saving money and improving voter turnout. In addition to the overarching issue of local authority, the concerns about consolidating elections expressed by local government representatives include city elections “getting lost” in larger elections, mixing partisan and nonpartisan elections, and long, confusing ballots.

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<sup>46</sup> Testimony to the Commission by Phillip Warren, election administrator, Wilson County, May 4, 2018.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Doyle Lowe, mayor, Sweetwater, February 7, 2019.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Ronnie Neill, mayor, Somerville, May 8, 2018.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Andy Berke, mayor, Chattanooga, December 6, 2018.

<sup>50</sup> Testimony to the Commission by Chris Norman, administrative assistant to the mayor, City of Dickson, May 4, 2018.

*Combining municipal elections with larger elections has tradeoffs.*

The concerns expressed by stakeholders in Tennessee relate to combining municipal elections with county, state, or federal elections.<sup>51</sup> One argument is that city elections would “get lost” in the larger elections. Campaigning and fundraising could be more challenging for local candidates than for state or federal candidates running in the same election. Local issues that are important for communities and are debated during stand-alone elections would not receive the same attention during state or national elections when the focus is on broader issues. In testimony to the Commission in May 2018, the mayor of Brentwood said “Local issues would get lost among county, state, and national general election discussions. . . . Local government issues that are very specific to each area, such as land use, long-range planning, and infrastructure, are the most important in the day to day life of residents. . . . Having those stand-alone local elections allows these important issues to be front and center during that election process.”<sup>52</sup> According to both local officials and national stakeholders, voters who vote in stand-alone elections are better able to educate themselves, and therefore might be more informed about local candidates and issues than voters in larger elections when not as much attention is given to local elections, potentially diluting the informed votes. They say this is not the best way to elect local government representatives.<sup>53</sup>

With different types of issues and races in the same election, including different levels of government and partisan and nonpartisan races, ballots could become long, complicated, and confusing, especially in more highly populated areas of the state that have precincts with overlapping voting districts and multiple ballot styles. As a result, voters could become fatigued by a long ballot and not complete the ballot, often called ballot fatigue.<sup>54</sup> Additionally, some think mixing nonpartisan municipal elections with partisan county, state, or federal elections would potentially make nonpartisan election partisan in practice over time.<sup>55</sup> In Tennessee, municipal elections are nonpartisan and

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<sup>51</sup> Interviews with city and county representatives and testimony to the Commission, May 2018.

<sup>52</sup> Testimony to the Commission by Jill Burgin, mayor, Brentwood, May 4, 2018.

<sup>53</sup> Testimony to the Commission by Jill Burgin, mayor, Brentwood, May 4, 2018; interview with Jason Booher, election administrator, Sullivan County, December 20, 2018; Maciag 2016; and Underhill 2014.

<sup>54</sup> Interviews with Alan Farley, election administrator, Rutherford County, September 20, 2018; Jason Booher, election administrator, Sullivan County, December 20, 2018; Ronnie Neill, mayor, Somerville, May 8, 2018; and Steve McDaniel, city manager, Parkers Crossroads, February 8, 2019; and de Benedictis-Kessner 2017; Maciag 2016; and Underhill 2014.

<sup>55</sup> Interviews with Alan Farley, election administrator, Rutherford County, September 20, 2018; Andy Berke, mayor, Chattanooga, December 6, 2018; Doyle Lowe, mayor, Sweetwater, February 7, 2019; Kay Senter, vice-mayor, Morristown, December 6, 2018; and Rick Graham, mayor, Spring Hill, December 7,

most local officials interviewed say they generally like it that way and do not want to make their elections more partisan.

The literature reflects that these issues are discussed by local election officials across the US and includes reasons many oppose mandating election consolidation.<sup>56</sup> According to one study, “historically there have been real objections to holding local elections concurrently with national contests, and many of these normative concerns remain today.”<sup>57</sup> During testimony to the Kansas Special Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government in 2014, a National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) staff member discussed that the potential disadvantages and benefits need to be considered from the perspective of voters, candidates, and elections officials.<sup>58</sup> The advantages that are most discussed by stakeholders and the literature are cost savings and increased voter turnout in elections, and in fact most city leaders in Tennessee cite these as the reasons they moved their election date.

*Cities save money when their elections are on the same day as a countywide election.*

In Tennessee, county governments are responsible for the cost of elections, with a few exceptions. County legislative bodies fund their county election commission, which is responsible for conducting all elections for public office in the county and is monitored by the state election commission.<sup>59</sup> Counties pay for county and state primary and general elections, and they pay for city and school board elections, including special school districts, if they are on the same day as a countywide election. They also pay for federal elections, except for presidential primaries, which the state pays for. The state also pays for some special elections, such as an election for one seat in the General Assembly, and county primary elections and city elections if the counties and cities choose to hold those elections on the same day as the presidential primary.<sup>60</sup>

When cities’ elections coincide with a countywide election, they pay only for the expenses caused by the city election that would not otherwise have been incurred in the

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2018; and testimony to Commission by Mark Goins, coordinator of elections, Division of Elections, Secretary of State and Jill Burgin, mayor, Brentwood, May 4, 2018.

<sup>56</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures 2016; Underhill 2014; Hajnal and Lewis 2003; de Benedictis-Kessner 2017; Anzia 2014; and Hernandez 2013.

<sup>57</sup> Hajnal and Lewis 2003.

<sup>58</sup> Underhill 2014.

<sup>59</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Sections 2-12-101; 2-12-109; 2-12-116; and 6-53-101.

<sup>60</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-12-109; and email received on March 14, 2019, and interview with Mark Goins, coordinator of elections, Division of Elections, Tennessee Secretary of State, April 9, 2018.

countywide election.<sup>61</sup> In these cases, the city reimburses the county for expenses. For small to medium size cities, this cost is minimal—less than 10% of the cost of the stand-alone city election and as little as a few hundred dollars—and most commonly includes ballot printing and voting machine programming costs, according to county election administrators.<sup>62</sup> The biggest cost in running an election is for poll workers, and because the county election commission is responsible for conducting all elections and covering the cost of personnel, adding the city races and initiatives on the ballot during a countywide election is generally not an additional burden.<sup>63</sup> Additional poll workers would need to be recruited for stand-alone city elections, which is often a challenge.<sup>64</sup> For larger cities, however, combining the city ballot with county, state, or federal ballots could be a more complicated undertaking.<sup>65</sup>

When cities hold stand-alone or pure municipal elections, meaning they are on a day other than a countywide election, they are responsible for the full cost of the election.<sup>66</sup> Some city leaders say because they budget for the cost every year, paying for their own stand-alone election is not a burden, and the benefits outweigh the cost. Other city representatives, in addition to some county election administrators, say the cost savings is often the main motivation for consolidating city elections with countywide elections.<sup>67</sup>

The cost of stand-alone city elections varies widely depending on the size of the city and the type and complexity of the election, ranging from about a thousand dollars to a few million dollars. For example, elections with uncontested races or fewer races or initiatives on the ballot result in shorter ballots and require less programming and printing; therefore, they are generally not as expensive as elections with more items on

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<sup>61</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-12-109.

<sup>62</sup> Interviews with Phillip Warren, election administrator, Wilson County, February 13, 2019; and Jason Booher, election administrator, Sullivan County, December 20, 2018.

<sup>63</sup> Interviews with Jason Booher, election administrator, Sullivan County, December 20, 2018; and Alan Farley, election administrator, Rutherford County, September 20, 2018; testimony to the Commission by Phillip Warren, election administrator, Wilson County, May 4, 2018; Underhill 2014; and National Conference of State Legislatures 2018.

<sup>64</sup> The Presidential Commission on Election Administration 2014.

<sup>65</sup> Testimony to the Commission by Mark Goins, coordinator of elections, Division of Elections, Tennessee Secretary of State, May 4, 2018.

<sup>66</sup> Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-12-109.

<sup>67</sup> Interviews with Joanie Collins, election administrator, McNairy County, December 19, 2018; Doyle Lowe, mayor, Sweetwater, February 7, 2019; Amber Moore, election administrator, Hardeman County, December 19, 2018; Phillip Warren, election administrator, Wilson County, February 13, 2019; and Tanya White, election administrator, Lawrence County, December 27, 2018.



the ballot. Larger cities spend more. Because election expenses are not reported the same way in each city audit report, it is difficult to compare the amounts cities spend to conduct elections. For example, Knoxville's fiscal year 2018 audit report shows \$316,843 in actual expenditures for city elections, 0.12% of its overall expenditures that year. Nashville's fiscal year 2015 audit report shows \$3,799,725 in actual expenditures for the election commission, 0.47% of its overall expenditures that year.<sup>68</sup> According to city representatives, the cost for small to medium size cities to conduct an election ranges widely, as little as roughly \$1,000 to over \$40,000, and from less than 1% to approximately 3% of their overall expenditures.<sup>69</sup> Regardless of the actual dollars spent, for any size city, the cost of city elections is usually a small percentage of the overall government budget, often less than 1% of actual total expenditures.<sup>70</sup> However, even though cities would likely save money by consolidating their elections, some stakeholders say voter participation is the real issue, not cost.

