



2024
TN State House
District 65
Republican
Candidate Survey

Brian Beathard



1. Why are you running for TN State House District 65?

I care deeply about Williamson County—its values and way of life. Many people move here for what Williamson County has to offer, but then want to change things once they arrive. I am running for State Representative to help preserve and sustain this special place we call home.

I believe in Tennessee's tradition of fiscal responsibility. I am running for State Representative to promote budgetary prudence and small government, and to continue fostering an environment that supports job creation. I will vote for policies and laws that keep Williamson County, Tennessee the best place to live, raise a family, grow a business, and retire.

During my 14 years as a Williamson County Commissioner, our schools have become among the best in the nation. We have built a nationally recognized Sheriff's Department, great parks, roads, and a state-of-the-art hospital. And we have accomplished all of this with one of the lowest tax rates in the country while maintaining a AAA bond rating.

Each of these accomplishments is outstanding on its own. But when you put them all together, you begin to recognize how blessed we are to live in Williamson County. Most wealthy counties in the U.S. are not known for their low tax rates, and most counties with low tax rates are not known for their excellent schools. We have both, and it didn't happen by accident. It's the result of hard-working, fiscally responsible individuals doing their due diligence every day to ensure our property values and way of life remain high, while our taxes and crime rate remain low.

It's the result of courageous leadership, collaboration, and wise investment. I want to continue this tradition as the State Representative in the 65th District.

2. What have you found to be the most pressing issue for voters in TN State House District 65?

As the second-fastest growing county in the state, Williamson County is an economic engine. I see two fundamental issues that result: lack of appropriate funding from the tax dollars we generate, and the overreach from Nashville that negatively impacts our ability to manage our local government most effectively. Our challenges are the byproducts of our success, but we need to be in a position to address our infrastructure on our timeline with our resources. I'll be fighting for more of our fair share of the revenues that we produce.

3. If elected, what will be the first bill that you would like to bring forward for legislation?

I'm not going to the state House with the intention to pass a bunch of new laws, but among my first priorities would be re-evaluating the TDOT funding formula. State roads like Highway 100 in Fairview, Highway 31 in Thompson's Station, and Mack Hatcher in Franklin need immediate attention. We could do an awful lot with the nearly \$700 million we send to the state to be redistributed to other counties. That needs to change.

Williamson County is one of three counties in the state that produces more than twice of the tax revenues it receives back from the state. Another bill I would consider a priority would cap that amount at no more than double.

4. The RNC recently issued a resolution on Election Integrity which encourages the use of secure, hand-marked paper ballots. Read the resolution [here](#).

a. Where do you stand on this resolution?

b. If you support the resolution and are elected, how will you ensure that it is enacted?

c. If you do not support the resolution, why not?

d. Would you advocate for appointing election commissioners who support this resolution?

I believe in the conservative bedrock principle of local control. The Heritage Foundation has ranked Tennessee #1 in election security in the nation, because Tennessee election integrity law is strong and comprehensive; we've already implemented the measures the resolution suggests. The RNC's election integrity efforts should be focused on states where we know there are issues with ballot harvesting, drop boxes, universal mail-in ballots, and people going door to door taking votes. None of this is permitted in Tennessee.

Every vote cast in Williamson County since 2019 has been on a voter-verified paper ballot. We require citizenship and verified photo identification, and we provide both convenience and security. Humans are neither timely nor accurate, and hand-counting and interpreting ballots would be a step backward. We should all remember Tennessee's "Hopewell Ballot" days.

Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Arizona where the majority of the 2020 complaints came from and Republicans are not currently in charge.

5. The state of Tennessee has strong laws concerning the life of the unborn. If elected, will you uphold the restrictions that are currently in place?

I believe in the sanctity of life, which includes that of the mother, and I think there should be consideration in the instance of rape or incest. I certainly support parental consent to transport a minor across state lines, for any reason. The simple answer is that government's most fundamental job is to protect innocent life.

6. Would you support additional legislation to demagnetize Tennessee for illegals? If so, what would that legislation look like?

