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### No. 01 An Order Requiring A Statement Of Rural Impact And Recommendations For Better Serving Rural Tennesseans From All Executive Branch Departments

Bill Lee

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PUBLICATIONS

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**EXECUTIVE ORDER**  
BY THE GOVERNOR

No. 1

**AN ORDER REQUIRING A STATEMENT OF RURAL IMPACT AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BETTER SERVING RURAL TENNESSEANS FROM  
ALL EXECUTIVE BRANCH DEPARTMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, this Administration recognizes that Tennessee's economic growth and prosperity has reached historic levels; and

**WHEREAS**, despite such growth and prosperity, Tennessee's rural citizens face challenges unique to their geography that often require a unique response, including:

15 of Tennessee's rural counties qualify as economically distressed, ranking among the nation's 10% most distressed counties based upon an annual index of unemployment, income, and poverty; and

Health outcomes remain a challenge for rural communities, including shortages in access to primary care; and

Educational attainment and labor workforce participation are continuing to lag within our rural communities; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the policy of this Administration to ensure that all Tennesseans are efficiently and effectively served by their government; and

**WHEREAS**, this Administration recognizes that achieving this policy will require a continued focus on the unique challenges and responses for rural Tennesseans.

**NOW THEREFORE**, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Tennessee Constitution and the laws of Tennessee, do hereby declare that it is the unwavering policy of the Executive Branch to remain accountable for how its policies impact rural Tennesseans. Accordingly, I hereby direct and order that:

1. No later than May 31, 2019, the commissioner of each of the departments of the executive branch shall provide to the Governor a Statement of Rural Impact, which shall include:
  - a. A statement of the department's mission and how that mission may uniquely impact rural Tennesseans;
  - b. A statement of the approximate number of taxpayers or customers served by the department who live in a rural community;
  - c. A comprehensive description of the department's initiatives adopted or funded in the last four years to specifically address challenges unique to rural communities;
  - d. A summary of the department's participation in the Governor's Rural Task Force convened from 2015 to 2016 and the status of any items, tasks, or initiatives addressed by the Task Force that impact, or are to be executed by, the department;
2. No later than June 30, 2019, the commissioner of each of the departments of the executive branch shall provide to the Governor recommendations for improving and making more efficient the department's service of rural Tennesseans.
3. No later than March 8, 2019, the commissioner of each of the departments of the executive branch shall submit to the Governor:
  - a. A report regarding the department's progress toward completion of the directives of this Order;
  - b. The name and title of an employee designated as the department's point of contact regarding the fulfillment of the directives of this Order.
4. The Office of Customer Focused Government, under the direction of the Chief Operating Officer and in consultation with the Governor's Office, is charged with providing to all departments staff and technical support and any other assistance as reasonably requested for carrying out this Order.
5. All executive branch departments, agencies, boards and commissions, and any other divisions of state government shall fully cooperate with the Office of Customer Focused Government and other departments of the executive branch in carrying out this Order and shall provide staff support and any other assistance as reasonably requested.
6. This Order shall remain in effect through June 30, 2019, at which time it shall cease and be of no further force or effect.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have subscribed my signature and caused the Great Seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed this 23rd day of January, 2019.

*Ben Lee*

GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

*Lucretia*

SECRETARY OF STATE

