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Source: *The Daily News Online & Chandler Reports*

– *Eric Smith*

Tenn. Smokers to Keep State Health Insurance

House Democratic Caucus Chairman [Mike Turner](#) is abandoning a proposal to refuse health insurance to new state employees who smoke.

Turner, of Nashville, announced on the House floor Wednesday that he is withdrawing the proposal under the “strong encouragement” of fellow Democratic Rep. John Litz, a tobacco farmer from Morristown.

The measure would have denied health insurance eligibility for tobacco-using state workers hired after Nov. 2.

– *The Associated Press*

Senate Rejects Veto On Menu Labeling

The state Senate has voted 24-7 to override Democratic Gov. Phil Bredesen’s veto of a menu labeling bill.

The bill would only allow local elected government bodies to require calorie counts on menus, and prohibit unelected ones like health boards from setting those requirements.

Bredesen vetoed the bill in July, citing Tennessee’s obesity rate, which ranks among the highest in the nation.

It takes a majority vote in both chambers of the General Assembly to override a veto. Republican Rep. [Susan Lynn](#) of Mt. Juliet, the main sponsor of the House version of the bill, said she hopes to bring the veto override up for a vote in the lower chamber next week.

The full text of bill, S.B. 1092, is available at <http://www.capitol.tn.gov>.

– *The Associated Press*

LRK Nabs Five Architecture Awards

Looney Ricks Kiss Architects received five Best American Living Awards, which were presented at the International Builders’ Show in Las Vegas.

LRK was honored with the “Platinum Award/Best One-of-a-Kind Custom Home – 6,501 square feet and over” for a private residence in Memphis and a “Gold Award/Best One-of-a-Kind Custom Home – 4,001 to 6,500 square feet” for a private residence in Eads.

The firm also received a “Platinum Award/Best Rental Development – five stories and over” and a “Best in the South Central Region” award for the Arthouse at Keller Town Center in Keller, Texas. The firm also took home a “Gold Award/Best High-Rise Multifamily – six stories and over” for the Paramount on Lake Eola in Orlando.

The Best American Living Awards are sponsored by “Professional Builder” magazine and the National Association of Home Builders. The awards showcase projects that demonstrate design

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Sixty-seven winners in 37 categories were chosen by a panel of six judges. Winners will be featured in the February issue of Professional Builder magazine.

– *Taylor Shoptaw*

Wharton Seeks Advice on 9th District Race

Memphis Mayor A C Wharton Jr. told The Daily News he'll be talking with his advisers for advice on who he will endorse in the Democratic primary for the 9th Congressional District race, which features a matchup between political titans [Steve Cohen](#), the incumbent, and former Memphis Mayor Willie Herenton.

"I'm going to be getting their advice," Wharton said of his advisers, "because whatever I do, I want there to be a 'One Memphis' approach to it, so that it won't just be one little skinny guy saying this is who I'm for or against."

– *Andy Meek*

Memphis Attorney Censured by BPR

The Tennessee Supreme Court Board of Professional Responsibility has publicly censured Memphis attorney Murray B. Wells of the law firm [Horne & Wells PLLC](#).

Wells, the owner/operator of a title company, was an authorized title agent and closing attorney for a title insurance underwriter. He was "to maintain an escrow/trust account and reconcile that account monthly under his agreement with the underwriter," according to the report from the BPR.

The censure states that Wells failed to complete monthly audits of his trust account, leading to a theft when he failed to properly supervise the non-attorney closing agent he hired to assist in the matter. Also, the BPR said Wells "failed to provide recompense to the insurance underwriter," although it noted no consumers saw any losses.

Wells violated the Tennessee Supreme Court Rules of Professional Conduct 5.3(b), failure to supervise a non-lawyer assistant, and 1.15, which deals with the safekeeping of property.

– *Rebekah Hearn*

Local Head Start Receives \$1.6M Grant

Shelby County Head Start has received a \$1.6 million grant from the Department of Health and Human Services to create an Early Head Start program.

The new program will focus on offering educational, medical and social services for pregnant women as well as children up to age 3.

The program aims to assist in reducing the infant mortality rate by underwriting home-based prenatal services for 23 pregnant mothers to include health, nutrition and proper care and nurturing of children. The program also will benefit 121 children up to age 3 through educational services, disability and mental health screenings and evaluations.