Program Highlights:

- **Congress Pageant**
  Sunday’s opening assembly will highlight the Tennessee 4-H Performing Arts Troupe and the participants in the leadership, citizenship and public speaking contests. You will learn about Tennessee’s past, present and future as you enjoy the tradition of the Congress Pageant.

- **Know Your Government**
  You will visit the state capitol to sit in the seat of your elected representative to the state legislature and actually vote on bills. Be sure to study the bills before your legislative session. You will be able to state your views and try to influence your peers regarding the bills introduced at the “Know Your Government” sessions of Congress.

- **State Contests**
  The state citizenship, leadership, essay, poster and public speaking contests are held at Congress. Awards will be presented at the Monday night assembly. The History Bowl is Tuesday morning.

- **Legislative Visits**
  On Monday afternoon you will have a chance to go with your county delegation to meet some of your state legislators. Be prepared to talk with them about 4-H and the issues that are important to you. You may want to show your appreciation with gifts that represent 4-H and your county.

- **General Jackson and Educational Tours**
  Nashville is an exciting city with natural beauty, culture and more than 200 years of history for you to explore. While in the city, you will enjoy many of the sights and sounds of your state capital - including a ride on the General Jackson® Showboat.

- **Citizenship Banquet and Inaugural Ball**
  Congress ends on Tuesday night with the banquet and dance.

- **Election of Officers**
  One of the Congress highlights is officer elections. A regional caucus is held on Sunday night to nominate the candidates to run for Congress Governor, Speaker of the Senate and Speaker of the House. To be eligible to run for a Congress office, you must be approved by the state 4-H office for membership in the Tennessee 4-H Honor Club by April 6, 2006. Following nominations, the election goes into full swing. Delegates will vote on Tuesday morning, and new officers will be installed at the banquet that night.

What to Wear
You will be serving as an ambassador for the Tennessee 4-H program while you are in Nashville. You will be interacting with state officials, legislators, 4-H donors and others in Nashville. It is important that you look like an official Congress delegate at all times.

Congress delegates will wear their official 4-H Congress sweaters to all Congress functions except the ride on the General Jackson® Showboat, the final banquet and the dance. You will receive your sweater when you register in Nashville. The Congress sweaters are cream-colored with the 4-H clover. Delegates will need to dress professionally in clothes to complement the sweaters. Suggested colors include green, navy, charcoal and khaki. Gentlemen are expected to wear ties when wearing their Congress sweaters.

Jeans and other sportswear are ONLY appropriate for the General Jackson® Showboat.

For the banquet and dance, ladies will need a dress or party dress (length optional). Gentlemen should wear a suit or sports coat with a shirt and tie.

Don’t forget rain gear and comfortable shoes!

**Sponsors**
Tennessee 4-H Congress is conducted by UT Extension with the sponsorship of the Tennessee 4-H Foundation in cooperation with a number of other interested friends of 4-H.
Preparing for 4-H Congress

Tennessee 4-H Congress is an activity that supports the citizenship project and helps 4-H'ers develop the life skill of responsible citizenship.

Responsible citizenship is an individual’s demonstration of love and devotion in response to duties, rights and privileges as a member of a community or country. It includes:

- Loyalty to one’s place of residence
- The entitlements and privileges of citizenship, including voting, protection, participation in government
- Obligations of citizenship
- Appreciating and valuing diversity

One way to be a responsible citizen is to understand your government and how you can be involved so that your government represents you and other citizens.

Democratic governments are established to be operated by the people and for the people. Citizen involvement in government is the only way to keep government responsive to the people.

How much do you know about your government? To help you get the most benefit from your participation in 4-H Congress, you can also participate in a service project. You may choose to run for office. After Congress, you can take the “next steps” to continue your civic engagement in your local community!

4-H Congress Purposes

1. To recognize outstanding 4-H’ers and leaders from all Tennessee counties.
2. To provide new opportunities for 4-H’ers and leaders to develop a better understanding of citizenship and how it relates to daily living.
3. To offer new and stimulating leadership experiences for 4-H’ers on a statewide basis.
4. To provide the opportunity for 4-H’ers and leaders to learn how their state government functions.
5. To encourage 4-H’ers and leaders to assume and continue leadership roles in their communities.
6. To encourage 4-H’ers to develop a greater appreciation of the history and heritage of Tennessee.

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How much do you know about your government? To help you get the most benefit from your participation in 4-H Congress, you should look in books and on the Internet to learn more about how government works, especially in Tennessee.

Who are the leaders in your state government? How are they elected? How does a bill become a law? What happens if the governor vetoes a bill?

If you know the answers to these and other interesting questions about state government, you will be better prepared to serve as a 4-H Congress senator or representative.

Be a Good Delegate

As a Congress delegate, you are serving as a 4-H ambassador. You represent over 320,000 other Tennessee 4-H’ers. Represent them well through your active participation, courteous behavior and professional dress throughout Congress. Here are a few reminders:

1. Make it a point to be on time or ahead of time for each session and event.
2. Be a good listener. You will hear some of your most important state officials speak. You can impress them by your attentiveness.
3. Smoking and chewing gum are out of place during any 4-H event.
4. Cell phones are out of place at any meal event or assembly.
5. Show your appreciation by writing thank-you notes to sponsors, leaders, agents and parents.
6. Share your experiences with others when you return home. Take notes and be prepared to give an interesting and worthwhile account of your Congress experience.

Want to know more about Tennessee 4-H Congress? Visit the Congress Web site or talk to your county 4-H agent for more details.

http://4h.tennessee.edu/stcong/

Visit these Web sites to learn more about government and citizenship and to prepare for your trip to Congress:

- http://firstgov.gov
- http://kids.gov/k_gov.htm
- http://4h.tennessee.edu/stcong/links.htm