



THE *Senator* SOURCE

NEWSLETTER OF STATE SENATOR CHARLANE OLIVER
TENNESSEE'S 19TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT

January 2023



I am excited to bring you *The Senator Source*, a new monthly newsletter created and produced by the office of Senator Charlane Oliver for residents of District 19. This summer, I listened to many of you on the campaign trail who desired communication about what's happening on the Hill. I'll be sharing legislative updates and resources, bills I'm working on, how you can make your voice heard, as well as community news in and around District 19. **To receive my newsletter, please [subscribe here](#).**

FROM THE DESK OF SENATOR OLIVER

January 10, 2023 marked the convening of the 113th General Assembly and I'm proud to be representing you over the next four years. Whether it's getting moved in, ordering stationery, or crafting bills, I've been actively establishing my foundation to have a successful legislative year. The first two weeks of session was deemed the Organizational Session, where we took the oath of office as new members, adopted chamber rules, received our committee assignments, elected caucus leadership officers, re-elected Lt. Gov. Randy McNally as Speaker of the Senate, re-elected constitutional officers for Comptroller and Treasurer, elected TN Black Caucus officers, and attended the inauguration of Governor Bill Lee.

LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS



The Senate Democrats [made history](#) with three Black women leading. My colleagues elected me as **Vice Chairwoman of the Senate Democratic Caucus** for the next two years, along with Senator London Lamar as Caucus Chair, and Senator Raumesh Akbari as the Minority Leader. This position assists the Caucus Chair in ensuring we elect more Democrats to the Senate and champion our values and legislative agenda.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Speaker McNally selected me to serve on the following committees for the 113th General Assembly:

- **Government Operations**
- **Energy, Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee**
- **Joint Government Operations Rule Review**

- **Joint Education, Health and General Welfare Subcommittee**
- **Joint Judiciary and Government Subcommittee**

Fun fact: The late former Sen. Thelma Harper served as chair of the Government Operations committee for several years. Government Operations has broad important powers, as it oversees legislation and rules pertaining to all state government departments, agencies, boards, commissions, or councils.