*Voter turnout in countywide elections is usually higher than in stand-alone city elections.*

Nationally, Tennessee ranked 49<sup>th</sup> in voter turnout in 2016, compared to 46<sup>th</sup> in 2012 and 43<sup>rd</sup> in 2008, according to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Elections Performance Index, which assesses election administration in every state.<sup>71</sup> While voter turnout varies depending on the election, it is usually higher in countywide elections than in stand-alone city elections. The Tennessee Secretary of State's division of elections collects countywide data from the county election commissions for the presidential primary and regular August and November elections.<sup>72</sup> It does not regularly collect municipal election data. When countywide data is compared to a sample of stand-alone city elections, voter turnout in countywide elections is higher most of the time. Turnout in regular November elections is typically the highest—in 2018 the average turnout in Tennessee was 54.5%, and in 2016 it was 61.9%. Turnout in regular August elections is usually lower than in November—in 2018 it was 30.5%, and in 2016 it was 14.1%. Turnout in the March 2016 presidential primary was 31.9%. By comparison, turnout in 56 local stand-alone elections in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018

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<sup>68</sup> City of Knoxville Finance Department 2018; Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County Department of Finance 2015.

<sup>69</sup> Interviews with city representatives; testimony to the Commission by Jill Burgin, mayor, Brentwood, May 4, 2018; and city annual audit reports.

<sup>70</sup> City annual audit reports; testimony to the Commission by Ron Littlefield, former mayor of Chattanooga, and Chris Norman, administrative assistant to the mayor, City of Dickson, May 4, 2018; and interview with Rick Graham, mayor, Spring Hill, December 7, 2018.

<sup>71</sup> Massachusetts Institute of Technology Election Data + Science Lab "State Profiles."

<sup>72</sup> Calculated as number of registered voters who voted. Tennessee Secretary of State "Election Statistics."

ranged from 1.2% to 46%. Thirty-one of the 56 had turnout less than 15%, turnout in eight of the 56 was between 30% and 46%. In the other 17, turnout was between 15% and 30%.<sup>73</sup> It is common for small cities to have uncontested elections, resulting in very low turnout.<sup>74</sup> While the Secretary of State's office does not regularly collect turnout data for county primary elections, in interviews, local government representatives said turnout in those elections is typically low. Appendix F compares turnout in stand-alone city elections with countywide elections, and appendix G shows countywide voter turnout in the 2016 and 2018 regular August and November elections and 2016 presidential primary election in Tennessee.

Voter and election fatigue are often mentioned when discussing voter turnout. Consolidated elections can result in longer ballots, and when ballots are long, some voters might not complete the ballot, resulting in ballot fatigue or drop-off. Although it is hard to measure, examples from other states show that there is some ballot drop-off when multiple elections are combined on one ballot, but overall turnout increases. A 2013 study conducted two case studies comparing consolidated and unconsolidated city elections in California cities with similar populations, registered voters, and election characteristics. The study found that when controlling for down-ballot drop-off, consolidated elections had both higher overall turnout and higher down-ballot turnout than the unconsolidated elections—down-ballot turnout in the consolidated elections was 14% higher than overall turnout in the stand-alone city elections.<sup>75</sup> Two additional case studies of cities with comparable characteristics in Nevada conducted by the NCSL shows a similar result, with down-ballot turnout in the consolidated elections between 29% and 35% higher than total turnout in the stand-alone city elections.<sup>76</sup> See table 5. Based on the available evidence, the NCSL concludes that “running concurrent elections does increase voter participation in the smaller ‘down ballot’ races.”<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Received in email from Mark Goins, coordinator of elections, Division of Elections, Tennessee Secretary of State, May 8, 2018, and January 30, 2019.

<sup>74</sup> Testimony to the Commission by Ronnie Neill, mayor, Somerville, and Mark Goins, coordinator of elections, Division of Elections, Tennessee Secretary of State, May 4, 2018; and interviews with Steve McDaniel, city manager, Parkers Crossroads, February 8, 2019; Kim Wallace, city manager, Dover, February 7, 2019; Jennifer Moody, city administrator, Tullahoma, February 7, 2019; and Doyle Lowe, mayor, Sweetwater, February 7, 2019.

<sup>75</sup> Hernandez 2013; Hajnal et al. 2002.

<sup>76</sup> Underhill 2014.

<sup>77</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures 2016.

**Table 5. Down-Ballot Turnout in Nevada Municipal Elections**

	City	Election Type		Citywide Turnout	Down-Ballot Turnout
<b>Case Study One</b>	Las Vegas	June 2011 Municipal	Unconsolidated	25%	23%
	Reno	November 2010 General	Consolidated	64%	60%
<b>Case Study Two</b>	Mesquite	June 2011 Municipal	Unconsolidated	46%	45%
	Carson City	November 2010 General	Consolidated	79%	75%

Source: Underhill 2014.

Another idea discussed is that voters could get tired of showing up for frequent elections, potentially leading them to not vote in every election, especially the smaller elections like municipal elections.<sup>78</sup> When elections are more consolidated, they don't happen as often, and people might be more likely to vote, increasing overall turnout. One statistically significant survey conducted in 2008 found that nationwide, "voters like the idea of voting less often," and 70% said they "favored combining small races on larger election days."<sup>79</sup>

Although voter participation in elections is influenced by many factors, and it is difficult to determine which factors play a key role in a particular election, the literature and stakeholders agree that election consolidation usually improves voter turnout. In testimony, an NCSL staff member acknowledged that it is difficult to influence turnout, identifying the weather, civic culture, competitiveness of races, voter information, and get-out-the-vote efforts as a few contributing factors.<sup>80</sup> The form of city government, controversial issues, and voter apathy can also have an effect.<sup>81</sup> A 2011 study concluded that even when considering the great variance in when local elections are held in the US, "Amidst this great heterogeneity, one widely known and well accepted fact is that turnout in local elections is notably higher when those elections are held concurrently with major national or state races."<sup>82</sup> Some studies show that when city elections coincide with other elections, turnout doubled in some jurisdictions after changing the timing of elections, and turnout in cities with even-year consolidated elections was

<sup>78</sup> Underhill 2014; FairVote 2008; interview with Kay Senter, vice-mayor, Morristown, December 6, 2018.

<sup>79</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures 2016; Underhill 2014.

<sup>80</sup> Underhill 2014.

<sup>81</sup> Wood 2002.

<sup>82</sup> Berry and Gersen 2011.

much higher, up to seven times, than cities with off-cycle elections.<sup>83</sup> Some conclude that election timing is the easiest way to improve turnout—it is one factor that policymakers can influence and change.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Aldag 2016; Hajnal et al.; Hernandez 2013.

<sup>84</sup> Aldag 2016; Anzia 2014; Hajnal et al. 2002; Wood 2002.

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## Persons Contacted

Margie Alexander, City Recorder  
Milledgeville

Sarah Anzia, Michelle J. Schwartz  
Associate Professor of Public Policy &  
Associate Professor of Political Science  
University of California, Berkeley

Melissa Ashburn, Legal Consultant  
University of Tennessee Municipal  
Technical Advisory Service

Andy Berke, Mayor  
Chattanooga

Jason Booher, Election Administrator  
Sullivan County

Jill Burgin, Mayor  
Brentwood

Kim Buckley, Election Administrator  
Madison County

Joanie Collins, Election Administrator  
McNairy County

David Connor, Executive Director  
Tennessee County Services Association

Chris David, Assistant Election  
Administrator  
Knox County

Tom Davis, Election Administrator  
Rhea County

Alan Farley, Election Administrator  
Rutherford County

Mark Goins, Coordinator of Elections  
Tennessee Secretary of State  
Division of Elections

Rick Graham, Mayor  
Spring Hill

Julianne Hart, Election Administrator  
Gibson County

Gary Jaeckel, Municipal Management  
Consultant  
University of Tennessee Municipal  
Technical Advisory Service

Chad Jenkins, Deputy Director  
Tennessee Municipal League

Bobby Killen, Police Chief  
Loretto

Ron Littlefield, Former Mayor  
Chattanooga

Phyllis Looper, Finance Office Manager,  
City Clerk  
Livingston

Doyle Lowe, Mayor  
Sweetwater

Dylan Lynch, Policy Associate, Elections  
& Redistricting  
National Conference of State  
Legislatures

