

Bill Haslam Governor

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HASLAM ANNOUNCES PLAN FOR REGIONAL "JOBS BASE CAMPS" Approach Would Leverage Regional Assets To Grow Jobs

KNOXVILLE – Republican gubernatorial candidate Mayor Bill Haslam released today the conceptual outline of his plan for regional approaches to economic development. As governor, Haslam would create regional "jobs base camps" with the responsibility for aligning and coordinating regional resources, staff, education, labor and economic development strategies into a powerful plan.

Haslam is the two-term Mayor of Knoxville, re-elected in 2007 with 87% of the vote. A hardworking, conservative public servant, he led Knoxville to become one of the top ten metropolitan areas for business and expansion, while reducing the city's debt, tripling the rainy day fund, and bringing property taxes to the lowest rate in 50 years.

"I really believe our state is poised to be the best in the Southeast and perhaps in the country for growing high quality jobs," Haslam said. "Every region in the state has assets on which we can build, and the key will be coordinating and leveraging existing local efforts and resources."

Haslam's plan would decentralize the "home office" and push the leadership and support to the regional level. He envisions 10 to 13 regional directors that will be responsible for supporting and coordinating already existing local and regional efforts, aligning resources and developing regionalized short-term and long-term plans for economic development. These regional directors would be tasked with giving weekly progress reports directly to the Governor and Commissioner of Economic and Community Development.

"Clearly, we have some great things happening in Tennessee," Haslam said. "From FedEx, the medical device industry, and the TVA MegaSite in West Tennessee, to the health care and entertainment industries in Middle Tennessee, to Volkswagen, Eastman Chemical, UT and Oak Ridge National Laboratory in East Tennessee, there are unique opportunities in every region of the state to recruit to our strengths and create high quality jobs."

"But from my travels last year and in listening to economic development professionals, I see the real need for very specific coordinated regional efforts. We need to support these professionals in the field and make sure they have a direct line to the Governor's office," he continued.

Mayor Haslam will begin his Jobs Tour next week and plans to discuss his ideas with economic development professionals and others. The Jobs Tour will take him across the state and will focus on roundtable discussions with small business owners, meetings with economic development professionals, and tours of businesses and factories to highlight "best practices."

An executive leader with a proven record of success, Haslam helped grow his family's small business from 800 employees into one of Tennessee's largest companies with 14,000 employees. Bill and Crissy Haslam have two daughters, Annie and Leigh, and a son, Will, who resides in Knoxville with his wife, Hannah.

For more information on Bill Haslam, please visit www.BillHaslam.com.

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