MEET MY TEAM



Aundra "Keo" Sparks

Executive Legislative Assistant

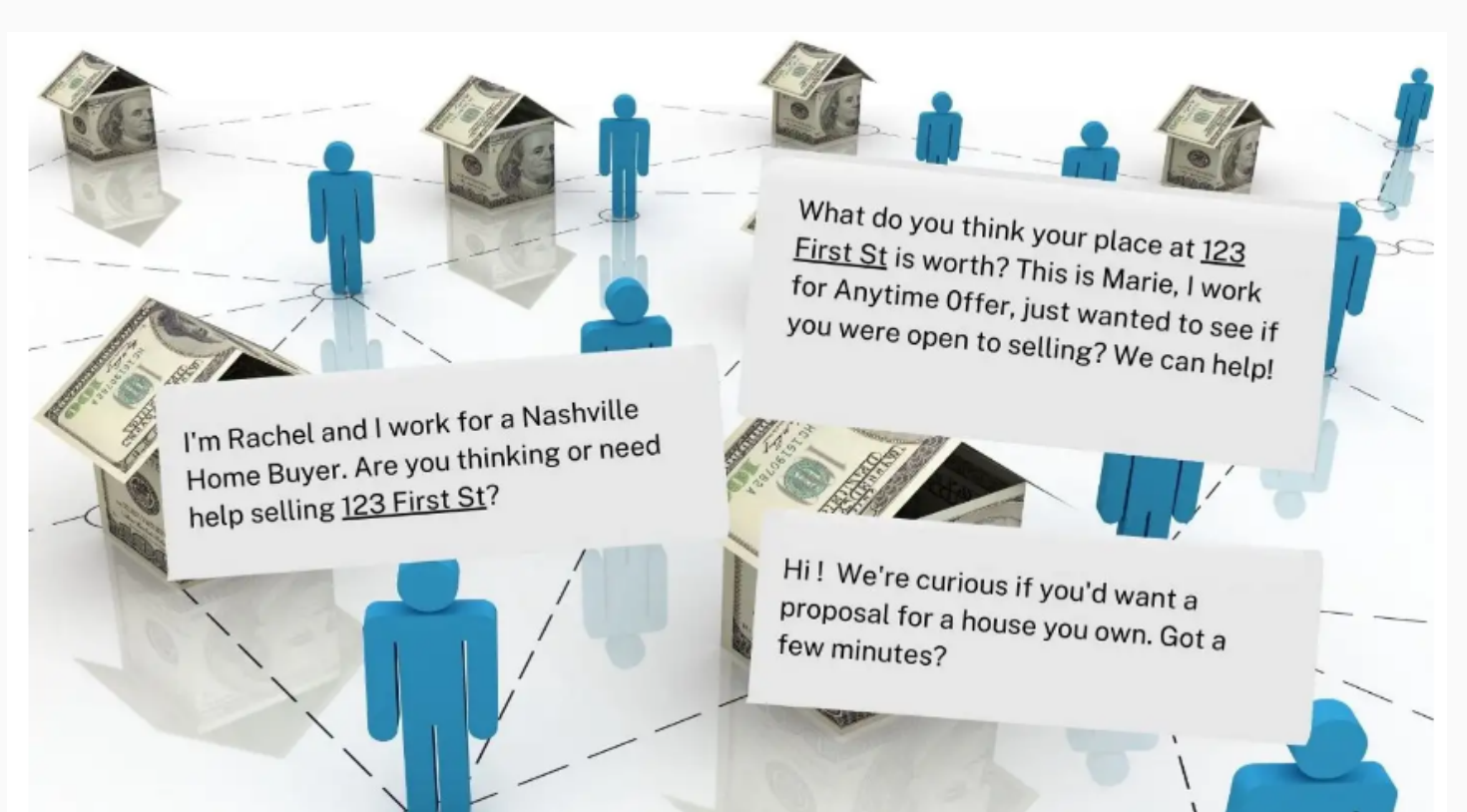
Aundra Keo Sparks is a graduate of Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama. She has lived in Nashville for the past 17 years and comes to Senator Oliver's office having previously worked as an executive assistant at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Keo's journey into civic activism began when she volunteered for The Equity Alliance in 2019. She is a cohort 2 Liberator of the LiberTEA Collective leadership development program powered by The Equity Alliance and later worked as a part-time organizer for The Equity Alliance's Black Print Survey initiative. Keo was an active volunteer for Senator Oliver's state senate campaign. She continues to be civically engaged as the Executive Legislative Assistant to Senator Oliver, who also happens to be the Senator for the district she lives in.



Kimora Reaves
Legislative Intern

Kimora Reaves is a senior honors student majoring in political science at Tennessee State University and will be graduating in May 2023. A native Nashvillian, she received her high school diploma from West High School in Knoxville. She currently serves as the president of First Ladies Club, Incorporated, an organization at TSU and is a member of Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity, International. Kimora is involved within her community, hosting food banks for local unhoused people and tutoring kids in grades K-12. She is the CEO of her own skincare business, Shaley Skin. Kimora has a focus in law and politics and working as a Legislative Intern for Senator Oliver.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES



With the senate bill filing deadline on Feb. 2, I have been on the move introducing my first of many pieces of legislation: **SB 234**. This [anti-harassment bill](#) seeks to limit the amount of times a real estate investor may make unsolicited contact with a homeowner about selling their home/property and add penalties for violators. Amid Tennessee's high demand for affordable housing, this bill will protect homeowners from being pressured to sign away their assets. Sen. Oliver states, "No one should suffer incessant harassment just because they own a home. It's time for the legislature to create some guardrails to protect Tennesseans, and especially our senior citizens, from these deceptive, high-pressure tactics." Read the full press release [here](#).

In this first year, my vision for District 19 is to build on a legislative agenda that:

- **Champions women, children and working families**
- **Addresses the childcare shortage**
- **Protects our most vulnerable citizens**
- **Protects our constitutional rights**
- **Ensures our democracy works for all of us**
- **Bring significant investments to District 19**



On Jan. 30, Democrats introduced the **Fundamental Right to Reproductive Health Care Act**. I signed on as a co-sponsor of this legislation to protect women's reproductive freedoms.

- [SB 762](#) would protect reproductive healthcare decisions as a "fundamental right" and restrict government from intruding on that freedom. The legislation also repeals criminal statutes related pregnancies and deletes medically unnecessary requirements currently in the law.
- [Read the release](#) and [watch](#) the announcement

But we must keep a watchful eye on potentially harmful and controversial legislation! As you know, Tennessee Republicans have proposed bills that attack the sovereignty of Nashville and the rights of the LGBTQ+ community.