Steve McDaniel, City Manager  
Parkers Crossroads

Julian McTizic, Mayor  
Bolivar

Jeff Metzger, Legal Consultant  
University of Tennessee County  
Technical Assistance Service

Dan Miller, Election Administrator  
Henderson County

Jessica Miller, Deputy Clerk  
Red Boiling Springs

Jennifer Moody, City Administrator  
Tullahoma

Amber Moore, Election Administrator  
Hardeman County

Ronnie Neill, Mayor  
Somerville

Chris Norman, Administrative Assistant  
to the Mayor  
Dickson

Margaret Norris, Executive Director  
University of Tennessee Municipal  
Technical Advisory Service

Cindy Pinner, Election Administrator  
Tipton County

Cameron Sexton, Representative  
District 25, Tennessee

Kay Senter, Vice-Mayor  
Morristown

Tom Solomon, City Manager  
Dayton

Tammy Smith, Election Administrator  
Wilson County

Barbara Stakiel, Accounting Clerk  
Greeneville

Cinda Tillman, Election Administrator  
Lauderdale County

Ben Torres, Deputy General Counsel  
and Director of Government Relations  
Tennessee School Boards Association

Wendy Underhill, Director, Elections &  
Redistricting  
National Conference of State  
Legislatures

Kim Wallace, City Manager and Police  
Chief  
Dover

Phillip Warren, Election Administrator  
Wilson County

Tanya White, Election Administrator  
Lawrence County

Tim Wirgau, Former Representative  
District 75, Tennessee

**Appendix A: House Bill 2265 by Representative C. Sexton and  
Senate Bill 2146 by Senator Gardenhire (2018)**

SENATE BILL 2146  
By Gardenhire

HOUSE BILL 2265

By Sexton C

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2,  
relative to elections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-10-206(a)(6), is amended by deleting the language "January 15" and substituting instead "January 31".

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

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**Senate State and Local Government Committee 1**

**Amendment No. 1 to SB2146**

**Yager  
Signature of Sponsor**

**AMEND Senate Bill No. 2146\***

**House Bill No. 2265**

by deleting all language after the enacting clause and by substituting instead the following:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2, Chapter 3, Part 2, is amended by adding the following new section:

(a) Notwithstanding § 6-54-138 or any private act of a municipality to the contrary, the legislative body of a municipality shall, by ordinance, change the date of municipal elections to coincide with the August or November general election beginning in 2022. The ordinance changing the election date must provide for the extension of the terms of elected officials of the municipality necessary to comply with this section, but no term may be extended for more than two (2) years beyond its regular expiration date. Upon action taken pursuant to this subsection (a), the presiding officer of the legislative body shall file a certified copy of the ordinance with the state coordinator of elections.

(b) Nothing in subsection (a) may be construed to remove any incumbent from office or abridge the term of any incumbent prior to the end of the term for which an elected official was selected.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

## Appendix B: Snapshot of state and local election timing in the United States as of 2014

State	State Elections	County Elections	Municipal Elections	School Board Elections
Alabama	November / Even	November / Even	August / Even	Varies <sup>1</sup>
Alaska	November / Even	October / All <sup>2</sup>	October / All <sup>3</sup>	Varies
Arizona	November / Even	November / Even	Multiple schedules	November / Even
Arkansas	November / Even	November / Even	November / Even	September / All
California	November / Even	June / Even	Multiple schedules <sup>4</sup>	Multiple schedules
Colorado	November / Even	November / Even	Multiple schedules	November / Odd
Connecticut	November / Even	N/A	Multiple schedules	Multiple schedules
Delaware	November / Even	November / Even	Varies	May / All
Florida	November / Even	November / Even	Varies	November / Even
Georgia	November / Even	November / Even	November / Odd	Multiple schedules <sup>5</sup>
Hawaii	November / Even	November / Even	N/A	N/A
Idaho	November / Even	November / Even	November / Odd	May / Odd
Illinois	November / Even	November / Even	April / Odd <sup>6</sup>	April / Odd
Indiana	November / Even	November / Even	November / Odd	November / Even
Iowa	November / Even	November / Even	November / Odd	September / Odd
Kansas	November / Even	November / Even	April / Odd	April / Odd
Kentucky	November / All <sup>7</sup>	November / Even	November / Even	November / Even <sup>8</sup>
Louisiana	November / Odd	November / Odd <sup>9</sup>	Multiple schedules	November / Even <sup>10</sup>
Maine	November / Even	November / Even	Varies	Varies

State	State Elections	County Elections	Municipal Elections	School Board Elections
Maryland	November / Even	November / Even	Varies	November / Even
Massachusetts	November / Even	November / Even	Varies <sup>11</sup>	Varies <sup>12</sup>
Michigan	November / Even	November / Even	Multiple schedules	November / Even
Minnesota	November / Even	November / Even	Multiple schedules	Multiple schedules
Mississippi	November / Odd	November / Odd	June / Odd <sup>13</sup>	Multiple schedules <sup>14</sup>
Missouri	November / Even	November / Even	April / All	April / All <sup>15</sup>
Montana	November / Even	November / Even	November / Odd	May / All
Nebraska	November / Even	November / Even	November / Even <sup>16</sup>	November / Even <sup>17</sup>
Nevada	November / Even	November / Even	Multiple schedules	November / Even
New Hampshire	November / Even	November / Even	Varies <sup>18</sup>	Varies
New Jersey	November / Odd	November / All	Multiple schedules	Multiple schedules
New Mexico	November / Even	November / Even	March / Even <sup>19</sup>	February / Odd
New York	November / Even	November / All <sup>20</sup>	Varies <sup>21</sup>	May / All <sup>22</sup>
North Carolina	November / Even	November / Even	November / Odd <sup>23</sup>	Varies <sup>24</sup>
North Dakota	November / Even	November / Even	June / Even	Varies
Ohio	November / Even	November / Even	November / Odd	November / Odd
Oklahoma	November / Even	November / Even	April / Odd <sup>25</sup>	February / All
Oregon	November / Even	November / Even	November / Even	May / Odd
Pennsylvania	November / Even	November / Odd	November / Odd	November / Odd

State	State Elections	County Elections	Municipal Elections	School Board Elections
Rhode Island	November / Even	N/A	November / Even <sup>26</sup>	November / Even <sup>27</sup>
South Carolina	November / Even	November / Even	<b>Varies</b>	<b>Varies</b>
South Dakota	November / Even	November / Even	<b>Varies</b> <sup>28</sup>	<b>Varies</b> <sup>29</sup>
Tennessee	November / Even	<b>August / Even</b>	<b>Varies</b>	<b>Varies</b> <sup>30</sup>
Texas	November / Even	November / Even	<b>Multiple schedules</b>	<b>Multiple schedules</b>
Utah	November / Even	November / Even	<b>November / Odd</b>	November / Even
Vermont	November / Even	November / Even	<b>March / All</b>	<b>Varies</b> <sup>31</sup>
Virginia	<b>November / Odd</b>	<b>November / Odd</b>	<b>Multiple schedules</b>	<b>Multiple schedules</b>
Washington	November / Even	November / Even	<b>November / Odd</b>	<b>November / Odd</b>
West Virginia	November / Even	November / Even	<b>Varies</b> <sup>32</sup>	<b>May / Even</b>
Wisconsin	November / Even	<b>Multiple schedules</b>	<b>April / All</b>	<b>April / All</b>
Wyoming	November / Even	November / Even	<b>Multiple schedules</b>	November / Even

Received in an email from Sarah Anzia, author, *Timing and Turnout: How Off-Cycle Elections Favor Organized Groups*, January 11, 2019. Permission to reproduce the information received from the University of Chicago Press, January, 11, 2019.

"Varies" describes "cases in which governments in a given category have broad latitude to choose whatever elections dates they please with very few restrictions."

"Multiple schedules" describes categories where "subtypes of government...that hold elections at different times" or "individual governments...might have discretion to choose from among a menu of established election dates."

Bold text means "at least some elections of that type of government in that state are held at times other than November of even-numbered years." (Anzia 2014)

Notes:

1. County school boards are elected in November of even years; city school boards that are elected hold elections at various times throughout the year.
2. Alaska has boroughs rather than counties.

