

2021 Interim Committee Study Items

Approved by the Legislative Management Committee | April 14, 2021

On behalf of the interim committee chairs, the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel has compiled the following items recommended for interim study.

Items listed in Table 1 are those that more than one interim committee intends to study, although each will focus on a different aspect of the issue. These issues are also **highlighted in green** throughout the document.

Table 1: Issues Studied in Multiple Interim Committees

Issue	Committees
Digital equity and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ EDWS – focus on increasing access to digital opportunities for rural and multicultural communities, including role of GO Utah’s Broadband Center.▪ PUET – focus on Navajo Nation communications and broadband for schools.
Mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ EDU – focus on support for public education students and staff.▪ HHS – focus on substance abuse and mental health broadly.▪ LAW – focus on intersection of mental health, law enforcement, and public safety.
Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ GOV – focus broadly on multiple issues including methodologies, judicial elections, plain language ballots, etc.▪ JUD – focus on understanding Utah’s current practices from those running Utah’s elections.
Data privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ GOV – focus on individual data privacy and government sharing, storing, and using data.▪ JUD – focus on the criminal code, online impersonation/harassment, and creating a penalty for catfishing.
Local forms of government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ GOV – focus on state’s delegation of state authority including forms of local government.▪ POL – focus on county forms of government.
Bail reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ JUD – primary focus including hearing reports from work group, staff, and stakeholders.▪ LAW – acknowledges JUD is taking the lead but wants to receive updates as the issue progresses.
Utah Lake Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NAE – focus on water issues.▪ POL – focus on the authority and multi-government cooperation and coordination.

Business and Labor Interim Committee

(Sen. Bramble, Rep. Ferry)

- Cryptocurrency regulatory sandbox.
- Business teleworking incentive program.
- Lessons learned from COVID-19 business regulations and next steps.
- Occupational and Professional Licensing Review restructuring.
- Social media free speech.
- Gig economy regulations, employment status, and licensing.
- Regulations for certain financial institutions.

- COVID-19 relief programs fraud.

Economic Development and Workforce Services Interim Committee

(Sen. Winterton, Rep. Handy)

- **Childcare affordability:** Study the employment barriers for working families including data related to childcare affordability, availability, and access. What are the roles of state and local agencies in terms of oversight, licensing etc.? What is the role of the legislature? Evaluate past and current efforts, legislation, appropriations, etc.
- **Workforce development:** Study the education-to-industry pipeline including the alignment of education to employer needs to ensure efficiencies and implementation of legislative direction, appropriations, etc. Review the status of previous legislation, the alignment of higher education, technical colleges, stackable credentials, etc. Determine the necessity of additional legislative direction.
- **Department of Workforce Services delivery of services:** Study the Department of Workforce Services' mission, division alignment, regional offices, leadership structure, FTEs, compensation, effectiveness measurements, "customer service" ratings, etc.
- **Alignment of economic development efforts:** Study how economic development efforts in the state (state and local) can be better aligned. Specifically, in light of 2021 legislation, what are the goals and activities of GO Utah to meet the intent of the legislation? What is the timetable for full implementation? Review the collaboration and coordination of GO Utah with local and county economic development efforts. Where do they complement? Where do they overlap? Review the role of the Economic Development Corporation of Utah, EDCU, in relationship to all economic development efforts.
- **Digital equity and inclusion:** Study how the state can increase access to digital opportunities for low-income, rural, and multicultural communities in Utah. Review recent and prior legislation and appropriations including the efforts and role of GO Utah's Broadband Center.
- **Film industry in Utah:** Study and quantify the economic impact (return on investment) of the film industry in Utah. Specifically, what are the appropriate mechanisms to incentivize the film industry to come to Utah? Compare and contrast Utah's film incentives with other states. Review specific case studies and review film industry employment in Utah.
- **Utah's position in the global economy:** Study how to strengthen Utah's position in the global economy, post pandemic. Review Utah's trade activities, exports and imports, including other states and nations, etc.¹

Education Interim Committee

(Sen. Johnson, Rep. Snow)

- School funding equalization.
- Public education accountability system.
- State Board of Education's [Portrait of a Graduate](#) and related preschool through postsecondary [competencies](#).
- Public education lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Mental health** supports for public education students and staff.
- Public education prevention and intervention programs, including bullying prevention and youth suicide prevention programs.
- Higher education performance funding, including implementation of statewide attainment goals.

