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Politics on the menu - 2011 Legislative Breakfast



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ROGERSVILLE - Even though tax revenues are beginning to rebound, Tennessee legislators maybe looking at ways to cut more than a billion dollars to balance the state's budget. The federal budget, which is already running a record deficit, may also be due for some serious cuts.

The budget discussions were the main item on the menu at the annual Rogersville/Hawkins County Chamber of Commerce Legislative Breakfast, held Feb. 12.

State Representative Mike Harrison, who represents parts of Hawkins and Hancock counties, and State Senator Mike Faulk, who represents Hawkins, Claiborne, Grainger, Hancock, Jefferson and Union counties, discussed the state's budget while First District Congressman Phil Roe shared his perspective on the national political scene. State Representative Dale Ford, who serves as the legislative representative for a small portion of the county, was unable to attend.

"We are looking at a \$1.5 billion shortfall as far as revenues. In the past we have had some stimulus money, but it's not there anymore," Harrison said.

The state representative, who serves as chairman of the house budget committee and is "one of the five or six most powerful men in the state" according to Faulk, predicted the bleak financial situation would limit what the state can accomplish even with some signs of economic growth.

"We are still projecting that by 2013 the state will only be at back the revenue level we were in 2007. You talk about a dip, we've had it," he said.