3. Anchorage holds its elections in April.
4. Charter cities can choose their election dates.
5. County school board elections are held during state general or primary elections; municipal school board elections are in November of odd years or during primaries.
6. Chicago holds elections in February of odd years.
7. Statewide offices are elected in odd years; legislative offices are elected in even years.
8. Independent school districts that embrace a fifth class city can hold elections in May.
9. Orleans Parish is an exception.
10. Municipal school districts do not necessarily have to hold their elections concurrently with national elections.
11. Town elections are held on various dates in the spring; most city elections are in November of odd years.
12. Municipal school committee elections are during their parent municipalities' elections; districtwide regional school elections are in November of even years.
13. Municipalities with special charters can hold elections at other times.
14. County school districts hold elections in November of even years; municipal school districts hold elections on the first Saturday in March.
15. Urban school districts have biennial elections in April of even years.
16. Omaha and Lincoln hold elections in May of odd years.
17. A few districts hold school elections during statewide primaries or in odd years.
18. Town elections can be on three different dates; village elections are anytime between January 1 and May 1; most city elections are in November of odd years.
19. Four cities hold elections at other times, only one of which is in November of even years (Los Alamos).
20. Different counties have different schedules. All are in November, but some are annual, some are biennial in odd years, and some are biennial in even years.
21. Cities and towns hold elections in November of even years, odd years, or both. Village elections are on the third Tuesday in March but can change to other days.
22. Albany and the "Big Five" (New York City, Yonkers, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo) are exceptions.
23. Municipalities with nonpartisan elections and runoffs hold general elections on the fourth Tuesday before the November odd-year date.
24. The default date is the date of the statewide primary, but local laws can override that policy.
25. Some charter cities hold elections at other times.
26. Central Falls, Woonsocket, and Jamestown are exceptions; they hold elections in November of odd years.
27. Woonsocket holds elections in November of odd years.
28. The default date is in April of every year, but municipalities can also consolidate with school district elections or the statewide primary in June.
29. Elections must be between the second Tuesday in April and third Tuesday in June of each year, or combined with municipal elections or the statewide primary.
30. County school boards hold elections during the statewide primary in August; municipal school boards choose their own election dates.
31. The annual town school district meeting is usually the date of the town meeting, but the date can be changed to anytime between February 1 and July 15.
32. Most municipal elections are in June of odd years.



# Appendix C: Public Chapter 1008, Acts of 2010

Public Chapter No. 1008

PUBLIC ACTS, 2010

1

**PUBLIC CHAPTER NO. 1008**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 3404**

**By Representative Ramsey**

**Substituted for: Senate Bill No. 3526**

**By Senators Overbey, Ford**

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 6, relative to municipal elections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 6-3-104, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and by substituting instead the following language:

(a) The board may by ordinance change the date of municipal elections to coincide with the August or November general election. The ordinance changing the election date shall provide for the extension of the terms of members of the board necessary to meet the election date, but no term may be extended for more than two (2) years beyond its regular expiration date.

(b) Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed to remove any incumbent from office or abridge the term of any incumbent prior to the end of the term for which an elected official was selected.

(c) If the board changes the date of municipal elections pursuant to subsection (a), the board may at a later date change the election date back to what such date was prior to moving the election date to coincide with the August or November general election. The board may only make an election date change under this subsection (c) one (1) time. Terms of incumbent members of the board shall not be abridged to accomplish an election date change under this subsection (c); however members elected at a date change pursuant to this subsection (c) may take office at a later date so as to not abridge terms of incumbent members. If such members take office at a later date, their term may be abridged due to such members having to take office at the later date.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 6-20-102, is amended by deleting subsection (c) in its entirety and by substituting instead the following language:

(c)

(1) The board of commissioners may by ordinance change the date of municipal elections to coincide with the August or November general election. The ordinance changing the election date shall provide for the extension of the terms of members of the board necessary to meet the election date, but no term may be extended for more than two (2) years beyond its regular expiration date.

(2) Nothing in subdivision (c)(1) shall be construed to remove any incumbent from office or abridge the term of any incumbent prior to the end of the term for which an elected official was selected.

(3) If the board of commissioners changes the date of municipal elections pursuant to subdivision (1), the board may at a later date change the election date back to what such date was prior to moving the election date to coincide with the August or November general election. The board may only make an election date change under this subdivision (3) one (1) time. Terms of incumbent members of the board shall not be abridged to accomplish an election date change under this subsection (c); however members elected at a date change pursuant to this subsection (c) may take office at a later date so as to not abridge terms of incumbent members. If such members take office at a later date, their term may be abridged due to such members having to take office at the later date.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 6-31-102(b), is amended by designating the existing language as subdivision (1) and by adding the following language at the end of the subsection:

The ordinance changing the election date shall provide for the extension of the terms of council members necessary to meet the election date, but no term may be extended for more than two (2) years beyond its regular expiration date.

(2) Nothing in subdivision (b)(1) shall be construed to remove any incumbent from office or abridge the term of any incumbent prior to the end of the term for which an elected official was selected.

Section 6-31-102(b) is further amended by deleting the period at the end of the first sentence and adding the language "or to coincide with the August general election."

(3) If the council changes the date of municipal elections pursuant to subdivision (1), the council may at a later date change the election date back to what such date was prior to moving the election date to coincide with the August or November general election. The council may only make an election date change under this subdivision (3) one (1) time. Terms of incumbent council members shall not be abridged to accomplish an election date change under this subsection (c); however council members elected at a date change pursuant to this subsection (c) may take office at a later date so as to not abridge terms of incumbent council members. If such council members take office at a later date, their term may be abridged due to such members having to take office at the later date.

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 6, Chapter 54, Part 1, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

6-54-1\_\_\_\_.

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of a private act of a municipality to the contrary, the legislative body of a municipality may by ordinance


change the date of municipal elections to coincide with the August or November general election. The ordinance changing the election date shall provide for the extension of the terms of members of the legislative body of the municipality necessary to meet the election date, but no term may be extended for more than two (2) years beyond its regular expiration date. If an action is taken pursuant to this subsection (a), the presiding officer of the legislative body shall file a certified copy of the ordinance with the state coordinator of elections.

(b) Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed to remove any incumbent from office or abridge the term of any incumbent prior to the end of the term for which an elected official was selected.

(c) If the legislative body of a municipality changes the date of municipal elections pursuant to subsection (a), the legislative body may at a later date change the election date back to what such date was prior to moving the election date to coincide with the August or November general election. The legislative body may only make a change under this subsection (c) one (1) time. Terms of incumbent members of the legislative body shall not be abridged to accomplish an election date change under this subsection (c); however members elected at a date change pursuant to this subsection (c) may take office at a later date so as to not abridge terms of incumbent members of the legislative body. If such members take office at a later date, their term may be abridged due to such members having to take office at the later date.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

**PASSED: May 20, 2010**

  
KENT WILLIAMS, SPEAKER  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

  
RON RAMSEY  
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE

**APPROVED this 3rd day of June 2010**



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PHIL BREDESEN, GOVERNOR

DRAFT

## Appendix D: All Tennessee City Election Dates and Charter Types

City	County that Administers Election	Charter Type	Next Election Date
Adams	Robertson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Adamsville	McNairy	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Alamo	Crockett	Private Act	May 1, 2021
Alcoa	Blount	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Alexandria	DeKalb	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Algood	Putnam	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Allardt	Fentress	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Altamont	Grundy	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Ardmore	Giles	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Arlington	Shelby	General Law Mayor-Alderman	September 19, 2021
Ashland City	Cheatham	Private Act	December 7, 2019
Athens	McMinn	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Atoka	Tipton	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Atwood	Carroll	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Auburntown	Cannon	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Baileyton	Greene	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Baneberry	Jefferson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Bartlett	Shelby	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Baxter	Putnam	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Bean Station	Grainger	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Beersheba Springs	Grundy	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Bell Buckle	Bedford	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Belle Meade	Davidson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Bells	Crockett	Private Act	May 1, 2021
Benton	Polk	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Berry Hill	Davidson	General Law Manager-Commission	March 3, 2020
Bethel Springs	McNairy	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Big Sandy	Benton	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Blaine	Grainger	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Bluff City	Sullivan	Private Act	May 21, 2019
Bolivar	Hardeman	Private Act	May 21, 2019
Braden	Fayette	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Bradford	Gibson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Brentwood	Williamson	General Law Manager-Commission	May 7, 2019
Brighton	Tipton	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Bristol	Sullivan	Private Act	May 21, 2019
Brownsville	Haywood	Private Act	June 16, 2020
Bruceton	Carroll	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Bulls Gap	Hawkins	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Burlison	Tipton	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Burns	Dickson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Byrdstown	Pickett	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Calhoun	McMinn	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Camden	Benton	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Carthage	Smith	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Caryville	Campbell	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020

