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Governor Threatens Veto if Judicial Selection Meetings Not Made Public

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Governor Phil Bredesen says he's willing to use his veto power to change the state's judicial selection process.

The legislature is currently conducting a regular review of the Judicial Selection Commission, the panel that chooses candidates for judicial appointments.

The Governor says open meetings are the key to cutting down on the politics of judicial selection. Today/yesterday he confirmed reports from legislative leaders that he's prepared to take a hard line on the matter.

"If they try to say, 'Here is the answer to the problem you've provided,' and it doesn't include open records, then I don't think it will be an answer to the problem that I have posed, and I would be inclined to veto that, yes."

Bredesen says he might settle for an extension of the commission for a year, but he'll insist that long term changes include open meetings.

Over the course of two years, the governor repeatedly turned down three-name lists of candidates from the Judicial Selection Commission and asked for further names. He declared himself dissatisfied with the process when the second set of candidates included some of the ones he had originally disapproved.

By Nina Cardona

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