

**Name: \***

James C. Hale

**Address: \***

P.O. Box 4154, Smithville, TN 37166

**Phone:**

**Email:**

haleforstaterep@gmail.com

**Tennessee legislative office sought: \***

State Representative of the 40th District

Please include the legislative district with this submission.

**Campaign Website:**

www.jameschale.com

**Please list and explain your current occupation, your background, and any other biographical information you would like to share:**

Spend a minute talking with James Hale and you'll swear that you've known him your whole life, because in a sense, you have. James was born and raised on a farm not far from here, went to school here, married and raised his kids here. Everything that James Hale has achieved is a reflection of the values he learned right here in Middle Tennessee.

James was raised on the family farm outside of Alexandria, Tennessee, where he and his 2 brothers and sister learned first-hand the importance of hard work and as the son of a laborer, he was instilled with a deep abiding respect for the men and women who built this country from the ground up.

After graduating from DeKalb High School, James went straight to work as a construction laborer as a member of Laborers' Local 386. James' natural leadership abilities and his desire to serve others were apparent as he became more involved in his Union. He eventually served the membership of Local 386 as Field Representative, President and Business Manager, consistently fighting for better wages, benefits and working conditions every day.

James' energy and hard work did not go unnoticed by the International Union. In 1996, he was named Manager of the Ohio Valley & Southern States Region, serving more than 50,000 members from 50 Local Unions across 14 states and 2 territories. In 1998, James added the title of International Vice President, sitting on the General Executive Board until his retirement in 2008. James was now in the position to help more than 500,000 hard working Laborers across America improve their lives with health insurance, training, and pensions.

In addition to his work on the national stage, James' leadership skills were being applied here in Middle Tennessee as an elected director of the DeKalb Telephone Cooperative, a member owned coop serving 20,000 residents. During his 12-year tenure, James worked to modernize the program and pushed for the creation of a cellular system

James and his wife of 39 years, Pam are the parents of 2 children, Brian and Beth. They are the proud grandparents of Eli, Noah and Atticus. James is a 45-year member of the Alexandria First Baptist Church and is an active volunteer in community, charitable and youth organizations. James is also an avid hunter and sportsman.

### Section One- Revenue/ Spending

The demand for public services, including higher education, is at an all-time high, yet funding for those services is the lowest it's been in years, and cuts are looming. At the same time, major corporations doing business in Tennessee routinely use creative accounting practices to take their profits out of state to avoid paying taxes that fund our state services. Twenty-one states have enacted combined reporting to stop this drain on their state budgets and to level the field for locally owned small businesses.

Do you view Tennessee's budget crisis as one of revenue, spending, or both?: \*

- Revenue  
 Spending  
 Both

Explain:

common sense approach needs to take place. A balance of spending cuts and revenue increases must be made. If areas can be cut without detriment to services, then they should be made. Where cuts are not available, then revenue must be secured. This will be no simple or painless task. However, the people of Tennessee are not unwilling to provide for the things they believe in and can be assured are benefiting them. We are known as the Volunteer State for a reason; and, we will provide for ourselves and our neighbors, but we must be assured that what is being spent is being done so prudently and in the best interest of all the people of Tennessee. Accountability is key.

Do you see cutting public services to reduce expenses as a better solution than increasing revenue?: \*

- Yes  
 No

Explain::

As a general rule, no; cutting public services is not a better option. These are the services that the most vulnerable in our community rely on; and in the case of education what we take for granted. However, I will not say that there aren't any areas in public service that couldn't be better managed. I feel that greater clarity must be given so that people know where and how their tax dollars are being spent and that those who are making those decisions must be accountable for not only the quantity they spend, but also the quality of the goods and services being acquired by those tax dollars.

Will you support legislation to (check all that apply): \*

- Enact combined reporting  
 Close corporate tax loopholes  
 Eliminate the sales tax exemption for cable television providers  
 Eliminate the sales tax cap for single-item purchases

Other:

### Section Two: Living Wage

Thousands of higher-education employees earn salaries that are at or below the poverty level. There are full-time employees, many with years of service, who qualify for public assistance.

Will you take steps to bring all state and higher education workers up to a living wage?: \*

- Yes
- No

Explain::

A Living Wage is a necessity. During my tenure as a LIUNA Vice President, I was proud to stand by my fellow members of Local 386 working at Vanderbilt University as they negotiated a contract which instituted a Living Wage for their custodial employees. Men and Women who are able and willing to work should be compensated in a fair and moral way. A Living Wage isn't a windfall or a bonus, it is what it takes to keep a roof over your head and food on your table. It isn't an entitlement, but it is what a worker has earned.

Below are some concrete steps that could be taken by legislators to support a living wage. Please indicate your support:

- Sponsor, co-sponsor, or sign legislation enacting a living wage policy
- Speak to the media about the importance of a living wage
- Support equal-dollar raises rather than percentage raises in future university and college budgets

Please list and explain other steps you would take to support a living wage.:

I have been supporting a living wage since the day I began my career as a Laborer and will continue to fight for working men and women in any way possible.

### Section Three- Employee Support

Tennessee state civil service employees have a standard, defined, grievance procedure ([http://tn.gov/dohr/employees/pdf/Employee\\_Handbook.pdf](http://tn.gov/dohr/employees/pdf/Employee_Handbook.pdf) ). Employees at the public colleges and universities do not have a consistent policy, much less standard procedures.

Which of the following measures would you support to extend rights to higher education employees?:

- Sponsor, co-sponsor, or sign legislation to extend civil service grievance protections to higher education staff (exempt and non-exempt)
- Sponsor, co-sponsor, or sign legislation that would allow a worker to bring a representative of his/her choice to disciplinary hearings

Please list and explain other steps you would take to support extending rights to higher education employees:

A standard and defined grievance procedure is the key to any well functioning enterprise. The ability to have your voice heard improves employee morale and can resolve many issues for the employer long before they become major problems.