<b>City</b>	<b>County that Administers Election</b>	<b>Charter Type</b>	<b>Next Election Date</b>
Cedar Hill	Robertson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Celina	Clay	Private Act	June 1, 2021
Centertown	Warren	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Centerville	Hickman	Private Act	October 5, 2019
Chapel Hill	Marshall	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Charleston	Bradley	General Law Manager-Commission	August 6, 2020
Charlotte	Dickson	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Chattanooga	Hamilton	Home Rule	March 2, 2021
Church Hill	Hawkins	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Clarksburg	Carroll	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Clarksville	Montgomery	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Cleveland	Bradley	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Clifton	Wayne	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Clinton	Anderson	Home Rule	November 3, 2020
Coalmont	Grundy	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Collegedale	Hamilton	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Collierville	Shelby	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Collinwood	Wayne	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Columbia	Maury	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Cookeville	Putnam	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Coopertown	Robertson	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Copperhill	Polk	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Cornersville	Marshall	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Cottage Grove	Henry	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Covington	Tipton	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Cowan	Franklin	Private Act	August 1, 2019
Crab Orchard	Cumberland	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Cross Plains	Robertson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Crossville	Cumberland	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Crump	Hardin	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Cumberland City	Stewart	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Cumberland Gap	Claiborne	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Dandridge	Jefferson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Dayton	Rhea	Private Act	April 17, 2019
Decatur	Meigs	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Decaturville	Decatur	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Decherd	Franklin	Private Act	August 1, 2019
Dickson	Dickson	Private Act	September 26, 2019
Dover	Stewart	General Law Mayor-Alderman	March 3, 2020
Dowelltown	DeKalb	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Doyle	White	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Dresden	Weakley	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Ducktown	Polk	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Dunlap	Sequatchie	Private Act	May 4, 2019
Dyer	Gibson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Dyersburg	Dyer	Private Act	November 3, 2020

<b>City</b>	<b>County that Administers Election</b>	<b>Charter Type</b>	<b>Next Election Date</b>
Eagleville	Rutherford	Private Act	November 3, 2020
East Ridge	Hamilton	Home Rule	November 3, 2020
Eastview	McNairy	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Elizabethton	Carter	General Law Modified Manager-Council	November 3, 2020
Elkton	Giles	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Englewood	McMinn	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Enville	Chester	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Erin	Houston	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Erwin	Unicoi	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Estill Springs	Franklin	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 1, 2019
Ethridge	Lawrence	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Etowah	McMinn	Home Rule	August 6, 2020
Fairview	Williamson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Farragut	Knox	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Fayetteville	Lincoln	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Finger	McNairy	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Forest Hills	Davidson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Franklin	Williamson	Private Act	October 22, 2019
Friendship	Crockett	Private Act	May 1, 2021
Friendsville	Blount	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Gadsden	Crockett	Private Act	May 1, 2021
Gainesboro	Jackson	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Gallatin	Sumner	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Gallaway	Fayette	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Garland	Tipton	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Gates	Lauderdale	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Gatlinburg	Sevier	Private Act	May 21, 2019
Germantown	Shelby	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Gibson	Gibson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Gilt Edge	Tipton	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Gleason	Weakley	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Goodlettsville	Sumner	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Gordonsville	Smith	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Grand Junction	Hardeman	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Graysville	Rhea	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Greenback	Loudon	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Greenbrier	Robertson	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Greeneville	Greene	Private Act	August 1, 2019
Greenfield	Weakley	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Gruetli-Laager	Grundy	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Guys	McNairy	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Halls	Lauderdale	Private Act	May 4, 2021
Harriman	Roane	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Harrogate	Claiborne	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Hartsville	Trousdale	Metropolitan	November 3, 2020
Henderson	Chester	Private Act	August 6, 2020

<b>City</b>	<b>County that Administers Election</b>	<b>Charter Type</b>	<b>Next Election Date</b>
Hendersonville	Sumner	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Henning	Lauderdale	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Henry	Henry	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Hickory Valley	Hardeman	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Hohenwald	Lewis	Private Act	May 2, 2019
Hollow Rock	Carroll	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Hornbeak	Obion	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Hornsby	Hardeman	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Humboldt	Gibson	Private Act	November 2, 2021
Huntingdon	Carroll	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Huntland	Franklin	Private Act	August 1, 2019
Huntsville	Scott	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Jacksboro	Campbell	General Law Mayor-Alderman	April 6, 2019
Jackson	Madison	Private Act	May 7, 2019
Jamestown	Fentress	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Jasper	Marion	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Jefferson City	Jefferson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Jellico	Campbell	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Johnson City	Carter	Home Rule	November 3, 2020
Jonesborough	Washington	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Kenton	Gibson	Private Act	November 8, 2022
Kimball	Marion	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Kingsport	Sullivan	Private Act	May 21, 2019
Kingston	Roane	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Kingston Springs	Cheatham	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Knoxville	Knox	Home Rule	November 5, 2019
Lafayette	Macon	Private Act	May 5, 2020
LaFollette	Campbell	Private Act	November 3, 2020
LaGrange	Fayette	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Lakeland	Shelby	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Lakesite	Hamilton	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
LaVergne	Rutherford	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Lawrenceburg	Lawrence	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Lebanon	Wilson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Lenoir City	Loudon	Home Rule	November 3, 2020
Lewisburg	Marshall	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Lexington	Henderson	Private Act	September 12, 2019
Liberty	DeKalb	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Linden	Perry	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Livingston	Overton	Private Act	June 3, 2020
Lobelville	Perry	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Lookout Mountain	Hamilton	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Loretto	Lawrence	General Law Mayor-Alderman	April 28, 2020
Loudon	Loudon	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Louisville	Blount	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Luttrell	Union	Private Act	June 6, 2019



<b>City</b>	<b>County that Administers Election</b>	<b>Charter Type</b>	<b>Next Election Date</b>
Lynchburg	Moore	Metropolitan	November 3, 2020
Lynnville	Giles	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Madisonville	Monroe	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Manchester	Coffee	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Martin	Weakley	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Maryville	Blount	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Mason	Tipton	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Maury City	Crockett	Private Act	May 1, 2021
Maynardville	Union	General Law Manager-Commission	June 23, 2020
McEwen	Humphreys	Private Act	May 18, 2019
McKenzie	Carroll	Private Act	November 3, 2020
McLemoresville	Carroll	Private Act	November 3, 2020
McMinnville	Warren	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Medina	Gibson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Medon	Madison	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Memphis	Shelby	Home Rule	October 3, 2019
Michie	McNairy	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Middleton	Hardeman	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Milan	Gibson	Private Act	November 5, 2019
Milledgeville	McNairy	General Law Mayor-Alderman	May 25, 2019
Millersville	Robertson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Millington	Shelby	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Minor Hill	Giles	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Mitchellville	Sumner	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Monteagle	Franklin	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Monterey	Putnam	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Morrison	Warren	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Morristown	Hamblen	Private Act	May 7, 2019
Moscow	Fayette	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Mosheim	Greene	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Mount Carmel	Hawkins	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Mount Pleasant	Maury	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Mountain City	Johnson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Mt. Juliet	Wilson	Home Rule	November 3, 2020
Munford	Tipton	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Murfreesboro	Rutherford	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Nashville	Davidson	Metropolitan	August 1, 2019
New Hope	Marion	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
New Johnsonville	Humphreys	Private Act	August 6, 2020
New Market	Jefferson	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
New Tazewell	Claiborne	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Newbern	Dyer	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Newport	Cocke	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Niota	McMinn	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Nolensville	Williamson	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Normandy	Bedford	Private Act	November 3, 2020

<b>City</b>	<b>County that Administers Election</b>	<b>Charter Type</b>	<b>Next Election Date</b>
Norris	Anderson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Oak Hill	Davidson	General Law Manager-Commission	August 6, 2020
Oak Ridge	Anderson	Home Rule	November 3, 2020
Oakdale	Morgan	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Oakland	Fayette	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Obion	Obion	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Oliver Springs	Anderson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Oneida	Scott	Private Act	November 2, 2019
Orlinda	Robertson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Orme	Marion	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Palmer	Grundy	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Paris	Henry	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Parkers Crossroads	Henderson	General Law Manager-Commission	May 7, 2019
Parrottsville	Cocke	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Parsons	Decatur	Private Act	June 9, 2022
Pegram	Cheatham	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Petersburg	Lincoln	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Philadelphia	Loudon	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Pigeon Forge	Sevier	General Law Manager-Commission	May 14, 2019
Pikeville	Bledsoe	Private Act	December 7, 2019
Piperton	Fayette	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Pittman Center	Sevier	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Plainview	Union	General Law Mayor-Alderman	June 23, 2020
Pleasant Hill	Cumberland	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Pleasant View	Cheatham	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Portland	Robertson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Powells Crossroads	Marion	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Pulaski	Giles	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Puryear	Henry	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Ramer	McNairy	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Red Bank	Hamilton	Home Rule	November 3, 2020
Red Boiling Springs	Macon	Private Act	April 27, 2019
Ridgely	Lake	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Ridgeside	Hamilton	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Ridgetop	Robertson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Ripley	Lauderdale	Private Act	April 2, 2020
Rives	Obion	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Rockford	Blount	General Law Manager-Commission	March 3, 2020
Rockwood	Roane	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Rocky Top	Anderson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Rogersville	Hawkins	Private Act	June 5, 2021
Rossville	Fayette	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Rutherford	Gibson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Rutledge	Grainger	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Saltillo	Hardin	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Samburg	Obion	Private Act	November 3, 2020