Yes, illegal immigration is out of control, based on the absurd lack of security at our southern border. The eVerify system should be enforced, and if it's not working, then the penalties should be increased. I would be receptive to legislation that would "demagnetize" our state.

7. Williamson County is over \$1.2 billion in debt. Would you be willing to pass legislation that mandates feasibility studies prior to zoning changes of more than 5 acres? These studies might include -- but are not limited to -- studies on infrastructure, environmental impact, imminent domain, gentrification, and taxes.

I would not be willing to pass any legislation that removes control from Williamson County; the last thing we need is Nashville micromanaging Williamson County. The state doesn't have any business regulating local zoning. Of our 95 counties, Williamson is one of only a handful of counties to have maintained a AAA bond rating, and when you look at the total assessed value of property in Williamson County, our debt load is akin to a \$10K mortgage on a \$600K home. Considering that the vast majority of our debt is at very low interest rates — much around three percent, and in some cases less than one percent — these are wise investments that allow us to accommodate growth instead of raising taxes.

8. What is your position on mass transportation?

We should leverage technology in every way possible instead of working to build multi-billion-dollar mass transit systems that will be obsolete by the time they are actually completed many years later. Other common-sense approaches could encourage staggered commute times, rural broadband that facilitates remote work, signal optimization, etc.

9. What are parental rights? If your interpretation of these rights were challenged, how would you defend them? More specifically, what is the source of these rights, or from where are they derived?

Parental rights are God-given, and absolute unless they cross into parental abuse. We have truancy laws that were put into place in the 1920s and '30s to prevent parents from taking kids out of school to help work, as the impact on the child of the loss of formal education would be tantamount to abuse — the child would be set up to fail for life. But within reasonable boundaries, parents should be free to raise children as they see best. My wife and I raised two children now in college, and it's common sense that parents are best positioned to know how to raise their children. It isn't up to the village.

10. Is it good for government to appropriate taxpayer dollars to incentivize corporations to move here?

In the right circumstances, it can be a useful tool. If a company is bringing more high-paying jobs and revenue to our county, then there can be a strong return on investment for taxpayers.

Incentives are an unavoidable reality in the world of economic development, and we wouldn't want to be the only ones to unilaterally disarm ourselves from a competitive standpoint. But, considering our struggles to accommodate growth, we don't need to be bending over backwards for more of it. It's about wise stewardship and return on investment. We are not abating taxes for our schools, and 67% of taxes collected are allocated for public education. Benchmarks are also used, i.e. number of jobs created, to hold corporate partners accountable.

11. Regarding the 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution:

a. What does "shall not infringe" mean to you?

It means exactly what it says – the late Justice Antonin Scalia famously said that the Constitution says what it says, and it doesn't say what it doesn't say. It was written very carefully to be clear and precise.

b. Since the Covenant shooting there has been a lot of discussion about red flag laws and ERPO. At what point do these types of legislation infringe on 2nd Amendment rights?

They infringe when they infringe on due process. The American legal system is based on what a reasonable person would think, and a law is not considered full and final until it has been adjudicated by the Supreme Court. I think we can all agree that we wouldn't want to be on an airplane full of armed passengers, any more than we would want everyone to bring a long gun in to the chambers of the General Assembly. There are reasonable standards that help protect the citizenry without infringing on our right to protect ourselves.

12. There is an "ethics and campaign finance reform" bill that seeks to force 501(C)4's to divulge a list of their donors before an election. In your estimation, is this a legitimate effort to stop "dark money", or is it an attempt to stifle opposition and suppress previously protected free speech?

All of these "defund the police" and Hamas type demonstrations that appear to be funded with George Soros money, but it is not required to be disclosed. Our great Senator Howard Baker said if you can't vote for me, you shouldn't be able to give to me. Out-of-state and out-of-district dark money is a real problem, here and everywhere.

13. Would you support making nongovernment agencies that receive government funding subject to public records requests? Why or why not?

