



TACIR

The Tennessee Advisory Commission
on Intergovernmental Relations



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MEMORANDUM

TO: TACIR Commission Members

FROM: Harry A. Green *Harry*
Executive Director

DATE: September 17, 2008

SUBJECT: Update on Forum on Tennessee's Future

You will recall from our June commission meeting that one of our big initiatives for the current fiscal year is a literal meeting of great minds to discuss and write about the big public policy challenges that are facing our state. (See Attachment A, Appendix 1—FY 2009 Work Program: Forum on Tennessee's Future.) I am happy to report that we were able to recruit an impressive team for this project, including one current and several former TACIR commissioners, two of them former Governors' cabinet members; one former chancellor and one current management-level academic from our fine public higher education institutions; a member of the Federal Reserve Bank; several representatives of the private sector; and a former chief justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court. (See Attachment B.) We could not be more pleased with the group.

The Forum will follow a modified version of the Delphi Method, first exchanging ideas electronically, then in person, as they develop a list of ten issues or trends in response to this question:

What are the biggest challenges that Tennessee must deal with in order to improve its competitive edge and enhance the quality of life for all current and future residents?

TACIR staff will summarize the first set of response responses, which are expected later this month, and distribute them back to the group for further comment. The group will then be asked to comment on each other's responses and revise their own as they work toward a set of ten topics for policy papers that we hope to publish in December or January. The group will meet on October 22, here in Nashville, to discuss and refine the list of topics. TACIR staff will review the second round of comments and develop

questions to guide the discussion. At the end of the meeting, the Forum members will distribute the ten topics with each one choosing one for his or her policy paper.

The final product will be a magazine-style document accessible to a broad audience. We hope this process and this publication will generate topics for further research. Budgetary constraints permitting, I hope to be able to support some of that research as it relates to our work program. And we hope that other grant-making agencies, public and private, will find topics of interest there as well.

APPENDIX 1

FY 2009 TACIR Work Program: Forum on Tennessee's Future

Purpose

By early fall 2008, gather a small group of well-informed, highly regarded, and thoughtful Tennesseans to identify and describe the ten most challenging trends facing public policy makers.

Objective

Produce a set of opinion pieces that will draw attention to these trends, promote understanding and concern about them, and set the stage for further work, including research that could be presented at a conference during summer 2009.

Focus

Enhance Tennessee's economic competitiveness while preserving the qualities that are attracting growth.

Method

1. Identify a pool of potential participants from which ten will be chosen.
2. Invite the chosen ten (allow time to substitute from the pool) to participate in a process that will begin with a broad question soliciting short descriptions of the most challenging trends facing policy makers in Tennessee and ending with a set of ten opinion pieces presenting those trends and broad recommendations for action on them to policy makers and the general public.
 - a. Submit the following question for comment.

What are the biggest challenges that Tennessee must deal with in order to improve its competitive edge and enhance the quality of life for all of our residents?

- b. Summarize comments and resubmit/share for further comment/refinement.
 - c. Frame further questions to focus/guide comment leading to identification of ten trends/issues.

- d. Convene group for face-to-face discussion
 - i. Refine concerns
 - ii. Settle on opinion piece topics
 - iii. Suggest/rank areas in need of further research
3. Write forward and publish opinion pieces.

Follow Up

1. Select research projects; solicit proposals from higher ed institutions.
2. Plan conference for presentation of research and further discussion of ten trends.
3. Reconvene group of ten (substitute if necessary).

Martha L. Perine Beard, vice president and senior branch executive, Memphis Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; member, Memphis Tomorrow Board of Directors

Richard Chesteen, Ph.D., professor of political science, University of Tennessee (Martin); former member Obion County Commission and president of the Tennessee County Services Association; former member TACIR

Nick Dunagan, Ph.D., former Chancellor of UT Martin; former executive director of WestStar Leadership; member of the Obion and Weakley County Economic Development Council

Ruth E. Johnson, attorney; Associate Vice President for Advancement, Meharry Medical College, former Commissioner of Revenue; member, Vanderbilt Law School National Council, former member TACIR

Boyce C. Magli, owner and founder, Magli Realty Company; former president, Tennessee Realtors Association; member, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission

John G. Morgan, Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury; former vice president and director of Public Finance of Third National Bank, Nashville; member TACIR

Matthew N. (Matt) Murray, Ph.D., economist; Associate Director, University of Tennessee Center for Business and Economic Research; Chair, Economic Development Board of Blount County; former member, National Tax Association Board of Directors

Lyle Reid, attorney; former Chief Justice, Tennessee Supreme Court; former Deputy Commissioner of Commerce and Insurance, State of Tennessee; former Member, Board of Directors, National Center for State Courts; Vice-President, Litigation for Columbia/HCA, 1998-2000; former member TACIR

William B. (Bill) Sansom, Pres. & CEO, The H.T. Hackney Company; Chair, Tennessee Valley Authority; former Commissioner of Finance and Administration and of Transportation, State of Tennessee; former member TACIR

Greer Tidwell, Jr., Director of Environmental Mgmt., Bridgestone/Firestone; Chair, Tennessee Air Pollution Control Board; member, Federal Advisory Council for TVA Regional Resource Management