<b>City</b>	<b>County that Administers Election</b>	<b>Charter Type</b>	<b>Next Election Date</b>
Sardis	Henderson	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Saulsbery	Hardeman	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Savannah	Hardin	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Scotts Hill	Henderson	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Selmer	McNairy	Private Act	November 5, 2019
Sevierville	Sevier	Home Rule	May 2, 2019
Sharon	Weakley	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Shelbyville	Bedford	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Signal Mountain	Hamilton	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Silerton	Hardeman	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Slayden	Dickson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Smithville	DeKalb	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Smyrna	Rutherford	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Sneedville	Hancock	General Law Mayor-Alderman	May 1, 2021
Soddy-Daisy	Hamilton	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Somerville	Fayette	Private Act	November 3, 2020
South Carthage	Smith	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
South Fulton	Obion	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
South Pittsburg	Marion	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Sparta	White	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Spencer	Van Buren	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Spring City	Rhea	General Law Manager-Commission	August 6, 2020
Spring Hill	Maury	General Law Mayor-Alderman	April 11, 2019
Springfield	Robertson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
St. Joseph	Lawrence	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Stanton	Haywood	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Stantonville	McNairy	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Sunbright	Morgan	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Surgoinsville	Hawkins	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Sweetwater	Monroe	Home Rule	June 13, 2019
Tazewell	Claiborne	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Tellico Plains	Monroe	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Tennessee Ridge	Houston	General Law Manager-Commission	August 6, 2020
Thompson's Station	Williamson	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Three Way	Madison	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Tiptonville	Lake	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Toone	Hardeman	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Townsend	Blount	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Tracy City	Grundy	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Trenton	Gibson	Private Act	August 4, 2022
Trezevant	Carroll	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Trimble	Dyer	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Troy	Obion	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Tullahoma	Coffee	Private Act	August 1, 2019
Tusculum	Greene	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020

<b>City</b>	<b>County that Administers Election</b>	<b>Charter Type</b>	<b>Next Election Date</b>
Unicoi	Unicoi	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Union City	Obion	General Law Modified Manager-Council	November 3, 2020
Vanleer	Dickson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Viola	Warren	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Vonore	Monroe	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Walden	Hamilton	Home Rule (was General Law Mayor-Alderman)	November 3, 2020
Wartburg	Morgan	General Law Mayor-Alderman	August 6, 2020
Wartrace	Bedford	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Watauga	Carter	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Watertown	Wilson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Waverly	Humphreys	Private Act	May 8, 2019
Waynesboro	Wayne	General Law Manager-Commission	August 6, 2020
Westmoreland	Sumner	Private Act	November 3, 2020
White Bluff	Dickson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
White House	Robertson	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
White Pine	Jefferson	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Whiteville	Hardeman	Private Act	August 6, 2020
Whitwell	Marion	Home Rule	November 3, 2020
Williston	Fayette	General Law Manager-Commission	November 3, 2020
Winchester	Franklin	Private Act	August 1, 2019
Winfield	Scott	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Woodbury	Cannon	Private Act	November 3, 2020
Woodland Mills	Obion	General Law Mayor-Alderman	November 3, 2020
Yorkville	Gibson	General Law Manager-Commission	November 5, 2019

Sources: Tennessee Secretary of State 2017, 2018, and 2019 "Elections by Date"; Tennessee Secretary of State "Tennessee Department of State – Division of Elections, County Election Commissions"; county election commission websites; county election administrators; city representatives; University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service "Tennessee Cities by Charter Type"; emails from Gary Jaeckel, municipal management consultant, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, December 21, 2018 and January 14, 2019; and United States Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, five-year estimate, 2017.

**Appendix E: Senate Bill 1040 by Senator Kyle and House Bill 1929 by Representative Rinks (2007)**

HOUSE BILL 1929  
By Rinks

SENATE BILL 1040

By Kyle

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 6,  
relative to municipal elections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 6-3-104, is amended by inserting the following language after the first sentence:

The date of such elections shall be held in conjunction with the regular November election or with the regular August election as defined in § 2-1-104.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 6-20-102, is amended by deleting subdivision (c) and substituting instead the following:

(c)

(1) In addition to the authority granted by subsections (a) and (b), the board of commissioners shall fix the date of subsequent regular municipal elections as the date of the regular November election or regular August election as defined in § 2-1-104.

(2)

(A) During the transition period, if a term expires six (6) months or less before a regular November election or regular August election, whichever date is chosen as the date for subsequent regular municipal elections, the board of commissioners may by ordinance extend the length of the term of an incumbent to coincide with such election.

(B) During the transition period, if a term expires more than six (6) months before a regular November election or regular August election, whichever date is chosen as the date for subsequent regular municipal elections, the board of commissioners shall fix the date of the election as long as any date so designated falls within ninety (90) days of the annual election anniversary of the

first election of the board of commissioners. In such election, the term of office shall be a transitional one, which shall extend only until the next regular November election or regular August election that occurs more than three (3) years after such scheduled election.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 6-31-102, is amended by deleting subsection (b) and substituting instead the following:

(b) Any city operating under this charter shall change the date of holding its regular biennial municipal election from the date provided in subsection (a) to the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, to coincide with the election of members of the general assembly and representatives in the congress of the United States, as provided in § 2-3-203 or to the regular August election as defined in § 2-1-104.

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 6, Chapter 54, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new, appropriately designated section:

Notwithstanding any provision of law, charter or private act to the contrary, except in any county having a metropolitan form of government, all municipal elections shall be held in conjunction with the regular November election or with the regular August election by 2010. Each municipality shall provide the state coordinator of elections a plan by which the municipality intends to comply with this section. Such plan shall include timetables of transitional elections. Nothing in this section shall be construed to remove any incumbent from office or abridge the term of any incumbent prior to the end of the term for which an elected official was selected. Provided, however, a municipality may extend the length of a term to facilitate the transition to the November or August election.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

