

Dear Chairman/Chairwoman [Last Name] and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to respectfully urge your support for House Bill 2375 and Senate Bill 2480, the Greenbelt Initiative Fund Transfer (GIFT) Act.

The GIFT Act is about protecting rural Tennessee and ensuring our farming counties can thrive while continuing to serve their communities. Rural counties preserve family farms, forests, and the open landscapes that define our state's character and sustain agriculture, tourism, and local economies. These lands provide statewide benefits, yet the responsibility for maintaining them rests largely at the county level.

Many rural counties face structural challenges that limit their financial flexibility. Significant Greenbelt participation can constrain growth in the local property tax base, even as counties must continue funding state-mandated services such as roads, bridges, emergency response, and law enforcement. At the same time, many rural counties do not have the statutory authority to enact impact fees, leaving property taxes as one of the few available tools to manage infrastructure demands and population growth.

This imbalance places increasing pressure on homeowners, farmers, and small businesses. Rural communities should not be forced to choose between preserving farmland and maintaining essential public safety and infrastructure services.

HB 2375 and SB 2480 provide a thoughtful and structured approach to strengthening rural counties by:

- Recognizing agricultural stewardship and Greenbelt participation
- Reducing property tax pressure on local residents
- Supporting law enforcement, fire protection, and EMS services
- Maintaining roads and essential infrastructure
- Promoting long-term stability in Tennessee's farming communities

Importantly, the GIFT Act does not alter Greenbelt eligibility or weaken farmland protections. Instead, it reinforces the communities that uphold those protections and carry the responsibility of preserving Tennessee's agricultural backbone.

By supporting HB 2375 and SB 2480, the General Assembly can ensure that rural counties remain strong, resilient, and capable of providing core services without disproportionate tax burdens.

I respectfully ask that you vote in favor of this legislation and advance the GIFT Act out of committee.

Thank you for your leadership and service to Tennessee.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Address]

Link to Senate Committee Members for Finance, Ways and Means Committee:

<https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/CommitteeInfo/SenateComm?ga=114&committeeKey=650000>

Link to House Committee Members for Agriculture & Natural Resources Sub Committee:

<https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/CommitteeInfo/HouseSubComm?ga=114&committeeKey=810010>

The GIFT Act has not been formally placed on these committees agenda yet however, these are the committees they have been assigned to.

Legislation
114th General Assembly (2025-2026)

HB 2375
by *Doggett

(SB 2480)
BY *BOWLING

Show Caption Text

Public Funds and Financing - As introduced, enacts the "Greenbelt Initiative Fund Transfer (GIFT) Act," which creates the rural revenue equity fund; authorizes the commissioner of economic and community development to distribute amounts from the fund to rural counties based on certain agricultural, demographic, and fiscal criteria, including greenbelt acreage. - Amends TCA Title 4; Title 5; Title 6; Title 7; Title 9 and Title 67.

□ Bill History □ Amendments □ Video □ Summary □ Fiscal Note □ Votes

HB2375	DATE	SB2480	DATE
Assigned to s/c Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee	02/05/2026	Passed on Second Consideration, refer to Senate Finance, Ways, and Means Committee	02/05/2026
P2C, ref. to Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee	02/05/2026	Introduced, Passed on First Consideration	02/02/2026
Intro., P1C.	02/04/2026	Filed for introduction	02/02/2026
Filed for introduction	02/02/2026		