¹ This item could, alternatively, be assigned to the International Relations and Trade Committee for interim study.

Government Operations Interim Committee

(Sen. Thatcher, Rep. Maloy)

- **Election law:** Study various issues related to election law, including election methodologies, judicial elections, precincts, plain language ballots, and unopposed municipal elections.
- **Data privacy:** Study individual data privacy, specifically government sharing, storing, and using private data of individuals.
- **Open and Public Meetings Act (OPMA):** Study potential amendments to OPMA, including electronic meetings.
- **Legislative review of federal legislation and executive action:** Study the state's responsibility, position, and authority in compliance with pending federal legislation and executive action.
- **Delegation of state authority:** Study the state's responsibility and authority to delegate state authority to local government, **including forms of local government.**
- **Department mergers:** Study the impact of 2021 General Session legislation that resulted in the merging of the Department of Administrative Services, the Department of Technology Services, and the Department of Human Resource Management.

Health and Human Services Interim Committee

(Sen. Kennedy, Rep. Nelson)

- Substance abuse and mental health.
- Healthcare reform.
- Transgender issues:
 - transgender youth in athletics; and
 - puberty inhibition procedure or a sex characteristic-altering procedure on a minor.
- Address statutorily required reports, assigned audits, and other oversight tasks as needed.
- Study the merger of the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services, including the results of the legislative audit anticipated this fall.

Judiciary Interim Committee

(Sen. Weiler, Rep. Lisonbee)

- **Bail reform:** The committee's primary focus, including hearing reports from the work group, presentations from staff and stakeholders, and discussing the possibility of a committee bill file.
- **Expungements:** Study Utah's expungement process and how it can be more efficient. The committee would like an update on how agencies are handling recent legislative changes.
- **Victims Services Division:** Explore creating a new division or amending the Utah Council on Victims of Crime's duties in statute to streamline victim services in the state.
- **Digital & data privacy:** Explore ways in which legislation can help protect Utahns from digital privacy issues.
- **Elections systems security & integrity review:** Utah is a country-wide leader on this and the committee would like a report or update on current practices.
- **Sex offender registry:** Learn more about how the registry works and examine if it should be updated for modern times.

Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Committee

(Sen. Grover, Rep. Wilcox)

- **Mental health and public safety:** Study the various ways in which mental health, law enforcement, and public safety intersect.
- **Privacy and criminal justice:** Study issues related to balancing the protections of the Fourth Amendment with effective policing strategies.
- **Driving under the influence:** Study matters related to sentencing for DUI violations.
- **Recruitment and retention:** Study the current status of recruitment and retention efforts among law enforcement agencies.
- **Law enforcement training and policies:** Review substantive changes made during the 2021 General Session concerning law enforcement training and conduct standards, and study whether further changes are necessary.
- **Bail reform:** Acknowledging Judiciary will take the lead, receive updates regarding ongoing efforts to reform the bail system.

Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee

(Sen. Sandall, Rep. Stratton)

- **Branding inspections:** Study the Branding Inspection Program, the recent Legislative audit, and make recommendations on any legislative action (if necessary).
- **Formation of monuments and parks process:** The statutory process to designate a state monument does not account for individual legislators who want to establish a state monument. Current statute requires the process to begin with the Division of Parks or the county in which the monument would reside. Current statutes do not include a defined process to create/authorize state parks.
- **Land conservation entities:** Study the different land conservation programs throughout the state. Is there any overlap between the programs or are there grant opportunities that are being missed?
- **Wildlife code review and possible recodification:** Begin a multi-year review of the current wildlife code and make recommendations on language clean-up and possible restructuring or recodification.
- Penalties and posting requirements of trespassing code.
- Impact on natural resources from the environmental executive order regarding climate change crisis.
- Water user fees.

