



For Immediate Release

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**LEDA LISTENS TOUR: INVESTING IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE'S ECONOMIC SECURITY
BY PREPARING A WORKPLACE-READY WORKFORCE**

(Murfreesboro, Tenn., August 13, 2014) – Lenda Sherrell will discuss workforce readiness when she makes a “Lenda Listens” tour stop in Sequatchie County tomorrow. Sherrell, a certified public accountant who won last week’s Democratic Primary for Tennessee’s 4th Congressional District, will meet with Dunlap’s Mayor Dwain Land, County Executive Keith Cartwright and Executive Director of the Sequatchie-Dunlap Chamber of Commerce Marlene Basham at 2 p.m., August 14, at the Dunlap City Training Center, 15609 Rankin Avenue.

“Local economies are at risk because we do not have a highly-trained and skilled workforce to meet the needs of employers. We must invest in education that creates a viable pathway from pre-k to college to ensure graduates have the skills that attract businesses with well-paying jobs,” said Sherrell. “We also need to connect employers with educators so our students and youth are better prepared for careers of the 21st Century by emphasizing programs that infuse Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).”

Sequatchie County officials continue to work on recovering jobs lost during the economic downturn by reaching out to businesses to open up shop. Two years ago, when Auto supplier Mann+Hummel located to Dunlap, 925 people applied for 150 jobs. According to 2013 United States Census Bureau figures, 19.3% of the population remained below the poverty level compared with 17% around the state, about 12% had graduated from college compared with 24% in the state, and median household income was \$33,181 compared with the rest of the state at \$44,140.

“Sequatchie County has much to offer,” said Sherrell. “City leaders are working hard to bring companies here, but there also needs to be a STEM-literate workforce that makes it attractive for businesses with good-paying jobs to want to locate to this part of middle Tennessee.”

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