

Corker encouraged to seek re-election

DICKSON (AP) — Republican Sen. Lamar Alexander says he was disappointed when Sen. Bob Corker decided not to seek re-election and they have talked about his decision whether to reconsider. But Alexander claims he hasn't urged Corker to run again and is "staying out of it."

Asked about those comments, Alexander chuckled, saying he "just assumed they were talking about somebody

ly" to those encouraging him to reconsider. Republican Rep. Marsha Blackburn's campaign for Corker's seat has said anyone who thinks she can't win is a "plain sexist pig," saying they aren't worried about "these ego-driven, tired old men."

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STATE ROUNDUP

else." Republican Rep. Stephen Fincher recently left the race and encouraged Corker to re-enter, saying he can beat ex-Democratic Gov. Phil Bredesen.

NASHVILLE (AP) — Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam says applications

are now being accepted for adults who want to enroll tuition-free this fall at a community college or technical college. The governor's office says Tennessee Reconnect applications can be completed online. Enrollees need to apply to a community college or other eligible institu-

tion, file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, form, and enroll in a degree or certificate program at least part-time. To be eligible, a student can't have an associate or bachelor's degree, must be a Tennessee resident for at least one year and must be determined an independent student on the FAFSA.

Tennessee Reconnect builds off Tennessee Promise, which provides high school graduates two years of tuition-free community or technical college.

CLARKSVILLE (AP) — Google has broken ground on a \$600 million

data center in Tennessee that will bring 70 to 100 high-tech jobs. Google officials have announced new and expanding data centers and offices in 14 states, including the Clarksville center.

Sen. Bob Corker's office says the facility will be Google's eighth U.S. data center and the 15th worldwide.

According to The Leaf-Chronicle, the new facility is expected to create 1,000 construction jobs and will likely go online in the first half of 2019.

The Tennessee center is part of a \$2.5 billion investment that includes new and expanding data centers in Alabama, Oregon, Virginia and Oklahoma.

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2018

Home Show

February 23-25

McMinnville Civic Center

500 Garfield Street, McMinnville, TN

Friday, February 23

5:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 24

10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 25

1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Come by and register for \$500 cash to be given away at the end of the show.

PRIZES BEING GIVEN AWAY

Maytag 4.7 cubic ft. Washer (Sears Hometown Store)	DeWALT 20 Volt Drill & Impact Driver (combo set) (Montgomery Landscaping & Excavation)
6ft. Aluminum Ladder (Sherwin-Williams)	Gas Grill (Meadows Homes)
Programmable Thermostat with an HVAC Tune Up (McMinnville Electric System)	Gift Card (Warren County Board of Realtors)
Amazon Echo (one each day of show) (Ben Lomand Connect)	Information Handed Out On The Free Smoke Detector Program (McMinnville Fire Department)

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BY LISA HOBBS

Reporter for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

McMinnville officials are continuing with an examination of their records to determine if enough monetary damage exists to warrant a lawsuit against opioid manufacturers.

"The city is not being represented in any way on behalf of this lawsuit by the DA's office," said Alderman Ben Newman. "We are a municipality. We are an entity of our own. We don't have anything to do with the lawsuit the DA has filed. The county may or may not. That's pending. We're independent. Whatever happens in that lawsuit will not affect us."

The city Finance Committee decided last month to allow Galligan & Newman, Attorneys at Law, to review records with McMinnville Police Chief Bryan Denton and determine if the city experienced increased law enforcement costs that could be recouped by a lawsuit. A follow-up meeting was scheduled by chairman Everett Brock after the county Budget and Finance Committee voted to hold off on a measure to hire Galligan & Newman to represent it.

Warren County government is in the midst of a rare situation: District Attorney General Lisa Zavogiannis hired the

Nashville firm of Branstetter, Stranch & Jennings to represent her district of Warren and Van Buren counties, and Warren County government is considering a measure to hire Galligan & Newman to represent it. Both lawsuits are seeking similar damages.

As explained by Alderman Ben Newman, the county has decided to wait on a judge to rule on litigation in Kingport that may answer the question of which litigation should prevail: those filed by DAs or those filed by the county governments.

"Sullivan County was the first to file in the state of Tennessee," said Newman, in explaining the situation. "The drug companies have filed a motion to dismiss whatever claim they have filed against them."

He warned the judge's decision could be the beginning of an appeals process and may not signal a final outcome.

"The decision is subject to appeal and subject to further appeal," said Newman. "The decision by a lower state court judge doesn't always mean what you think it does. It can be appealed and reversed."

The city's committee did not rescind last month's decision to allow an examination by Galligan & Newman. Newman, an attorney in that firm, did not participate in last month's vote.

Tax reform key to special election

NORTH HUNTINGDON, PA. (AP) — In southwest Pennsylvania, Democratic congressional hopeful Conor Lamb hammers the new Republican tax law as a gift to corporations and the wealthy that will add to the national debt and give the GOP-led Congress an excuse to gut Social Security and Medicare. Rick Saccone, Lamb's opponent in the 18th Congressional District that wraps around Pittsburgh, says the sweeping tax changes will aid the economy and give Americans bigger paychecks. National Republican groups, meanwhile, are blanketing the public with ads to tell voters Lamb simply doesn't want them to have lower taxes.

It's a defining fault line ahead of the 2018 midterm elections, and the outcome for Lamb could serve as a guidepost for

Democrats as they try to reclaim a House majority this November.

Democrats must flip at least 24 GOP-held seats to regain a majority, and the Pennsylvania seat — in a district Trump won by almost 20 points in 2016 — would be an unexpected boost.

The emphasis being placed on taxes ahead of the March 13 special election also may remind the power players in Washington the midterm elections will not revolve exclusively around the tempests that regularly consume the nation's capital — the Russia investigations, a lingering immigration stalemate, the occasional government shutdown. The November outcome will turn as much or more on voters' fundamental impressions about how Congress is affecting their wallets, now and in the future.