The following are recommended for the **Legislative Water Development Commission** (Sen. Hinkins, Rep. Stratton) to study:

- **Utah Lake Authority.**
- **Extraterritorial jurisdiction:** This went to the executive water task force last interim for study and a report is expected this interim.
- **State Engineer - public interest analysis:** Study the state engineer process to change water rights (UCA 73-3a-108 and SB126, 2015). Statute requires the State Engineer to consider the public welfare when approving an application; however, “public welfare” is not defined. Does the “public welfare” need to be defined and, if so, is this a statutory change or administrative rules?
- Water user fees.

Political Subdivisions Interim Committee

(Sen. McKell, Rep. Dunnigan)

- **Creation of Utah Lake Authority (in consultation with the Legislative Water Development Commission).**
- Real property recording requirements, including mineral/split estate documents.
- Housing affordability issues for local governments (in consultation with the Housing Affordability Commission), including inclusionary zoning and short-term rentals.
- Gradual transitions for county classifications and **county forms of government.**

- Local government use of COVID-related relief funds.
- Separation of powers issues in county and municipal governments.
- Powers of community reinvestment agencies.

Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Interim Committee

(Sen. Hinkins, Rep. Albrecht)

- **Blockchain technology:** Study emerging blockchain technology and any regulatory mechanisms used in neighboring states.
- **IPP:** Study the use of Utah resources and commitments to Utah as well as hydrogen policy.
- **Energy plan:** Gather input and feedback to create a 10-year energy plan for Utah.
- **Grid robustness:** Study the transmission line report and overall energy security and long-term storage/reserves, including blackout prevention. Receive updates on certain natural gas projects in rural areas of Utah.
- **Clean energy:** Study opportunities for waterpower generation at reservoirs, electric charging stations in southern gateway communities, and increasing private sector investment in clean energy.
- **Broadband infrastructure updates:** Study Navajo Nation communications and broadband IT for schools.

Retirement and Independent Entities Interim Committee

(Sen. Harper, Rep. Brooks)

- Overview of the RIE Committee structure, URS, and PEHP.
- URS funding, impact of federal spending, and policy implications.
- Shifting life expectancies and the implications for PEHP and URS.
- Years of service timeframes and post-retirement reemployment restrictions.
- Review of participating employer active and inactive statuses and policy implications.
- Review the following independent entities and their independent entity status:
 - Utah State Railroad Authority Museum;
 - Utah Energy Infrastructure Authority; and
 - Utah Dairy Commission.

Revenue and Taxation Interim Committee

(Sen. McCay, Rep. Spendlove)

- Income tax issues, including Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) taxability.
- Property tax issues, including tangible personal property, circuit breaker provisions, and deferrals.
- Sales tax issues, including exemptions and distribution formulas.
- Review of the federal stimulus packages and potential federal tax reform, including the impact on state tax cuts and state tax policy.
- Fees review.
- Review of business incentives offered by the state, including to the airline industry.
- Tax Commission requests, including:
 - Utility adjustment calculation for circuit breaker rent relief; and
 - Electing Small Business Trust (ESBT) S-corp subtraction from income.

Transportation Interim Committee

(Sen. Harper, Rep. Christofferson)

- Road usage charges, vehicle registration fees, and transportation user fees.



- Transportation corridor preservation.
- State airplane fleet and operations.
- Current and future needs of alternate fueling stations.
- Adoption of electric and alternative fuel vehicles.
- Impact of federal funding on state transportation and debt service requirements.
- Evaluating transportation spending.
- Safety inspections.