# Appendix F: Voter Turnout in Stand-alone City Elections versus Countywide Elections

City	Population	County	Stand-alone City Election Year*	Stand-alone City Election Turnout	Countywide Turnout March 2016	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City Election March 2016	Countywide Turnout August 2016	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City Election August 2016	Countywide Turnout November 2016	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City Election November 2016	Countywide Turnout August 2018	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City election August 2018	Countywide Turnout November 2018	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City Election November 2018
Alamo	2,221	Crockett	2017	41.1%	31.7%	-9.4%	16.2%	-25.0%	64.3%	23.2%	42.4%	1.3%	57.0%	15.9%
Arlington	11,678	Shelby	2017	13.9%	27.9%	14.0%	15.0%	1.1%	60.2%	46.4%	27.7%	13.9%	51.1%	37.2%
Ashland City	4,599	Cheatham	2017	6.3%	33.7%	27.4%	17.0%	10.8%	66.2%	59.9%	29.9%	23.7%	56.1%	49.8%
Bells	2,687	Crockett	2017	22.6%	31.7%	9.1%	16.2%	-6.5%	64.3%	41.7%	42.4%	19.8%	57.0%	34.4%
Berry Hill	891	Davidson	na	na	32.4%	na	12.1%	na	62.3%	na	27.8%	na	57.5%	na
Bluff City	1,772	Sullivan	2017	12.4%	34.0%	21.6%	13.2%	0.8%	65.6%	53.2%	28.5%	16.1%	57.1%	44.7%
Bolivar	5,037	Hardeman	2017	8.0%	30.5%	22.5%	26.8%	18.8%	63.6%	55.6%	41.2%	33.2%	54.0%	45.9%
Brentwood	41,524	Williamson	2017	12.2%	37.2%	25.0%	12.2%	0.0%	72.1%	59.9%	29.6%	17.4%	68.0%	55.8%
Bristol	26,668	Sullivan	2015	4.2%	34.0%	29.8%	13.2%	9.0%	65.6%	61.4%	28.5%	24.3%	57.1%	52.9%
Brownsville	9,829	Haywood	2018	5.9%	26.9%	21.0%	23.2%	17.3%	62.4%	56.5%	43.8%	37.9%	55.1%	49.2%
Celina	1,763	Clay	2017	39.1%	26.4%	-12.7%	32.6%	-6.5%	51.8%	12.6%	45.2%	6.1%	45.4%	6.2%
Centerville	3,548	Hickman	2015	13.1%	32.0%	18.9%	10.1%	-3.0%	55.7%	42.6%	42.4%	29.3%	51.8%	38.7%
Chattanooga	176,291	Hamilton	2017	15.6%	32.3%	16.7%	12.1%	-3.5%	58.6%	42.9%	23.0%	7.3%	52.6%	37.0%
Cowan	1,477	Franklin	2017	15.1%	36.1%	21.0%	16.1%	1.0%	64.7%	49.6%	35.5%	20.4%	56.5%	41.4%
Dayton	7,341	Rhea	2017	1.7%	33.0%	31.3%	12.7%	10.9%	56.4%	54.6%	38.1%	36.4%	50.6%	48.9%
Decherd	3,073	Franklin	2015	23.5%	36.1%	12.6%	16.1%	-7.4%	64.7%	41.2%	35.5%	12.0%	56.5%	33.0%
Dickson	15,128	Dickson	2017	10.6%	29.8%	19.2%	12.8%	2.3%	61.9%	51.3%	32.1%	21.5%	52.9%	42.3%
Dover	2,013	Stewart	2018	23.7%	32.6%	8.9%	20.4%	-3.3%	61.6%	37.9%	49.5%	25.8%	52.7%	29.0%
Dunlap	5,061	Sequatchie	2017	10.0%	28.1%	18.1%	12.4%	2.4%	59.2%	49.2%	45.4%	35.4%	49.5%	39.5%
Estill Springs	2,125	Franklin	2015	14.8%	36.1%	21.3%	16.1%	1.3%	64.7%	49.9%	35.5%	20.7%	56.5%	41.7%
Franklin	72,990	Williamson	2017	9.1%	37.2%	28.1%	12.2%	3.1%	72.1%	63.0%	29.6%	20.5%	68.0%	58.9%
Friendship	705	Crockett	2017	45.1%	31.7%	-13.4%	16.2%	-28.9%	64.3%	19.2%	42.4%	-2.7%	57.0%	11.9%
Gadsden	627	Crockett	2017	13.1%	31.7%	18.6%	16.2%	3.0%	64.3%	51.2%	42.4%	29.3%	57.0%	43.9%
Gatlinburg	4,126	Sevier	2017	17.1%	32.4%	15.3%	7.1%	-10.0%	58.9%	41.8%	22.1%	5.0%	48.0%	30.9%
Greeneville	14,895	Greene	2015	8.8%	32.4%	23.6%	14.1%	5.3%	57.1%	48.3%	30.5%	21.7%	49.1%	40.3%
Halls	2,424	Lauderdale	2017	18.6%	26.8%	8.2%	17.8%	-0.8%	59.1%	40.5%	32.2%	13.5%	50.8%	32.2%
Hohenwald	3,651	Lewis	na	na	28.0%	na	9.6%	na	60.7%	na	47.9%	na	53.2%	na
Humboldt	8,155	Gibson	2017	34.9%	30.2%	-4.7%	15.4%	-19.5%	64.6%	29.7%	35.7%	0.7%	55.4%	20.4%
Huntland	693	Franklin	2015	26.2%	36.1%	9.9%	16.1%	-10.1%	64.7%	38.5%	35.5%	9.3%	56.5%	30.3%
Jacksboro	2,085	Campbell	2017	9.4%	22.4%	13.0%	16.9%	7.5%	52.6%	43.3%	42.7%	33.3%	43.5%	34.2%
Jackson	66,977	Madison	na	na	29.1%	na	20.3%	na	61.8%	na	30.9%	na	56.0%	na
Kingsport	52,698	Sullivan	2015	22.5%	34.0%	11.5%	13.2%	-9.3%	65.6%	43.1%	28.5%	6.0%	57.1%	34.6%
Knoxville	184,465	Knox	2017	10.0%	31.7%	21.7%	7.3%	-2.8%	60.6%	50.5%	26.3%	16.3%	52.7%	42.6%
Lafayette	4,985	Macon	2016	11.1%	29.7%	18.6%	18.5%	7.4%	59.7%	48.6%	51.6%	40.5%	50.3%	39.2%
Lexington	7,731	Henderson	2017	7.1%	27.9%	20.8%	12.0%	4.9%	59.6%	52.5%	36.9%	29.8%	52.4%	45.3%
Livingston	4,042	Overton	2018	33.6%	36.7%	3.1%	24.6%	-9.0%	58.6%	25.0%	39.1%	5.5%	53.5%	19.8%
Loretto	1,906	Lawrence	2018	4.1%	35.9%	31.8%	5.7%	1.6%	64.4%	60.3%	39.2%	35.1%	54.2%	50.1%
Luttrell	891	Union	2017	6.3%	26.0%	19.7%	19.8%	13.5%	53.4%	47.1%	48.3%	42.0%	48.6%	42.3%
Maury City	731	Crockett	2017	19.2%	31.7%	12.5%	16.2%	-3.0%	64.3%	45.1%	42.4%	23.2%	57.0%	37.8%

City	Population	County	Stand-alone City Election Year*	Stand-alone City Election Turnout	Countywide Turnout March 2016	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City Election March 2016	Countywide Turnout August 2016	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City Election August 2016	Countywide Turnout November 2016	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City Election November 2016	Countywide Turnout August 2018	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City election August 2018	Countywide Turnout November 2018	Difference in Turnout Between Countywide and Stand-alone City Election November 2018
Maynardville	2,611	Union	2018	29.6%	26.0%	-3.6%	19.8%	-9.9%	53.4%	23.8%	48.3%	18.7%	48.6%	19.0%
McEwen	1,694	Humphreys	2015	6.9%	28.2%	21.3%	15.2%	8.3%	56.8%	49.9%	31.7%	24.8%	47.3%	40.4%
Memphis	654,723	Shelby	2015	28.0%	27.9%	-0.1%	15.0%	-13.0%	60.2%	32.2%	27.7%	-0.3%	51.1%	23.1%
Milan	7,715	Gibson	na	na	30.2%	na	15.4%	na	64.6%	na	35.7%	na	55.4%	na
Milledgeville	288	McNairy	na	na	30.2%	na	28.0%	na	63.0%	na	39.1%	na	53.5%	na
Morristown	29,446	Hamblen	2017	23.7%	36.2%	12.5%	11.9%	-11.8%	59.4%	35.8%	24.9%	1.3%	50.1%	26.4%
Nashville	654,187	Davidson	na	na	32.4%	na	12.1%	na	62.3%	na	27.8%	na	57.5%	na
Oneida	3,682	Scott	2015	46.0%	20.1%	-25.9%	26.7%	-19.3%	51.8%	5.8%	53.9%	7.9%	40.5%	-5.5%
Parkers Crossroads	363	Henderson	2017	2.0%	27.9%	25.9%	12.0%	9.9%	59.6%	57.6%	36.9%	34.8%	52.4%	50.4%
Parsons	2,403	Decatur	2018	1.2%	29.4%	28.2%	25.9%	24.7%	63.1%	61.9%	52.1%	50.9%	53.9%	52.7%
Pigeon Forge	6,147	Sevier	2017	15.4%	32.4%	17.0%	7.1%	-8.2%	58.9%	43.6%	22.1%	6.8%	48.0%	32.7%
Pikeville	1,968	Bledsoe	na	na	35.9%	na	23.9%	na	57.4%	na	40.7%	na	49.3%	na
Plainview	1,837	Union	2018	16.2%	26.0%	9.8%	19.8%	3.6%	53.4%	37.2%	48.3%	32.1%	48.6%	32.4%
Red Boiling Springs	1,659	Macon	2015	43.7%	29.7%	-14.0%	18.5%	-25.2%	59.7%	16.0%	51.6%	7.9%	50.3%	6.6%
Ripley	8,148	Lauderdale	2016	21.6%	26.8%	5.2%	17.8%	-3.8%	59.1%	37.5%	32.2%	10.6%	50.8%	29.2%
Rockford	746	Blount	na	na	40.4%	na	15.6%	na	67.0%	na	27.5%	na	56.6%	na
Rogersville	4,326	Hawkins	2017	16.9%	34.6%	17.7%	18.0%	1.1%	64.5%	47.6%	33.1%	16.2%	56.1%	39.2%
Selmer	4,446	McNairy	2017	43.7%	30.2%	-13.5%	28.0%	-15.8%	63.0%	19.2%	39.1%	-4.7%	53.5%	9.7%
Sevierville	16,387	Sevier	2017	1.2%	32.4%	31.2%	7.1%	5.9%	58.9%	57.7%	22.1%	20.9%	48.0%	46.8%
Sneedville	1,347	Hancock	2017	5.2%	21.5%	16.3%	27.8%	22.7%	46.1%	41.0%	33.2%	28.0%	38.2%	33.1%
Spring Hill	35,995	Maury	2017	7.7%	35.5%	27.8%	17.2%	9.6%	64.4%	56.7%	38.7%	31.0%	55.5%	47.9%
Sweetwater	5,842	Monroe	2017	2.6%	39.5%	36.9%	29.6%	27.1%	59.8%	57.3%	35.5%	32.9%	49.7%	47.2%
Tullahoma	19,037	Coffee	2017	3.2%	34.7%	31.5%	18.1%	14.8%	61.8%	58.5%	37.2%	34.0%	54.2%	51.0%
Waverly	4,070	Humphreys	2015	9.3%	28.2%	18.9%	15.2%	5.9%	56.8%	47.5%	31.7%	22.4%	47.3%	38.0%
Winchester	8,467	Franklin	2015	14.0%	36.1%	22.1%	16.1%	2.1%	64.7%	50.7%	35.5%	21.5%	56.5%	42.5%
Yorkville	267	Gibson	na	na	30.2%	na	15.4%	na	64.6%	na	35.7%	na	55.4%	na

\*Most recent year with available data.

