



# INTERIM HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Legislative Research  
and General Counsel

Office of the Legislative  
Auditor General

## JULY INTERIM COMMITTEES

### Business and Labor

#### STUDY:

- Discussed uniform construction specifications and the bidding process in the construction industry.

#### ACTIONS:

- Directed staff to prepare legislation amending the sunrise review process for occupational and professional licensing.
- Recommended reauthorization of Title 31A, Chapter 31, Insurance Fraud Act, and removed the chapter from the sunset act.
- Directed staff to prepare legislation regarding per diem payments to the board of directors of the Workers' Compensation Fund.

*Chairs: Sen. Scott K. Jenkins / Rep. Stephen D. Clark*  
*Staff: Allison Morgan (analyst)/Patricia Owen (attorney)/Phalin Flowers (secretary)*

### Education

#### STUDIES:

- Discussed Jordan School District's policy on the acceptance of credits from schools outside the district and whether the policy is consistent with state statutes and State Board of Education rules.
- The Utah State Office of Education presented information on a teacher supply and demand study.
- Received presentations on and discussed alternative methods of assessing high school students' skills. The president of Utah Valley State College recommended that the Legislature consider requiring all high school students take the ACT, which can indicate a student's readiness for higher education.

*Chairs: Sen. Howard A. Stephenson / Rep. Margaret Dayton*  
*Staff: Constance Steffen & Phillip Dean (analysts)/Dee Larsen (attorney)/Glenda Whitney (secretary)*

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### Government Operations

#### STUDY:

- The Division of Finance presented suggested changes to the Utah Code that would benefit the division in carrying out its duties. The division recommended a trust fund for post-retirement benefits and revisions of the post-conviction appeals program statutes.

#### REPORT:

- The Utah State Archives and Records Services Division presented an overview of its functions and activities. After the meeting adjourned, the committee participated in a walking tour of the division's facilities.

#### ACTION:

- The committee requested that staff prepare draft legislation addressing the post-conviction appeals program.

*Chairs: Sen. Parley Hellewell / Rep. Douglas C. Aagard*  
*Staff: Benjamin Christensen (analyst)/Eric Weeks (attorney)/Brooke Ollerton (secretary)*

### Health and Human Services

#### STUDIES:

- Received a report on the design and use of health savings accounts authorized by the Legislature (2006 General Session) and to be offered by the Public Employees Health Program, beginning July 1, 2007.
- Received reports on the design and use of health savings accounts in the private insurance market in Utah and the U.S.
- Received reports on the implementation of H.B. 31, "Pilot Program for the Provision Services for People with Disabilities," (2006 General Session) which establishes a pilot program for providing supported employment services, the use of the FY 07 \$2.7 million increase in funding for the Division of Services for People with Disabilities, and options for further addressing the needs of persons waiting for division services.

*Chairs: Sen. Allen M. Christensen / Rep. Bradley G. Last*  
*Staff: Mark Andrews (analyst)/Catherine Dupont, Thomas Vaughn (attorneys)/Joy Miller (secretary)*

## Judiciary

### STUDIES:

- Discussed Utah Supreme Court rulemaking authority and the Legislature's constitutional authority to amend Rules of Procedure and Rules of Evidence in light of a recent Utah Supreme Court case.
- Discussed punitive damages, including the rationale for punitive damages, distribution of payments, implementation, problems encountered, and suggestions for changes.

### ACTION:

- Approved draft legislation "Comparative Negligence Amendments," which expands the definition of "fault" to include intentional torts and civil conspiracy.