I believe in transparency. Fundamentally, taxpayers deserve to be able to follow every one of the dollars they contribute to the government's stewardship.

14. Do you believe property taxes should be capped at current levels statewide?

This is a local issue, and any solvent municipality or county should be free to set their own rates. Unless the city or county is insolvent and in receivership, the state has no business regulating local property taxes. I've never voted for a property tax increase, and Williamson County is one of the lowest-taxed counties in the state and the nation. I would support doing away with the state property tax (presently 0%) altogether via constitutional amendment.

15. As a legislator serving on a committee, would you ensure that every bill gets a hearing, whether by bringing it forward or providing a second to a motion to bring the bill forward?

I believe in transparency, and would support roll call votes versus voice votes. Minutes of municipal and county meetings are far more detailed for accountability and posterity, and there should be more of that in the General Assembly. At the state level, a lot of bills filed before the deadline never make it to a hearing, for various reasons. The committee structure exists for a reason, and there is no need to give voice to extreme activists and their frivolous bills. Robert's Rules of Order have worked well for a long time — if a bill doesn't get a second, the committee doesn't deem it worthy of debate. If you don't like the makeup of the committee, then vote them out.

16. In the interest of supporting small government, would you support a house rule to reduce the number of bills brought forward in the house from 15 to 10? Why, or why not?

Yes, I would. Less government is better government. As a businessman, I believe in getting by with less, and the Legislature should be no different. I'd like to see it go back to eight.

Michelle Foreman



1. Why are you running for TN State House District 65?

I'm running because District 65 deserves a true conservative representing us in Nashville. I will fight for our values in the Tennessee House—keeping our taxes low, a quality education for every child, parental rights, protecting families and the unborn, and our 2nd Amendment rights.

2. What have you found to be the most pressing issue for voters in TN State House District 65?

As I'm talking to voters, concern about illegal immigration continues to be an issue. Because of the Biden Administration's complete mishandling of the border, every state is a border state, and every town is a border town. States must step up, work with local law enforcement and take action to stop illegal immigration since the federal government refuses to take responsibility for it.

3. If elected, what will be the first bill that you would like to bring forward for legislation?

I would like to bring a bill to end federal funding of education in the state of Tennessee.

4. The RNC recently issued a resolution on Election Integrity which encourages the use of secure, hand-marked paper ballots.

a. Where do you stand on this resolution?

I support this resolution. While serving on the TNGOP State Executive Committee I was elected to serve as the chair of the Permanent Elections subcommittee. I worked very hard with my team to pass resolutions and work with the legislature to pass election integrity laws. Many passed but others, including hand marked paper ballots. I am committed to bring back hand marked paper ballots for all Tennessee elections.

b. If you support the resolution and are elected, how will you ensure that it is enacted?

I will bring bills and always support proposed legislation that works to secure our elections through paper ballots.

c. If you do not support the resolution, why not? n/a

d. Would you advocate for appointing election commissioners who support this resolution? Yes

5. The state of Tennessee has strong laws concerning the life of the unborn. If elected, will you uphold the restrictions that are currently in place?

Yes. I am 100% pro-life and believe that women and families should be supported, and life clearly begins at conception.

6. Would you support additional legislation to demagnetize Tennessee for illegals? If so, what would that legislation look like?

Yes. As I mentioned before, illegal immigration is one of the issues that is top of mind for Williamson County voters, and I will support any measure that serves to demagnetize Tennessee. I would support any legislation that bans sanctuary cities, increases penalties for illegal aliens who are arrested for other crimes, or mandates that law enforcement work with ICE or other federal agencies to deport illegal aliens (like the new law scheduled to take effect July 1, 2024).

7. Williamson County is over \$1.2 billion in debt. Would you be willing to pass legislation that mandates feasibility studies prior to zoning changes of more than 5 acres? These studies might include -- but are not limited to -- studies on infrastructure, environmental impact, imminent domain, gentrification, and taxes.