Population is 2017 five-year estimate.

Source: Countywide turnout data from Tennessee Secretary of State "Election Statistics"; municipal turnout data received in emails from Mark Goins, coordinator of elections, Division of Elections, Tennessee Secretary of State, May 8, 2018 and January 30, 2019.



## Appendix G: Countywide Turnout in 2016 and 2018 elections in Tennessee

County	March 2016	August 2016	November 2016	August 2018	November 2018
Anderson	33.89%	9.50%	64.64%	31.20%	56.67%
Bedford	34.60%	11.01%	62.24%	37.63%	55.21%
Benton	30.34%	24.21%	59.40%	42.21%	48.40%
Bledsoe	35.91%	23.92%	57.39%	40.69%	49.25%
Blount	40.43%	15.56%	66.97%	27.46%	56.58%
Bradley	31.15%	13.76%	59.28%	24.58%	51.25%
Campbell	22.42%	16.89%	52.64%	42.65%	43.51%
Cannon	36.21%	21.44%	60.86%	50.02%	54.44%
Carroll	26.93%	12.83%	58.46%	35.90%	50.52%
Carter	34.90%	10.63%	63.47%	34.34%	55.44%
Cheatham	33.68%	17.03%	66.20%	29.93%	56.08%
Chester	29.57%	17.50%	61.43%	36.16%	51.51%
Claiborne	25.14%	32.80%	55.27%	45.99%	46.33%
Clay	26.38%	32.61%	51.75%	45.23%	45.35%
Cocke	31.43%	15.57%	53.85%	34.98%	47.40%
Coffee	34.66%	18.05%	61.77%	37.24%	54.22%
Crockett	31.71%	16.16%	64.29%	42.40%	57.01%
Cumberland	36.97%	14.87%	66.17%	31.67%	57.68%
Davidson	32.43%	12.11%	62.28%	27.83%	57.50%
Decatur	29.38%	25.90%	63.10%	52.09%	53.89%
DeKalb	30.98%	21.48%	60.03%	42.16%	51.50%
Dickson	29.76%	12.83%	61.87%	32.07%	52.87%
Dyer	29.20%	12.94%	61.04%	32.50%	52.10%
Fayette	36.11%	24.85%	69.68%	35.23%	61.30%
Fentress	29.41%	26.20%	60.90%	51.94%	53.65%
Franklin	36.10%	16.14%	64.71%	35.53%	56.48%
Gibson	30.24%	15.43%	64.64%	35.65%	55.35%
Giles	27.63%	13.74%	59.19%	36.23%	50.95%
Grainger	27.92%	12.36%	54.47%	28.03%	50.66%
Greene	32.39%	14.14%	57.09%	30.46%	49.10%
Grundy	31.23%	21.60%	62.99%	41.48%	49.54%
Hamblen	36.20%	11.86%	59.42%	24.93%	50.10%
Hamilton	32.28%	12.13%	58.56%	22.96%	52.59%
Hancock	21.48%	27.83%	46.11%	33.16%	38.23%
Hardeman	30.48%	26.80%	63.63%	41.19%	53.95%
Hardin	30.06%	22.87%	62.01%	42.50%	51.75%
Hawkins	34.64%	18.01%	64.49%	33.11%	56.13%

County	March 2016	August 2016	November 2016	August 2018	November 2018
Haywood	26.91%	23.16%	62.44%	43.79%	55.12%
Henderson	27.87%	11.98%	59.63%	36.87%	52.42%
Henry	36.28%	23.36%	64.09%	35.99%	55.44%
Hickman	32.01%	10.11%	55.73%	42.38%	51.79%
Houston	29.97%	25.82%	61.69%	55.06%	51.35%
Humphreys	28.22%	15.18%	56.79%	31.66%	47.29%
Jackson	25.15%	20.08%	51.37%	46.10%	48.56%
Jefferson	35.71%	7.93%	62.36%	28.61%	51.42%
Johnson	30.29%	19.79%	59.09%	48.08%	53.39%
Knox	31.73%	7.28%	60.58%	26.31%	52.67%
Lake	21.60%	39.94%	52.68%	48.43%	41.05%
Lauderdale	26.75%	17.82%	59.10%	32.17%	50.80%
Lawrence	35.88%	5.74%	64.41%	39.18%	54.20%
Lewis	28.00%	9.61%	60.66%	47.93%	53.23%
Lincoln	33.14%	12.57%	64.82%	27.16%	52.68%
Loudon	38.62%	7.05%	70.02%	35.80%	61.69%
Macon	29.72%	18.46%	59.65%	51.58%	50.28%
Madison	29.13%	20.25%	61.76%	30.90%	55.98%
Marion	31.53%	20.37%	61.86%	28.22%	52.72%
Marshall	28.96%	18.03%	62.67%	38.98%	56.77%
Maury	35.49%	17.23%	64.37%	38.70%	55.52%
McMinn	34.93%	9.31%	61.11%	29.26%	50.94%
McNairy	30.16%	27.98%	62.95%	39.08%	53.48%
Meigs	32.88%	23.85%	58.33%	37.95%	51.18%
Monroe	39.54%	29.64%	59.84%	35.45%	49.74%
Montgomery	25.36%	7.81%	52.40%	19.75%	47.81%
Moore	38.70%	31.37%	61.42%	47.61%	50.26%
Morgan	26.77%	7.93%	55.44%	50.14%	53.54%
Obion	30.93%	14.08%	64.65%	38.13%	49.03%
Overton	36.66%	24.61%	58.58%	39.07%	53.46%
Perry	25.40%	43.68%	53.32%	51.36%	47.92%
Pickett	36.98%	32.33%	66.19%	51.00%	57.20%
Polk	32.89%	21.85%	55.44%	32.15%	44.32%
Putnam	35.40%	12.13%	64.14%	33.79%	57.52%
Rhea	33.00%	12.65%	56.38%	38.14%	50.62%
Roane	33.77%	23.85%	64.08%	38.69%	59.62%
Robertson	32.39%	13.93%	65.84%	34.61%	57.49%

County	March 2016	August 2016	November 2016	August 2018	November 2018
Rutherford	33.12%	13.77%	64.91%	26.09%	57.63%
Scott	20.08%	26.74%	51.75%	53.85%	40.52%
Sequatchie	28.08%	12.38%	59.22%	45.38%	49.48%
Sevier	32.43%	7.13%	58.92%	22.11%	48.01%
Shelby	27.90%	14.97%	60.21%	27.72%	51.09%
Smith	33.38%	13.55%	62.51%	47.24%	55.93%
Stewart	32.59%	20.43%	61.55%	49.50%	52.67%
Sullivan	34.00%	13.20%	65.57%	28.51%	57.06%
Sumner	32.31%	12.79%	65.98%	26.86%	60.36%
Tipton	26.77%	14.36%	58.44%	26.19%	53.35%
Trousdale	26.67%	14.57%	59.59%	45.24%	49.79%
Unicoi	38.75%	25.07%	65.49%	33.88%	59.91%
Union	25.96%	19.75%	53.40%	48.29%	48.57%
Van Buren	28.40%	12.73%	54.31%	38.75%	48.89%
Warren	39.45%	18.12%	63.06%	47.46%	53.16%
Washington	32.95%	9.46%	63.73%	25.48%	58.46%
Wayne	24.60%	29.59%	56.31%	49.76%	49.78%
Weakley	31.35%	12.39%	65.94%	42.74%	55.18%
White	34.44%	23.81%	62.04%	42.14%	55.42%
Williamson	37.24%	12.16%	72.11%	29.61%	67.95%
Wilson	37.62%	14.87%	71.12%	37.47%	62.97%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31.89%</b>	<b>14.05%</b>	<b>61.92%</b>	<b>30.50%</b>	<b>54.46%</b>

Source: Tennessee Secretary of State "Election Statistics."