

VOICES
FOR A
SAFER
TENNESSEE

December 14, 2023

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor of the State of Tennessee
1st Floor, State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243

Re: Support for TBI budget request for background checks

Dear Governor Lee,

Thank you for your work to address preventable firearm tragedies in the state of Tennessee. We are grateful for your courage in proposing an order of protection law, and for calling the Special Session on public safety.

We also want to recognize your executive order No. 100 that expedited the reporting of information to the Tennessee Instant Check System (TICS), and required the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) to investigate the barriers to complete, accurate, and timely reporting of information into TICS. Their subsequent June report in response was particularly enlightening; it is deeply informing Voices for a Safer Tennessee's work to expand background checks in the state, first by addressing shortfalls in the system that we are working to build upon. We recognize that a universal background check system won't be effective if the TICS system itself isn't sound.

To that end, we write in strong support of the TBI's FY2024-2025 budget request for additional personnel (Criminal Justice Information Services Support Specialists) to allow for audits, training of locals, and to help bring TBI into compliance with FBI requirements. We cannot expect to reduce firearm tragedies and keep firearms out of the hands of felons and other prohibited purchasers if we have a system with a 761,000-record backlog. We urge your administration to provide full funding to the TBI to address these needs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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Voices for a Safer Tennessee



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