



**Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller**

November 21, 2016

## **Pickett County Has Long History of Uncorrected Problems**

*Centralizing County Finances Could Help*

The Tennessee Comptroller's Office has released its annual audit of Pickett County government, and sadly, a troubling trend continues. Pickett County has had at least 10 audit findings for seven consecutive years.

The fiscal year 2016 report includes 13 findings identifying numerous problems, including issues with accounting, purchasing, bookkeeping and property assessment practices. Nine of the 13 findings were also noted in last year's report, but the problems had not been corrected.

Pickett County has also had multiple repeat findings over the last several years, which indicates an inability or unwillingness to correct significant concerns that may impact how the government is handling taxpayer money.

The Comptroller's Office recommends the county adopt a centralized system of accounting, budgeting, and purchasing instead of handling these processes separately within county departments. The Comptroller believes this is a best practice to improve financial accountability and the quality of services provided to citizens.

"I am disappointed that Pickett County continues to be plagued by unacceptable audits," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "We've seen the same problems continue across numerous county departments year after year. Audit findings are not always easy to correct, but there is no excuse for these issues to linger for years. I believe it's time for the county to seriously consider centralizing its accounting functions."

To view the audit online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/la/>

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