



Utah House of Representatives

House Majority Caucus

2023 General Session Accomplishments

Overview

- Passed over 500 bills
- Appropriated \$28 billion
- Made significant strides in key areas that will have positive impacts statewide
- Historic and generational investments

Stewardship

Water

- Accomplished 4 main goals this session:
 - Increased water capacity
 - Expanded conservation efforts
 - Prepared for future water needs
 - Enhanced outreach efforts
- Nearly **\$500 million** invested in Utah's water resources
- Solving Utah's water problem is a marathon, not a sprint. It will take several years, but we are committed to making progress every session

Funding Highlights

- \$200 million – Agriculture optimization
- \$50 million – Water reuse reservoir & desalination
- \$30 million – Water infrastructure projects
- \$15 million – Secondary water meters
- \$12.5 million – Great Salt Lake

Legislation

- H.B. 150 Emergency Water Shortages (Albrecht)
 - Outlines the process for declaring a temporary water shortage emergency
- H.B. 207 Compact Commission (Snider)
 - Allows the state engineer to oversee our various river compacts

- H.B. 307 Utah Water Ways (Musselman)
 - Combines private donations and state funding to spread awareness and bolster Utah water conservation efforts
- H.B. 349 Water Reuse Projects (Snider)
 - Prohibits the approval of a water reuse project if the water would have otherwise been discharged into a tributary of the Great Salt Lake
- H.B. 450 Landscaping Requirements (Wilcox)
 - Prohibits an HOA from requiring units to have more than 50% vegetative coverage
- H.B. 491 Amendments to the Great Salt Lake (Schultz)
 - Establishes the Office of the GSL Commissioner to help oversee all agencies working on the GSL
- H.B. 513 Great Salt Lake Amendments (Snider)
 - Addresses mineral leases or royalty agreements related to the Great Salt Lake
- S.B. 53 Groundwater Use (Vickers, Albrecht)
 - Strengthens Southern Utah's water resources
- S.B. 118 Water Efficient Landscaping (Sandall, Owens)
 - Provides financial incentives to remove turf and install/maintain water efficient landscaping
- S.B. 119 Per Capita Consumptive Use (McKell, Burton)
 - Provides that per capita consumptive use is the standard and requires reporting districts to calculate per consumptive use
- S.B. 158 Water Extractions (McKell, Whyte)
 - Requires cities to budget water usage in new development projects

Energy

- Safeguarded Utah's ability to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy
- Pushed back against the federal government's regulatory overreach that threatens our ability to provide power to the state
- Passed legislation to create a statewide energy plan to develop and implement Utah's energy policies and goals as it relates to renewable and non-renewable energy sources
- Will continue to invest in Utah's all-of-the-above energy approach including coal, natural gas, hydroelectric, nuclear, wind, solar, hydrogen, and more

Legislation

- H.B. 389 Renewable Energy Amendments (Jack)
 - Requires certain electric utility companies to prepare an electrical power delivery quality plan
- H.B. 425 Energy Security Amendments (Ivory)
 - Authorizes the AG to take legal action to defend Utah's energy independence
- H.B. 426 Statewide Energy Policy Amendments (Moss)
 - Creates the Utah Energy Research Grant Program
- H.C.R. 9 Concurrent Resolution Concerning the Shutdown of Utah's Power by the Federal Government (Schultz)
 - Highlights the state's need to protect and defend against federal regulations that jeopardize the state's right to an affordable, reliable, and dispatchable energy

Land Management

- Increased organization and funding for state outdoor recreation projects
 - Invested **\$45 million** one-time and **\$45 million** ongoing in active transportation for trails and other outdoor recreation infrastructure
- Put in place wildfire preventative measures to protect our state when disaster strikes

Affordability

Taxes

- The best way we can ensure Utahns can continue to call Utah home is to allow them to keep more of their hard-earned money in their pockets
- **\$850 million** total tax reduction

Legislation

- H.B. 54 Tax Revisions (Eliason)
 - Income tax reduction – 4.85% → 4.65%

- Social Security tax credit – for households earning up to \$75,000
- Double dependent exemption – for families in year of a child’s birth
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) – 15% → 20% of federal tax credit
- Removed state portion of sales tax on food
- H.B. 170 Child Tax Revisions (Pulsipher)
 - \$1,000 non refundable child tax credit for children 1-3 years old to help cover the cost of childcare
- S.J.R. 10 Proposal to Amend Utah Constitution - Income Tax
 - Modifies Article XIII in the Constitution by expanding the income tax earmark to allow the Legislature to use revenue growth to fund other essential programs.

