

**Representative Norman K Thurston** proposes the following substitute bill:

**FREE EXPRESSION REGULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

2017 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Norman K Thurston**

Senate Sponsor: Deidre M. Henderson

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill addresses local government regulation of expressive activity.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ requires that a political subdivision ensure that any generally or individually applicable time, place, or manner restriction on expressive activity on public grounds complies with certain constitutional requirements;

- ▶ requires that, if a political subdivision imposes a generally applicable time, place, or manner restriction on expressive activity on public grounds, the political subdivision must impose the restriction by ordinance or adopt the restriction in accordance with a general ordinance;

- ▶ prevents a political subdivision from prohibiting political activities on public grounds; and

- ▶ exempts compliance with Title 20A, Election Code, and certain property that a political subdivision owns or leases.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**



26 This bill provides a special effective date.

27 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

28 ENACTS:

29 **11-55-101**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

30 **11-55-102**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

31 **11-55-103**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

32 **11-55-104**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

33 **11-55-105**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



35 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

36 Section 1. Section **11-55-101** is enacted to read:

37 **CHAPTER 55. EXPRESSIVE ACTIVITY REGULATION**  
38 **BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT**

39 **11-55-101. Title.**

40 This chapter is known as the "Expressive Activity Regulation by Local Government  
41 Act."

42 Section 2. Section **11-55-102** is enacted to read:

43 **11-55-102. Definitions.**

44 As used in this chapter:

45 (1) "Expressive activity" means:

46 (a) peacefully assembling, protesting, or speaking;

47 (b) distributing literature;

48 (c) carrying a sign; or

49 (d) circulating a petition.

50 (2) "Generally applicable time, place, and manner restriction" means a content-neutral  
51 ordinance, policy, practice, or other action that:

52 (a) by its clear language and intent, restricts or infringes on expressive activity;

53 (b) applies generally to any person; and

54 (c) is not an individually applicable time, place, and manner restriction.

55 (3) (a) "Individually applicable time, place, and manner restriction" means a  
56 content-neutral policy, practice, or other action:

57 (i) that restricts or infringes on expressive activity; and  
58 (ii) that a political subdivision applies:  
59 (A) on a case-by-case basis;  
60 (B) to a specifically identified person or group of persons; and  
61 (C) regarding a specifically identified place and time.  
62 (b) "Individually applicable time, place, and manner restriction" includes a restriction  
63 placed on expressive activity as a condition to obtain a permit.  
64 (4) (a) "Political subdivision" means a county, city, town, or metro township.  
65 (b) "Political subdivision" does not mean a local district under Title 17B, Limited  
66 Purpose Local Government Entities - Local Districts, or a special service district under Title  
67 17D, Chapter 1, Special Service District Act.  
68 (5) (a) "Public building" means a building or permanent structure that is:  
69 (i) owned, leased, or occupied by a political subdivision or a subunit of a political  
70 subdivision;  
71 (ii) open to public access in whole or in part; and  
72 (iii) used for public education or political subdivision activities.  
73 (b) "Public building" does not mean a building owned or leased by a political  
74 subdivision or a subunit of a political subdivision:  
75 (i) that is closed to public access;  
76 (ii) that is a closed forum;  
77 (iii) where state or federal law restricts expressive activity; or  
78 (iv) when the building is used by a person, in whole or in part, for a private function.  
79 (6) (a) "Public grounds" means the area outside a public building that is a traditionally  
80 open forum where members of the public may safely gather to engage in expressive activity.  
81 (b) "Public grounds" includes sidewalks, streets, and parks.  
82 (c) "Public grounds" does not include the interior of a public building.  
83 Section 3. Section **11-55-103** is enacted to read:  
84 **11-55-103. Exceptions.**  
85 This chapter does not apply to:  
86 (1) a restriction on expressive activity on public grounds that a political subdivision  
87 imposes in order to comply with Title 20A, Election Code; or

88 (2) property that a political subdivision owns or leases:

89 (a) that is closed to public access;

90 (b) that is a closed forum; or

91 (c) where state or federal law restricts expressive activity.

92 Section 4. Section **11-55-104** is enacted to read:

93 **11-55-104. Time, place, and manner restrictions -- Generally applicable**

94 **restrictions by ordinance.**

95 (1) If a political subdivision imposes a generally applicable or individually applicable  
96 time, place, and manner restriction on expressive activity on public grounds, the political  
97 subdivision shall ensure that the restriction:

98 (a) is narrowly tailored to serve an important governmental interest, including public  
99 access to the public building, public safety, and protection of public property;

100 (b) is unrelated to the suppression of a particular message or the content of the  
101 expressive activity that the restriction addresses; and

102 (c) leaves open reasonable alternative means for the expressive activity.

103 (2) A political subdivision may not impose a generally applicable time, place, and  
104 manner restriction on expressive activity on public grounds unless the political subdivision:

105 (a) imposes the restriction by ordinance; or

106 (b) (i) creates a general policy by ordinance to guide the adoption, by policy or practice,  
107 of restrictions on expressive activity on public grounds; and

108 (ii) adopts the restriction in accordance with the provisions of an ordinance described  
109 in Subsection (2)(b)(i).

110 Section 5. Section **11-55-105** is enacted to read:

111 **11-55-105. Political activity outside a public building.**

112 (1) Except as provided in Section [11-55-103](#), a political subdivision may not prohibit a  
113 political activity, including signature gathering, on public grounds.

114 (2) A political subdivision may impose a time, place, and manner restriction on  
115 political activities outside a public building in accordance with Section [11-55-104](#).

116 Section 6. **Effective date.**

117 This bill takes effect on May 8, 2018.