



## State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

For Immediate Release: July 22, 2010

### Comptroller Introduces State's New Small Business Advocate

Comptroller Justin P. Wilson introduced Joshua Helton as the state's new small business advocate at an event in Kingsport Thursday morning. Comptroller Wilson joined House Republican Leader Jason Mumpower and Rep. Tony Shipley at the grand opening ceremony for Shipley's new district office at 2101 Fort Henry Drive in Kingsport.

At the ceremony, Comptroller Wilson discussed a new law, approved by the General Assembly this year, which created the position of the small business advocate within his office.

Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey and Leader Mumpower were the primary sponsors of the new law.

The small business advocate will provide information and answer questions for owners of businesses with 50 or fewer employees. The small business advocate will also act as a mediator to help resolve issues involving small businesses and state departments and agencies.

The new law also requires all state departments and agencies with regulatory authority over businesses to designate a point person who will deal directly with the small business advocate when issues or questions arise.

"This is an extremely important new law for small businesses across the state of Tennessee and I commend Leader Mumpower and Lt. Gov. Ramsey for their leadership in winning its approval from the General Assembly," Comptroller Wilson said. "Josh Helton has done a terrific job as a member of my staff and I am confident that he will continue to excel in this new role."

"Too often, government is in the position of placing new regulations on businesses that make it tougher for them to operate," Lt. Gov. Ramsey said. "This law does just the opposite. Its purpose is to make the lives of those hard-working small business people easier."

"Small businesses are really the backbone of our economy in Tennessee," Leader Mumpower said. "However, starting and operating a small business isn't easy. The small business advocate will be someone small business owners can turn to for help."

Helton worked for the private law firm of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz before joining the Comptroller's staff as a legislative auditor last September.

"I am very excited about this opportunity," Helton said. "I look forward to hearing from small

business about their concerns or questions about the way Tennessee regulates them. Working together, I hope we can make changes that will build on Tennessee's reputation as a business-friendly state."

Rep. Shipley expressed gratitude to Comptroller Wilson and Leader Mumpower for attending the ribbon-cutting ceremony for his new office, which will be a place where constituents from Tennessee's Second Representative District may go to ask questions or make comments about state government.

In addition to discussing the small business advocate law during his stop in Kingsport, Comptroller Wilson also talked about another new law that will reform the state's purchasing system and provided an update on the TNInvestco economic development program.

-30-

Media contact: Blake Fontenay, Communications Director, (615) 253-2668 or [blake.fontenay@tn.gov](mailto:blake.fontenay@tn.gov)

[Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury](#)  
State Capitol Nashville, TN 37243  
Phone: (615) 741-2501  
Email: [comptroller.web@tn.gov](mailto:comptroller.web@tn.gov)