



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2026-1759, **Version:** 1

A resolution directing the Metropolitan Council Office to develop scenarios and recommendations for potential amendments to the Metropolitan Charter regarding the size, structure, compensation, and support resources of the Metropolitan Council, in anticipation of a judicial ruling that may require a reduction in Council membership.

WHEREAS, in 2015, the voters of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County approved an amendment to the Metropolitan Charter affirming their preference for a forty-member Metropolitan Council, consisting of thirty-five district members and five at-large members; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Tennessee General Assembly enacted Public Chapter 21, providing that in any metropolitan form of government, the legislative body shall consist of no more than twenty members; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Supreme Court is currently considering issues related to the validity and enforceability of the state legislation; and

WHEREAS, regardless of the outcome of that proceeding, prudent governance requires the evaluation of potential scenarios to ensure continuity of governance and effective representation, should any change be required; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council is committed to transparency and public engagement and intends to present any potential scenarios to the public to ensure meaningful input in the development of any revised representative structure; and

WHEREAS, delaying the review of potential changes to the size and structure of the Council would limit the public's ability to provide substantive feedback; and

WHEREAS, amendments to the Metropolitan Charter may be necessary to bring the size and structure of the Metropolitan Council into compliance with state law; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Charter amendment process requires sufficient preparation to place a referendum before the voters of Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, the public must be informed of the composition of its legislative body well in advance of the Metropolitan Council election scheduled for 2027; and

WHEREAS, the scope and significance of potential changes to the size, structure, and operations of the Metropolitan Council necessitate deliberate and informed planning to ensure continued effective representation of the residents of Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, analysis conducted by the Metropolitan Council Office will provide the Council with multiple options and thoughtful evaluation regarding Council composition, compensation, staffing, and districting, thereby enabling well-informed consideration of any proposed Charter amendment; and

WHEREAS, nothing in this resolution shall be construed as a concession that the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County will not prevail before the Tennessee Supreme Court.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan County Council hereby goes on record as directing the Metropolitan Council Office to prepare and present to the Metropolitan Council multiple recommendations regarding Council size and structure. Such recommendations shall include, but not be limited to:

- The total number of Council Members;
- The allocation between district and at-large positions;
- Population distribution under each proposed scenario;
- Appropriate compensation levels, assuming full-time service;
- Recommended levels and types of support staffing; and
- Any additional factors deemed relevant to the effective operation and functioning of the Metropolitan Council.

Section 2. The Council Office shall present no fewer than two distinct scenarios that comply with Public Chapter 21 as enacted by the Tennessee General Assembly in 2023, which may include variations in Metropolitan Council size, composition, and other structural or operational considerations deemed relevant.

Section 3. The Council Office shall report its findings and recommendations to the Metropolitan Council within ninety days of the adoption of this resolution.

Section 4. This resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.