Total Tax Reductions

- \$607.9 million (H.B. 54) – Income Tax and Sales Tax on Food
- \$9.6 million (H.B. 170) – Child Care Tax Credit
- \$146 million (H.B. 293) – Property tax thaw
- \$51 million (H.B. 364) – Low Income Housing Tax Credit
- \$32.7 million (H.B. 301) – Gas tax
- \$2.6 million (H.B. 130) – Adoption Tax Credit

Housing

- Housing affordability is a top concern for lawmakers and Utahns
- Reduced regulatory barriers, identified tools to facilitate market-based solutions, and increased housing in rural Utah
- Will continue to work with local governments and the private sector to find solutions that allow Utahns to continue calling Utah home
- Allocated more than **\$200 million** for housing and homelessness plus **\$51 million** in a low-income housing tax credit

Legislation

- H.B. 364 Housing Affordability Amendments (Whyte)
 - Addresses our housing crisis by helping: First-time home buyers, renters, low-income families, homeless population, rural communities

- H.B. 406 Land Use, Development, and Management Act Modifications (Whyte)
 - Amends provisions related to municipal land use, development, and management of property
- S.B. 174 Local Land Use and Development Revisions (Fillmore, Whyte)
 - Amends provisions related to local land use and development
- S.B. 240 First-time Homebuyer Assistance Program (Adams, Whyte)
 - Provides grants for first-time home buyers which can be used towards the cost of purchasing a home

Funding Highlights

- \$51 million – Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)
- \$50 million – First-time homebuyer program
- \$50 million – Deeply affordable housing
- \$12 million – Homeless services
- \$10 million – Housing Preservation Fund

Government Overreach

- Blocked efforts to distort financial markets and limit access to capital based on artificial and subjective criteria
- Protected against investment schemes based on assessments of businesses' and individuals' political beliefs
- Ensured any state investment is done without regard to companies' political, environmental, or social considerations

Legislation

- H.B. 281 Social Credit Score Amendments (Acton)
 - Prohibits a governmental entity from using or enforcing a system that discriminates against/advocates for a person based on a social credit score
- H.B. 449 Unlawful Anticompetitive Activity Amendments (Ivory)
 - Blocks efforts to distort financial markets and limit access to capital based on artificial and subjective criteria
- S.B. 96 Fiduciary Duty Modifications (C. Wilson, Pulsipher)
 - Addresses fiduciary duties for management of government funds

- S.B. 97 Public Contract Requirements (C. Wilson, Shipp)
 - Addresses public entity contact requirements

Investment

Transportation

- Monumental year for generational investments, including every mode of transportation
- Over **\$2 billion** invested in transportation
 - \$1.6 billion for roads (\$770 million is high-risk debt reduction)
 - \$350 million for transit
 - \$90 million for active transportation
- These investments will not only benefit us today, but will greatly benefit our children and grandchildren and set Utah up for future success

Legislation

- H.B. 44 Transportation Corridor Funding Amendments (Christofferson)
 - Extends transportation planning time horizons and criteria
- H.B. 301 Transportation Tax Amendments (Schultz)
 - Ensures all users contribute to the cost of roads and maintenance, and prepares Utah for a shift in our infrastructure and transportation systems

Funding Highlights

- \$1.6 billion – UDOT/Roads
- \$200 million – Commuter rail improvements
- \$150 million – Phase one of Cottonwood Canyon transport
- \$88.5 million – Highway 191 improvements
- \$45 million – Active transportation
- \$40 million – Rural and backcountry roads (B&C)

Education

- Education inspires upward mobility, fosters innovation, and opens the doors of the future

- Made significant investments in public education that positively impact students, teachers, and parents:
 - Provided historic teacher pay raises
 - Gave additional learning opportunities for Utah students
 - Funded paid teacher collaboration and preparation time
 - Funded optional all-day kindergarten
 - Passed half a dozen bills related to school safety

Legislation

- S.B. 183 Educator Salary Amendments
 - Allows for teacher's salaries to be adjusted for inflation
- H.B. 215 Funding for Teacher Salaries and Optional Education Opportunities (Pierucci)
 - Creates the Utah Fits All Scholarship
 - Provides teachers with a \$6,000 pay raise
- H.B. 308 School Grading Modifications (Welton)
 - Removes the requirement on the State Board of Education to use a letter grade when assigning a school an overall rating
- H.B. 489 Educator Paid Professional Hours (J. Moss)
 - Allows LEAs to prorate paid professional hours of an educator who was hired during the school year
- H.B. 477 Full-day Kindergarten Amendments (Spendlove)
 - Makes full-day kindergarten available for all local education agencies with an option for half-day kindergarten
- H.B. 394 Hold Harmless For Public Education Enrollment (K. Peterson)
 - Prioritizes and protects public education funding in the state constitution