United Campus Workers works to defend the rights of individual workers who have grievances with the university. When going through university channels to effect change hasn't worked, we have turned to our allies in the Tennessee General Assembly to appeal to university officials to rectify injustices.

If asked to support an employee who has a legitimate grievance, will you:

- Join delegations to appeal to university administrators
- Make phone calls to university administrators
- Send letters to university administrators
- Speak to the media about the situation

Please list and explain other ways you would support an employee who has a legitimate grievance:

### Section Four- Complete College Act

The Tennessee Legislature passed the "Complete College Tennessee Act," in an effort to increase the number of Tennesseans who hold post-secondary degrees. This act ties both the base funding formula and performance funding to retention and graduation rates. It acknowledges: "the demand for postsecondary is at an all-time high and public resources for the enterprise... are at an all-time low." It asserts that "[a]n operating assumption of the 2010-2015 planning cycle is that there will be few to no new state dollars with which to pursue quality enhancements," and further, that increases in degree productivity must be generated "with available resources... with no decrease in instructional quality." For further analysis of this act, read Dr. Tim Gaudin's critique at <https://ucw-cwa.org/critiquing-tennessees-race-top>.

**Do you support linking funding to graduation rates? What concerns do you have with the possible outcomes of this legislation?:**

While linking funding to graduation rates is an easily understandable benchmark, but it doesn't show a true picture of education or the current job market. Once again, a common sense approach is key. A certain percentage of 4-year Baccalaureate Degrees should be kept, however, this should not be the only marker. Funding should also be made available based on students who pursue 2-Year Certificate and Training Programs. This field is booming, particularly in skilled trade fields. Currently, one of the largest job markets is in the skilled labor workforce, such as certified welders, plumbers, etc. "Blue collar" jobs and workers should not be neglected or ignored in our education system.

**What do you see as the role of public higher education in the state of Tennessee?:**

Public higher education has and must continue to play a vital role in the economy and community of Tennessee. A skilled and educated workforce is integral to drawing and keeping new businesses. As such, higher education must continue its traditional education programs as well as adapt to providing skills to the community that will help our state compete in both a domestic and global market.

**What do you think should be the state's role in supporting affordable public higher education?:**

initiative, and entrepreneurs to bring and develop existing and future business opportunities within and for the state. Without funding assistance, education would quickly be out of reach of some of our brightest and most talented people simply due to cost. In the long run, this would cost the state more in lost opportunity than the funding they would provide.

### Section Five- Doing More With Less

State funding levels for our schools continue to decrease year after year, while students and their parents are asked to pay more and more just to keep funding for education constant. By July 2011, it will have been four years since higher education employees have seen a salary increase. Additionally, we are seeing community colleges like Pellissippi State move away from students being taught by instructors to more web-based instruction in core courses such as Math and English. Maintaining quality education at our institutions of higher learning demands the funding to do the job right.

**What specific steps will you take to ensure that quality education is maintained at our public universities and colleges?:**

I would encourage state leaders to preserve and increase state funding while requiring accountability from Universities. I would promote public funding of higher education by directly linking tax monies and other state and local funding to not only graduation rates, but also to skilled certificate training, and job placement. Ultimately, the money given to higher education needs to be directly shown to benefit the state and community that supports it.

We face job losses – potentially in the hundreds – when stimulus money runs out. As outlined above, quality higher education must be paid for with strong support of students, staff, and faculty at our colleges and universities. This state, its students, and its citizens simply cannot afford to have their future shortchanged.

**Do you support saving these jobs?: \***

Yes

No

**Explain:**

It all comes back to the community and in a broader sense, the state. The University serves the community it is located in. Job cuts in higher education lead to lost education, lost opportunity, and ultimately lost state revenue. If these jobs are lost many would seek employment in different communities or even out of state, which means any revenues from home purchases, grocery bills, utilities, etc. that the state would receive in revenue, leaves with them. Not to mention the lost value of the students they would serve.

**If yes, what steps would you take to save these jobs?:**

I would once again urge state and community leaders to base their funding decisions not only on the bottom line, but to see what value would be lost to the community and state from the loss of these jobs.

**Section Six- Outsourcing of Jobs/ Privatization**

Many colleges and universities across Tennessee have privatized areas of their physical plant to private contractors who often "rehire" the displaced workers at lower pay rates, without health insurance or other benefits, and scheduled for fewer hours. In many areas there has been a decrease in the quality of work done by these contractors, including instances of U.T. Physical Plant workers having to fix work just completed by such private contractors. Additionally, many of the basic services and functions of the university, including general-education instruction, are likewise shifting away from full-time tenure-track faculty to contingent employees ("adjuncts").

**Will you oppose efforts for further privatization and outsourcing of university jobs?: \***

- Yes
- No

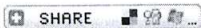
**If yes, how would you oppose efforts?:**

I would push for legislation that kept these jobs or held any contract workers to the same standards as state employees. Decreased wages and benefits saves the state nothing. Lower wages prevent people from buying food, clothing, rent, and the basic goods and services that keep our communities employed and growing. Decreased or non-existent health care costs the state even more. You can take a visit to your local ER and quickly see the cost of those who are uninsured. Additionally, by keeping these jobs "in house" greater clarity and accountability can be demanded by the community being served.

**If no, why not?:**

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**UCW-CWA**

1124 North Broadway  
Knoxville, TN 37917  
Phone: 1-877-292-3865  
Fax: 865-329-0484

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