*Chairs: Sen. David L. Thomas / Rep. James A. Ferrin*

*Staff: Jerry Howe (analyst)/Esther Chelsea-McCarty (attorney)/Brooke Ollerton (secretary)*

## Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

### STUDIES:

- Individuals spoke regarding their recovery from addiction to methamphetamine, their experiences with treatment programs, and recommendations for public education.
- Reviewed juvenile and adult drug courts, including their functions, the people they serve, and the courts' results.
- The Office of the Court Administrator stated that drug courts are the most effective treatment option for the population the courts serve.
- The Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice reported on the implementation of the pilot study of DORA (Drug Offender Reform Act) in the 3rd Judicial District and the differences between drug courts and DORA.
- The committee viewed the locally produced video "Mother Superior" regarding methamphetamine addiction among Utah women.

### REPORTS:

- The Utah Addiction Center discussed the physiology of methamphetamine addiction, issues in treating addiction, and public policy implications.
- The Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) reported that approximately 30% of all prison admissions are drug related and that this percentage is even higher among women. UDC noted more new prison admissions are for drug offenses than for any other category of crime. UDC said these facts have increased the need for providing drug treatment.

*Chairs: Sen. D.C. Buttars / Rep. DeMar "Bud" Bowman*

*Staff: Stewart E. Smith (analyst)/Susan Creager Allred (attorney)/Wendy Bangertner (secretary)*

## Medicaid

### REPORTS:

- Received reports on funding, philosophy, and issues related to programs delivered by the Department of Human Services, the Department of Workforce Services, and the Division of Rehabilitation Services.
- Received reports on the number of Utah births paid for by Medicaid, the degree to which community health centers rely on Medicaid, and the difference between Medicaid and sales tax growth rates.

*Chairs: Sen. Sheldon L. Killpack / Rep. Merlynn T. Newbold*

*Staff: Mark Andrews (analyst)/Leif Elder (analyst)*

*William Greer (fiscal analyst)/Derek Byrne (fiscal analyst)*

*Stan Eckersley (fiscal analyst)/Debbie Headden (fiscal analyst)*

*Thomas Vaughn (attorney)/Catherine Dupont (attorney)/Phalin Flowers (secretary)*

## Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment

### REPORTS:

- The Legislative Auditor General reported on the audit of the Endangered Species Mitigation Fund.
- The Department of Natural Resources reported on how endangered species recovery funds are expended for the Colorado River, June Sucker, and Virgin River plans.

*Chairs: Sen. Thomas V. Hatch / Rep. Roger E. Barrus*

*Staff: Brian Allred (analyst)/Emily R. Brown (attorney)/Joy Miller (secretary)*

## Political Subdivisions

### STUDIES:

- Discussed whether state law should be amended to allow primary elections for special districts' boards of trustees.
- Discussed issues and recommendations regarding land use referenda.
- Discussed a proposal to establish a process for submitting a nonbinding opinion question to the Utah voters.

*Chairs: Sen. Carlene M. Walker / Rep. Brad L. Dee*

*Staff: Joseph Wade (analyst)/Robert Rees (attorney)/Wendy Bangertner (secretary)*

## Public Utilities and Technology

### REPORTS:

- The Division of Homeland Security reported on protocols it would follow in responding to an energy emergency, including contact lists and reliance on specific market supplies.
- Rocky Mountain Power reported on energy transmission siting issues, including corridor widths, corridor identification, and congested transmission paths.
- The Public Service Commission reported that Utah will need more transmission power lines from surrounding states to ensure adequate future power supplies.

*(Continued next page)*

- Wasatch Wind reported on wind resource development, including transferable renewable energy tax credits, economic impact on rural communities, and the need for energy diversification.

*Chairs: Sen. Gregory S. Bell / Rep. Sheryl L. Allen  
Staff: Richard North (analyst)/Christopher Parker (attorney)/Tracey Fredman (secretary)*

## Revenue and Taxation

### STUDIES:

- Reviewed the history of the property tax assessing and collecting levy and the need to clarify several aspects of the current statute.
- Discussed two options to modify the uniform fees imposed on certain types of watercraft.
- Reviewed options to modify the state individual income tax, including:
  - reducing tax rates in the current state individual income tax system; and
  - allowing a taxpayer to elect to compute tax liability by multiplying a single rate by the federal adjusted gross income.