Funding Highlights

- \$213 million – Teacher pay raises
- \$236 million – 6% WPU increase
- \$92 million – Permanent school fund
- \$64 million – Teacher preparation/collaboration time
- \$42.5 million – Optional education opportunities
- \$15 million – Students experiencing homelessness

School Safety

- Multi-faceted approach to school safety by addressing top concerns of students, educators, parents, and law enforcement
- Invested in student safety and ensured best practices are used to protect Utah schools and students
- Addressed chronic absenteeism through prevention and intervention
- Passed legislation to empower parents with information and resources when their student has been subjected to bullying, cyber-bullying, or other abusive behavior

Legislation

- H.B. 60 Juvenile Justice Modifications (Acton)
 - Requires schools to report incidents of students bringing weapons to school
- H.B. 61 School Safety Requirements (Wilcox)
 - Establishes a school security task force and provides funding for security upgrades
- H.B. 140 Standard Response Protocol to Active Threats (Johnson)
 - Requires emergency response drills to be developmentally appropriate for students
- H.B. 249 Education Related Information Amendments (Peterson)
 - Empowers school resource officers to work with juvenile courts when appropriate
- H.B. 304 Juvenile Justice Revisions (Lisonbee)
 - Allows school admin and SROs to report students to law enforcement for misdemeanors committed on school grounds
- H.B. 400 School Absenteeism Amendments (Johnson)
 - Helps address Chronic absenteeism in Utah

Funding Highlights

- \$75 million – Flexible school safety, physical facility, and capital needs

Other

Abortion

- As a state, we deeply value human life at all stages and in all circumstances. It's the state's responsibility to protect the most vulnerable, and that includes the unborn
- While we anxiously await the court's ruling, we took additional steps to protect the sanctity of life while providing appropriate support to victims
- Since Roe v. Wade was overturned and put our statute into force, we have worked with hospitals and doctors to provide greater clarity for our healthcare professionals and for women

Legislation

- H.B. 467 Abortion Changes
 - Provides greater clarity
 - Protects innocent life
 - Protects women who experience dangerous complications during pregnancy

County Sherriffs

- Amended the Utah Constitution to ensure the continual election of sheriffs throughout the state
- Will be on the 2024 ballot for voters to decide

Legislation

- H.J.R. 10 Proposal to Amend Utah Constitution – Election of County Sheriffs (Wilson)
 - Codifies the election of county sheriffs in the Utah Constitution

Earmark

- Modified the income tax earmark to build upon Amendment G's success, which will solve our state's budget challenges and increase protections for public education funding
- Utah voters will decide at the November 2024 ballot box whether to increase protections for public education funding *and* remove the state portion of the sales tax on food

Election Integrity

- Clarified the oversight of elections, established a uniform statewide election process, and created a process to reconcile any disparities in ballot tabulation
- Passed legislation to require an audit be conducted each election cycle by the Legislator Auditor General's Office

Legislation

- H.B. 269 Election Audit Requirements (Schultz)
 - Requires and addresses a biennial audit of elections, conducted by the Office of the Legislative Auditor General
- H.B. 448 Election Changes (Maloy)
 - Amends provisions of the Election Code and the authority of the lieutenant governor over elections

Judicial Nomination

- Changed the makeup and process for judicial nominating commissions
 - Removed requirements that certain spots have to be filled by certain groups (Bar Association, Judiciary)
 - Gave Governor more discretion, broadening the pool of candidates
 - Required that all nominees must reside in the district which they will serve

Legislation

- S.B. 129 Judiciary Amendments (Cullimore, Lisonbee)
 - Addresses the selection, appointment, and confirmation of judges to the appellate, district, and juvenile courts of this state

Puberty Blockers

- Protected Utah's young people from being rushed into permanent, life-altering medical decisions, whose risks are still not fully understood
- Pushed pause for a couple years while the science continues to develop and we better understand the long-term outcomes and risks

Legislation

- S.B. 16 Sex Characteristics Surgical Procedures (Kennedy, Shipp)
 - Requires the Department of Health to conduct a systematic review of hormone blockers
 - Prohibits performing sex characteristic surgical procedures on a minor for the purpose of effectuating a sex change

Rural Utah

- H.B. 371 Working Farm and Ranch Protection Fund (Snider)
 - \$453,000 towards Rural Utah Student Initiative
 - \$40 million – B & C roads
 - \$30 million – 4-6th class county schools