- [SB 87](#) caps the number of members of the Metro Council to 20. This bill is being heard in the House Local Government Committee TOMORROW, Tues. 2/7 at 1:30pm.
- [SB 648](#) defunds the Music City Center, the largest civic project in the city's history.
- [SB 1326](#) gives the governor, House and Senate speakers control over the Metropolitan Airport Authority
- [SB 1335](#) gives the governor, House and Senate speakers control over the Metropolitan Sports Authority
- [SB 1407](#) renames a portion of "Rep. John Lewis Way" in Nashville to "President Donald Trump Boulevard."
- [SB 591](#) abolishes community oversight boards.
- [SB 1](#) bans gender-conforming medical procedures and treatments, among other prohibitions. The bill passed the House Health subcommittee.
- [SB 3](#) seeks to make some drag shows a criminal felony offense. The bill passed in both the Senate Judiciary and House Civil Justice subcommittee.
- Meanwhile, Gov. Lee announced drastic funding cuts to HIV prevention, treatment, and testing. [Here's what I had to say about that.](#)

OUT & ABOUT

Check out where Senator Oliver has been out and about in District 19 and beyond.

Swearing-In Ceremony and Reception







Legislative Leader's Academy in Knoxville

IMF Inaugural MLK Gala



IMF's 33rd Annual MLK Day Convocation at Tennessee State University

Watch Senator Oliver's remarks





North Nashville Collaborative School Supply Re-Up



Governor Bill Lee's Inauguration





MEDIA ROUNDUP

[Sen. Charlane Oliver's first bill seeks to limit unsolicited texts, calls from property buyers](#)
(*Senate Dems*)

[Sen. Charlane Oliver will push to abolish Tennessee's modern 'poll tax,' expand voting rights](#)
(*Senate Dems*)

[Bills to Keep an Eye on in This Year's Legislative Session](#) (*Nashville Scene*)

[Brinksmanship of Debt Ceiling Called Dangerous](#) (*Tennessee Tribune*)

[New Nashville lawmakers aim to expand student voting access](#) (*Main Street Nashville*)

[Tenn. Democrats mark 50th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision in a 'forced-birth' state](#)
(*Senate Dems*)

['Stay woke': Nashville honors Martin Luther King Jr.](#) (*The Tennessean*)

[MLK Day Convocation Remarks](#) (*YouTube*)

[Nashville's freshman lawmakers eye first legislative session. Here's what they hope to do.](#) (*The Tennessean*)

[There are more women serving in state legislatures than ever before, but Tennessee is going in the opposite direction](#) (*WPLN*)

[Lawmakers Charlane Oliver and Justin Jones show 'good trouble' lives in Tennessee](#) (*The Tennessean*)

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Division of TennCare offers \$3,000 in [Family Caregiver Support](#)** for certain Medicaid expenditures for home- and community-based services (HCBS). This stipend is made available with President Biden's American Rescue Plan funds. People who qualify can receive up to \$3,000 more of these services from now through March 31, 2024. To learn more, contact the LTSS Help Desk: 1-877-224-0219.
- **Department of Children's Services launches [Relative Caregiver Assistance](#) pilot program.** The Relative Caregiver Program supports children who are not able to be raised by their parents, and are being cared for by grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other extended family members. Eligible caregivers can receive up to **50%** of the foster care board rate in financial assistance. [Learn more.](#)
- **Department of Economic and Community Development to allocate \$120M** in federal American Rescue Plan funds to support disadvantaged and minority small businesses. [Learn more about Fund Tennessee.](#)
- **Governor Lee's 2023 State of the State Address** - Monday, February 6, 2023 at 6 p.m. CT at Tennessee State Capitol. [Learn more.](#)

CONTACT MY OFFICE

Contact my office if you have constituent needs, to schedule a meeting, or invite me to your next community event.

Office of Senator Charlane Oliver
19th Senatorial District
Cordell Hull Building
425 Rep. John Lewis Way North
Suite 766

Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Phone: (615) 741-2453

Email: sen.charlane.oliver@capitol.tn.gov

Scheduling: keo.sparks@capitol.tn.gov

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