*Chairs: Sen. Curtis S. Bramble / Rep. Wayne A. Harper  
Staff: Bryant Howe & Phillip Dean (analysts)/Rebecca Rockwell & Angela D. Oakes (attorneys)  
Phalin Flowers (secretary)*

## Transportation

### Report:

- The Transportation Commission reported on selected transportation issues facing the state.
- The Department of Transportation reported on the I-15 Ogden Weber Expansion project in Weber County.

*Chairs: Sen. Sheldon L. Killpack / Rep. Joseph G. Murray  
Staff: Mark Steinagel (analyst)/Shannon Halverson & Christopher Parker (attorneys)  
Tracey Fredman (secretary)*

## Workforce Services & Community and Economic Development

### STUDIES:

- Studied how unemployment insurance tax rates can be adjusted to more closely reflect a small business employer's fluctuations in employment levels.
- Studied the state's rural economic development efforts with representatives of the Governor's Office of Economic Development, the Governor's Rural Partnership Board, and the Rural Development Council.

### REPORTS:

- The Department of Community and Culture reported on the digitization of the state's art, history, museum, and library collections and the need for additional funding to complete the project.
- The Department of Community and Culture reported on:
  - the liability risk that government entities assume when they engage or deploy volunteers; and
  - the corrections made by the department to address audit findings of the State Auditor.
- The Division of Housing and Community Development presented an annual statutorily required report on the technical assistance extended by the division to local governments in preparing their moderate income housing plans.

*Chairs: Sen. John W. "Bill" Hickman / Rep. David N. Cox  
Staff: Art Hunsaker (analyst)/Jim Wilson (attorney)/Glenda Whitney (secretary)*

## Recordings of committee meetings are at the Legislature's website [www.le.utah.gov](http://www.le.utah.gov)

Click on "Committees" in either circled location (below)



Select the committee from the next screen (no illustration)

Then click on "Audio" for the selected meeting (below)

Education Interim Committee

This schedule is updated daily as documents become available. Contact the commit committee histories not yet available on our website.

Date/Time	Location	Notice/Agenda	Minutes/Audio
<a href="#">Wed. Apr 19, 2:00 PM</a>	<a href="#">Rm W135</a>	<a href="#">Notice</a>   <a href="#">Agenda</a>	<a href="#">Minutes</a>   <a href="#">Audio</a>
<a href="#">Wed. May 17, 2:00 PM</a>	<a href="#">Rm W135</a>	<a href="#">Notice</a>   <a href="#">Agenda</a>	<a href="#">Minutes</a>   <a href="#">Audio</a>
<a href="#">Wed. Jun 21, 2:00 PM</a>	<a href="#">Rm W135 - REVISED</a>	<a href="#">Notice</a>   <a href="#">Agenda</a>	<a href="#">Minutes</a>   <a href="#">Audio</a>

Click on the agenda item (below)

Meeting Schedule

Committee Membership

Related Links

Committee Search Page

**Audio\***  
(from the meeting on 5/17/2006 at 2:00 pm)

- [Start of Recording 1](#)
- [Item 1 - Committee Business](#)
- [Item 2 - Information Management Systems for Student \[](#)
- [Item 3 - U-PASS Accountability Plan](#)
- [Item 3 - U-PASS Accountability Plan](#)
- [Item 4 - Other Items / Adjourn](#)
- [Motion - Adjourn - Sen. Madsen](#)

\*Software to listen to audio recordings can be found at [Real.com](http://Real.com).

## Legislative Management Committee

### REPORT:

Staff presented the schedule for the legislative site visit to the Uintah Basin on August 7-8, 2006 (enclosure).

Legislative General Counsel reported on the Judiciary Interim Committee's interest in recodifying Title 78, Judicial Code, and the Committee's request that the Legislative Management Committee approve this project before it is started.