Yes. The county government can only exercise power that is given to it by the state, and the state can redefine the role and authority of local government as it deems appropriate. Due to the explosive growth in Williamson County and the incredible debt burden amassed, it would seem that the state now has an obligation to step in and begin to intervene.

8. What is your position on mass transportation?

I know traffic is a growing concern, but we need to ensure the Tennessee Department of Transportation is funded properly to keep up with the needs of our communities experiencing explosive growth, not hand our tax dollars to failed and costly concepts of mass transit.

9. What are parental rights? If your interpretation of these rights were challenged, how would you defend them? More specifically, what is the source of these rights, or from where are they derived?

Parental rights refers to many things, and I am absolutely supportive of them. Parents should be permitted to raise their children as they see fit—whether that is sending them to the school of their choice, disclosure of and control over school issues, books they are exposed to in school and other activities, and being informed of their activity while in the care of others.

Parents know their children best, and the government may not interfere as long as those children are safe and healthy under their parents' care. When parental rights are challenged, legislators need to be ready to intervene swiftly, knowledgeably, and confidently within the bounds of the law, and defend parental rights accordingly.

According to one of our founding documents, the Declaration of Independence, we are endowed by our Creator (God) with certain unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Government is to secure these rights, and its power to secure these rights comes from the consenting people. I fully believe and support this position and believe it is my obligation to defend it.

10. Is it good for government to appropriate taxpayer dollars to incentivize corporations to move here?

I don't believe it is. Tennessee is a low-tax, no income tax state and can attract businesses based on that and our business-friendly environment. Giving large sums of taxpayer dollars to private companies, especially without accountability, is not fair to taxpayers.

11. Regarding the 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution:

a. What does "shall not infringe " mean to you?

It means the 2nd Amendment is clear: Americans have the individual right to own and carry firearms for lawful purposes and the government may not interfere with that right.

b. Since the Covenant shooting there has been a lot of discussion about red flag laws and ERPO. At what point do these types of legislation infringe on 2nd Amendment rights?

The shooting at The Covenant School was a tragedy, and as a mother and citizen, my heart goes out to the affected families and community. Red Flag Laws/ERPO's (extreme risk protective orders) empower family members and law enforcement to temporarily restrict gun access for individuals with an elevated risk of harming themselves or others. While we don't want dangerous people to have access to firearms, we cannot guarantee that these measures will not infringe on someone's constitutional rights. We cannot propose/pass legislation that can be easily abused and effectively remove firearms from law-abiding citizens. I have not yet seen any legislative language that assuages these concerns and so at this time, I do not support what has been proposed.

12. There is an “ethics and campaign finance reform” bill that seeks to force 501(C)4’s to divulge a list of their donors before an election. In your estimation, is this a legitimate effort to stop “dark money”, or is it an attempt to stifle opposition and suppress previously protected free speech?

501(c)4’s are legal organizations recognized and regulated by the Internal Revenue Service, and must already follow stringent federal requirements to be recognized this way. Donors often give to organizations like this, which are already limited by law with regards to campaign activity, to shield themselves from retaliation by woke employers or being targeted for their beliefs. I believe these efforts stifle opposition and suppress protected speech.

13. Would you support making non-government agencies that receive government funding subject to public records requests? Why or why not?

Yes. When you receive taxpayer dollars, you should be held to a higher standard of both accountability and transparency. Taxpayers should always know where their money is going.

14. Do you believe property taxes should be capped at current levels statewide? Why, or why not?

Yes. The state should cap the property taxes, as we have seen recently, certain local government entities have passed unconscionably high property tax increases, the most recent was during the Covid-19 pandemic, when many citizens were even prohibited from working and could not pay their bills. In order to help address abusive taxation, and as taxpayers already have enough of a tax burden, the state should cap the tax.

15. As a legislator serving on a committee, would you ensure that every bill gets a hearing, whether by bringing it forward or providing a second to a motion to bring the bill forward?

Yes.

16. In the interest of supporting small government, would you support a house rule to reduce the number of bills brought forward in the house from 15 to 10? Why, or why not?

