



Joey Hensley, MD
Deputy Speaker
State Senator District 28
Maury, Lewis, Giles, Marshall and
part of Williamson Counties

Legislative Address
425 Rep. John Lewis Way N.
Suite 742 Cordell Hull Bldg.
Nashville, TN 37243

Home address
855 Summertown Highway
Hohenwald, TN. 38462

Senate
State of Tennessee
Nashville

Committees
Finance, Ways and Means
2nd Vice Chairman
Revenue Sub Committee
Chairman
Member
Education Committee
Health and Welfare Committee
Council on Pensions and Insurance

Office: (615) 741-3100
Cell: (931) 212-8823
Fax: (615) 253-023
senjoey.hensley@capitol.tn.gov

August 27, 2025

Dear Attorney General Skrmetti
Office of the Attorney General
John Sevier State Office Building
500 Charlotte Ave.
Nashville, TN 37219

Dear General Skrmetti,

As a strong advocate for the constitutional rights of Tennesseans—particularly those enshrined in Article I, Section 26 of our State Constitution and the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution—I write to express my views regarding the recent decision in *Hughes et al. v. Lee et al.*, issued by the Three-Judge Panel in the Chancery Court for Gibson County on August 22, 2025. I have sponsored legislation in the past that would accomplish the issues that these rulings address so I am very interested in this outcome.

In that ruling, the court found Tennessee Code Annotated §§ 39-17-1307(a) (commonly known as the “Going Armed Statute”) and 39-17-1311(a) (the “Parks Statute”) to be unconstitutional, determining that these provisions violate the fundamental right to keep and bear arms. The panel’s analysis, rooted in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court cases *District of Columbia v. Heller*, *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, and *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen*, rightly concluded that these statutes impermissibly infringe upon the core protections guaranteed to citizens for self-defense and public carry.

Notably, the court observed that the Going Armed Statute effectively criminalizes the exercise of the right to bear arms, while the Parks Statute extends this infringement to public recreational spaces without adequate historical justification under the “sensitive places” doctrine.

I believe this ruling aligns with the original intent of our founding documents and reflects the values held by many Tennesseans. Our state has a long tradition of respecting individual liberties, particularly the right to defend oneself. To appeal this well-reasoned decision would not only sow further uncertainty for law-abiding citizens but also commit public resources to challenging a ruling that is constitutionally grounded and thoughtfully articulated. I plan to sponsor legislation in the next session that will remove these prohibitions from our state code.

Therefore, I respectfully urge you to decline to appeal this decision and instead allow it to stand as a reaffirmation of the rights protected under Article I, Section 26 and the Second Amendment. By doing so, the General Assembly can proceed with clarity in crafting any future legislation that both upholds constitutional liberties and addresses public safety in a narrowly tailored and historically supported manner.

Please reach out to me at 615-741-3100 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joey Hensley MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joey Hensley, MD
State Senator

Cc: Governor Lee