### ACTIONS:

For the August 7-8 legislative site visit to the Uintah Basin, the LMC approved two days of per diem and expenses and approved one night's lodging, with discretion given to the Speaker and the President to authorize an additional night of lodging, depending on where a legislator lives.

Approved the requests of the following appropriations subcommittees:

- Capital Facilities and Administrative Services - for a two-day tour of capital development requests likely to arise during the 2007 General Session.
- Commerce and Revenue - for an August 30, 2006 meeting at 8:30 AM.
- Higher Education - for an October 19, 2006 meeting, at a time not yet determined.
- Natural Resources - for a site visit to Southern Utah, September 7-8, 2006.
- Executive Offices and Criminal Justice - for a meeting in September 2006, at a date and time not yet determined.
- Transportation, Environmental Quality and National Guard - for a July 20, 2006 meeting at 9:00 AM.
- Approved a request from the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee, and the Education Interim Committee for a joint meeting September 21, 2006 at Salt Lake Community College, time not yet determined.
- Approved a request from the Education Interim Committee to pay the travel expenses necessary for Dr. Jim Milgram (Stanford University) to testify at the October 18, 2006 interim meeting on mathematics instruction in grades K-12.
- Approved a motion to authorize the Judiciary Interim Committee to recodify Title 78, Judicial Code, and to allow the committee to determine if the recodification should divide the information in the current Judicial Code into two separate code titles.



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For more information about legislative activities, visit the Utah State Legislature's website at: [www.le.utah.gov](http://www.le.utah.gov).

*Editors: Susan Creager Allred & Stewart E. Smith  
Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel*

**Next Interim Day – September 20**

**UTAH STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**UINTAH BASIN SITE VISIT**  
**AUGUST 7-8, 2006**  
**ITINERARY**

**Monday, August 7**

**10:15AM - 10:45AM**

- Arrive in Roosevelt - meet at Utah State University Roosevelt Campus
- Welcome by local legislators, mayors, and Duchesne County Commission
- Water, juice, coffee, and snacks available
- Each legislator will receive a custom satchel with an agenda and several comfort items from the community

**10:45AM - 12:00PM**

- Board buses and drive to Newfield Production offices
- Mini oil field expo - several tables and displays will be set up where legislators can visit with business leaders in the exploration, development, production, and transportation phases of the oil industry. Brochures and other items will be available.

**12:00PM - 12:30PM**

- Lunch with business and community leaders

**12:30PM - 1:30PM**

- Oil Industry presentations

**1:30PM - 2:00PM**

- Question and Answer

**2:00PM - 3:30PM**

- Board buses and go to Newfield oil production sites and then return to Roosevelt

**3:30PM - 4:00PM**

- Drive to Vernal (buses or personal transportation)
- Check into motels

**5:30PM - 7:00PM**

- Dinner and visit with Vernal City and Uintah County community leaders - Western Park Convention Center (300 East 200 South)

**7:30PM - 9:00PM**

- Town meeting - Western Park Convention Center

**Tuesday, August 8**

**8:00AM - 9:00AM**

- Breakfast - Western Park Convention Center

**9:00AM - 9:30AM**

- Opening remarks by Commissioner Mike McKee
- Presentation by Andrew Bremner, IPAMS (Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States)

**9:30AM - 11:15AM**

- Board buses for trip to Vernal Theater
- Oil and gas production presentation

**11:15AM - 1:00PM**

- Lunch - the Uintah Dinosaur Gardens across the street

**1:00PM - 6:00PM**

- Board buses for afternoon tours (all buses will visit all sites)
- Temple Mountain Energy (tar sands)
- Deseret Generation & Transmission (power plant)
- OSEC (oil shale mine)
- Oil Tech (oil shale extraction)
- Closing remarks to be made at the last tour stop

**6:00PM**

- Arrive back at hotels, check out, and go home