



# MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Mayor Burchett opposes tax increase being discussed by some Commissioners**

*Knoxville, Tenn.* — A few Knox County Commissioners are reportedly discussing the possibility of a tax increase to fund pay raises for Knox County Government employees and sheriff's deputies. Friday, Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett released the following statement indicating his strong opposition to such a move:

"I truly appreciate that some commissioners agree that we must be fiscally conservative and put taxpayers first.

"Our employees and law officers do a great job and work hard for the citizens of Knox County. However, at a time when private-sector employees are not getting pay raises, and many families are struggling, it is not right to take even more of their money so Knox County's employees can get a pay increase.

"I've stated very clearly that, as a fiscal conservative, I am very much opposed to raising taxes in this economy or raiding our general fund's emergency reserves. On May 2, I presented a proposal that would balance the budget without either a tax increase or a withdrawal of funds from the emergency reserves. I also proposed an additional week of paid vacation for fulltime employees as a way to show appreciation for the work they do.

"Our first priority must be the Knox County taxpayers. This simply is not the time to raise taxes. We must not increase the tax burden on our citizens in this economy, especially when those same taxpayers are already funding a defined benefit pension plan for Sheriff's Department employees and a minimum 6 percent contribution match for county employee retirement accounts. Those benefits simply don't exist for many private employees."

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