  
PHIL BREDESEN  
THE GOVERNOR OF TENNESSEE

18 May 2010

The Honorable Ron Ramsey  
Speaker of the Senate  
1 Legislative Plaza  
Nashville, TN 37243

RE: Senate Bill 3012 ("Guns in Bars")

Dear Speaker Ramsey:

I am vetoing Senate Bill 3012.

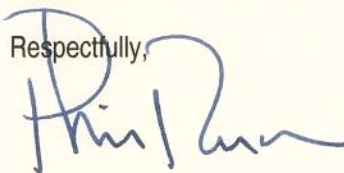
As I stated in the letter accompanying my veto message of a similar piece of legislation last year, I believe a basic and effective rule of gun safety is one I was first taught at a National Rifle Association-sponsored gun safety class almost fifty years ago: "*Guns and alcohol don't mix.*"

I am a strong supporter of the individual right to keep and bear arms, and I hold this right sacred as both an American and a Tennessean. I am a gun owner, and I exercise my rights as a hunter and in various other shooting activities as well. I value the constitutional right that allows me to protect my home and family. In Tennessee, this fundamental right has long been exercised within common-sense, reasonable rules. These rules don't diminish our collective freedom, but instead ensure that this fundamental right is exercised in a common-sense manner that ensures the survival of the right itself.

Until last year, Tennessee had long prohibited the possession of firearms in bars and restaurants that served alcohol. The legislation passed last year removed this protection in a manner that I, along with many law enforcement officers and innumerable private citizens, believed to be reckless and lacking in basic safeguards to public safety. A successful court challenge to last year's actions provided the General Assembly with a second opportunity to reconsider and adopt a more responsible approach to this issue. Instead, the General Assembly has essentially re-passed last year's legislation in an even more expansive and dangerous form. For this reason, I cannot sign this measure into law.

I'm well aware of the number of votes this matter gathered in the General Assembly, but as you consider this veto, I again respectfully urge the legislature to rethink this issue.

Respectfully,



Phil Bredesen