Yes. Bills become laws, and more laws mean more regulation and mandates on Tennesseans. We should do our best to limit the number of new laws each year, and prioritize those things the taxpayers are asking of us. Shorter legislative sessions also save taxpayer money.

Lee Reeves



1. Why are you running for TN State House District 65?

I love where we live and want an authentic, principled conservative who is invested in our community to represent District 65 in the State House.

2. What have you found to be the most pressing issue for voters in TN State House District 65?

Voters are most concerned about how illegal immigration is affecting Tennessee, our budget, and our safety.

3. If elected, what will be the first bill that you would like to bring forward for legislation?

State governments cannot do the job of the federal government, but we can help make Tennessee the last choice for those illegally crossing our southern border. Similar to laws recently passed by Oklahoma, Texas, Iowa, and Louisiana, my first bill will create the criminal act of unlawful entry, occurring when a person intentionally enters and remains in Tennessee without obtaining legal authorization to enter the United States. A person convicted under the law would be punished by fine and/or jail time and must leave the state within 72 hours following conviction or release from custody, whichever is later.

4. The RNC recently issued a resolution on Election Integrity which encourages the use of secure, hand-marked paper ballots.

a. Where do you stand on this resolution?

I agree with the resolution that election integrity is critical and foundational to our system of governance and that elections should be conducted accurately and swiftly. Secure paper ballots, with voters able to verify their votes before tabulation, citizens verified by their photo identification, and auditable vote counts—these are all elements of a well-run and accurate election.

b. If you support the resolution and are elected, how will you ensure that it is enacted?

Many elements of this resolution have already been implemented by the laws in Tennessee. We have paper ballots marked with an assistive device that voters can check to ensure the votes are accurate before tabulation. As I understand it, the printed paper ballots contain anti-counterfeit watermarks. Mandatory audits were passed into law in 2022, starting in 2024, and codified at TCA Title 2, Chapter 20, as the Tennessee Voter Confidence Act.

I would like feedback from experts and voters on certain resolution issues, such as voting outside one's precinct (but within the county) and early voting with constituents. In the March election, 37% of voters voted outside their precinct, which indicates that many prefer the convenience of doing so and perhaps expanding the number of voters who participate in voting. I believe that early voting is too long, and I would prefer two Saturdays and a work week before the election for early voting.

c. If you do not support the resolution, why not? N/A

d. Would you advocate for appointing election commissioners who support this resolution?

Election commissioners must implement Tennessee law and be staunch supporters of election integrity.

5. The state of Tennessee has strong laws concerning the life of the unborn. If elected, will you uphold the restrictions that are currently in place?

Absolutely. Tennessee's laws concerning the life of the unborn are a testament to our state's commitment to protecting our most vulnerable. Every innocent life is precious and deserving of protection, and I will stand firm in defending the sanctity of life from conception to natural death.

6. Would you support additional legislation to demagnetize Tennessee for illegals? If so, what would that legislation look like?

Absolutely – we need to demagnetize Tennessee for illegal immigrants and be the last state on their list in which to settle. There are several ways to approach this with legislation: (1) see #3 above, which describes my first bill on the criminal act of unlawful entry; (2) lower E-Verify requirements (currently employers of 35 or more employees must use E-Verify); and (3) invalidate, within the state, as Florida recently did, any drivers licenses and permits issued by other states to illegal immigrants.

7. Williamson County is over \$1.2 billion in debt. Would you be willing to pass legislation that mandates feasibility studies prior to zoning changes of more than 5 acres? These studies might include -- but are not limited to -- studies on infrastructure, environmental impact, imminent domain, gentrification, and taxes.

I believe in the political principle of subsidiarity, which states that the government closest to the people generally governs best. Most conservatives would hold that the items in the above question are city and county issues and should be addressed locally, not by the state.

8. What is your position on mass transportation?

Per my answer to #7 above, this is partly a local issue. For example, cities may decide to provide bus services for their citizens.

But if this question concerns light rail provided regionally or utilizing state resources, I oppose it. Light rail projects are exceedingly expensive to construct, operate, and maintain, often demanding new permanent revenue streams. They have also been associated with heightened crime rates in areas they serve.

9. What are parental rights? If your interpretation of these rights were challenged, how would you defend them? More specifically, what is the source of these rights, or from where are they derived?

Parental rights are inherent freedoms that allow parents to make decisions about their children's upbringing, education, and welfare. These rights come from God, not the government. As a father of three minor children, I strongly support parental rights, which are crucial for family independence and social stability. Challenges to these rights threaten the fundamental principles of individual liberty and limited government. I will advocate for laws that empower parents to raise and educate their children as they see fit.

10. Is it good for government to appropriate taxpayer dollars to incentivize corporations to move here?

I do not generally favor state economic development programs in which specific businesses receive taxpayer-funded incentives. If we continue to be a low-tax state, reduce regulatory burdens, and ensure our children are educated, businesses will continue to stay in and be created in Tennessee.

11. Regarding the 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution:

a. What does “shall not infringe” mean to you?

I agree with Justice Scalia in the 2008 Heller decision that the Second Amendment of the US Constitution guarantees the right of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms, which shall not be unduly restricted or violated by government interference. Section 26 of the Tennessee Constitution agrees with this interpretation of the Second Amendment.

b. Since the Covenant shooting there has been a lot of discussion about red flag laws and ERPO. At what point do these types of legislation infringe on 2nd Amendment rights?

Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs, also known as “red flag laws”) are described as an attempt to reduce the probability of a mass shooting or a suicide by temporarily removing firearms from a person if they are found to be unstable or a threat to themselves or others. We must address the mental health crisis in this country and this state, but not by violating the US Constitution’s 2nd Amendment or due process under the 14th Amendment and Section 9 of the Tennessee Constitution.

12. There is an “ethics and campaign finance reform” bill that seeks to force 501(C)4’s to divulge a list of their donors before an election. In your estimation, is this a legitimate effort to stop “dark money”, or is it an attempt to stifle opposition and suppress previously protected free speech?

I am skeptical of the proposed "ethics and campaign finance reform" bill. The goal of increasing transparency in campaign financing and reducing the influence of "dark money" in politics is a good one. But requiring 501(c)(4) organizations to divulge their donors before an election raises serious concerns about chilling free speech and infringing donors' privacy rights.

13. Would you support making nongovernment agencies that receive government funding subject to public records requests? Why or why not?

I believe in transparency and accountability, especially when taxpayer dollars are involved. I am also committed to fostering a business-friendly environment that allows small businesses to thrive and grow and am mindful of the burdens we place on small businesses. Therefore, any measures aimed at increasing transparency should be carefully balanced to ensure they do not unduly burden small businesses or charities or hinder their ability to operate efficiently. One way to do this is to require a nongovernmental entity receiving over a certain threshold of funding to provide information related to the use of those funds, particularly where a legitimate allegation of wrongdoing or waste is made.

14. Do you believe property taxes should be capped at current levels statewide?

The current state property tax rate is zero percent. I support passing a Tennessee constitutional amendment prohibiting a state property tax. This has already been introduced and voted on – and if passed again by both the House and the Senate in the next session, it will be placed on the ballot for Tennesseans to decide in 2026. I will vote “yes” to amending the Tennessee constitution to ban a state property tax.

15. As a legislator serving on a committee, would you ensure that every bill gets a hearing, whether by bringing it forward or providing a second to a motion to bring the bill forward?

There are many bad laws and resolutions legislators propose that I would not move or second to bring to the floor for debate.

16. In the interest of supporting small government, would you support a house rule to reduce the number of bills brought forward in the house from 15 to 10?

I am interested in passing good laws for the citizens of District 65 and undoing bad laws and regulations (each of which requires a bill). Setting an arbitrary number of bills is less important to me than doing the best job I can for my district and the state, regardless of how many bills are filed.

Voter registration deadline

July 2

Early voting

July 12-27

Primary Election Day

Aug. 1

Find your polling location [HERE!](#)