

**Senator Daniel Hemmert** proposes the following substitute bill:

**CONTROLLED BUSINESS IN TITLE INSURANCE REPEAL**

2019 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Daniel Hemmert**

House Sponsor: Mike Schultz

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill modifies provisions related to title insurance.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ defines terms;
- ▶ enacts provisions that govern affiliated business arrangements involving a title licensee;
- ▶ with certain exceptions, adopts the federal Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act as the state law governing affiliated business arrangement involving a title licensee;
- ▶ provides that the Division of Real Estate shall enforce the provisions of the bill
- ▶ requires a title licensee to submit an annual report to the Division of Real Estate related to the titled entity's affiliated business arrangements and capitalization during the previous calendar year;
- ▶ allows the Division of Real Estate to enforce certain provisions of the federal Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act against real estate licensees;
- ▶ repeals existing provisions governing controlled business relationships in the title industry; and
- ▶ makes technical changes.



26 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

27 None

28 **Other Special Clauses:**

29 None

30 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

31 AMENDS:

32 **31A-23a-504**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2015, Chapter 330

33 **61-2f-401**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2018, Chapter 213

34 ENACTS:

35 **31A-23a-1101**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

36 **31A-23a-1102**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

37 **31A-23a-1103**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

38 **31A-23a-1104**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

39 **31A-23a-1105**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

40 **31A-23a-1106**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

41 **31A-23a-1107**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

42 REPEALS:

43 **31A-23a-503**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2013, Chapter 319



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

46 Section 1. Section **31A-23a-504** is amended to read:

47 **31A-23a-504. Sharing commissions.**

48 (1) (a) Except as provided in Subsection **31A-15-103**(3), a licensee under this chapter  
49 or an insurer may only pay consideration or reimburse out-of-pocket expenses to a person if the  
50 licensee knows that the person is licensed under this chapter as to the particular type of  
51 insurance to act in Utah as:

- 52 (i) a producer;
- 53 (ii) a limited line producer;
- 54 (iii) a consultant;
- 55 (iv) a managing general agent; or
- 56 (v) a reinsurance intermediary.

57 (b) A person may only accept commission compensation or other compensation as a  
58 person described in Subsections (1)(a)(i) through (v) that is directly or indirectly the result of  
59 an insurance transaction if that person is licensed under this chapter to act as described in  
60 Subsection (1)(a).

61 (2) (a) Except as provided in Section 31A-23a-501, a consultant may not pay or receive  
62 a commission or other compensation that is directly or indirectly the result of an insurance  
63 transaction.

64 (b) A consultant may share a consultant fee or other compensation received for  
65 consulting services performed within Utah only:

66 (i) with another consultant licensed under this chapter; and

67 (ii) to the extent that the other consultant contributed to the services performed.

68 (3) This section does not prohibit:

69 (a) the payment of renewal commissions to former licensees under this chapter, former  
70 Title 31, Chapter 17, or their successors in interest under a deferred compensation or agency  
71 sales agreement;

72 (b) compensation paid to or received by a person for referral of a potential customer  
73 that seeks to purchase or obtain an opinion or advice on an insurance product if:

74 (i) the person is not licensed to sell insurance;

75 (ii) the person does not sell or provide opinions or advice on the product; and

76 (iii) the compensation does not depend on whether the referral results in a purchase or  
77 sale; or

78 (c) the payment or assignment of a commission, service fee, brokerage, or other  
79 valuable consideration to an agency or a person who does not sell, solicit, or negotiate  
80 insurance in this state, unless the payment would constitute an inducement or commission  
81 rebate under Section 31A-23a-402 or 31A-23a-402.5.

82 (4) (a) In selling a policy of title insurance, sharing of commissions under Subsection  
83 (1) may not occur if it will result in:

84 (i) an unlawful rebate; or

85 [~~(ii) compensation in connection with controlled business; or~~]

86 [~~(iii)~~] (ii) payment of a forwarding fee or finder's fee.

87 (b) A person may share compensation for the issuance of a title insurance policy only

88 to the extent that the person contributed to the examination of the title or other services  
89 connected with the title insurance policy.

90 (5) This section does not apply to:

91 (a) a bail bond producer or bail enforcement agent as defined in Section 31A-35-102

92 and as described in Subsection 31A-23a-106(2)(c);

93 (b) a travel retailer registered pursuant to Part 9, Travel Insurance Act; or

94 (c) a nonlicensed individual employee or authorized representative of a licensed  
95 limited line producer who holds one or more of the following limited lines of authority as

96 described in Subsection 31A-23a-106(2)(c):

97 (i) car rental related insurance;

98 (ii) self-service storage insurance;

99 (iii) portable electronics insurance; or

100 (iv) travel insurance.

101 Section 2. Section 31A-23a-1101 is enacted to read:

102 **Part 10. Affiliated Business in Title Insurance**

103 **31A-23a-1101. Definitions.**

104 As used in this part:

105 (1) "Affiliated business" means the gross transaction revenue of a title licensee's title  
106 insurance business in the state that is the result of an affiliated business arrangement.

107 (2) "Affiliated business arrangement" means the same as that term is defined in 12  
108 U.S.C. Sec. 2602.

109 (3) "Associate" means the same as that term is defined in 12 U.S.C. Sec. 2602.

110 (4) "Division" means the Division of Real Estate created in Section 61-2-201.

111 (5) "Essential function" means:

112 (a) examining and evaluating, based on relevant law and title insurance underwriting  
113 principles and guidelines, title evidence to determine the insurability of a title and which items  
114 to include or exclude in a title commitment or title insurance policy to be issued;

115 (b) preparing and issuing a title commitment or other document that:

116 (i) discloses the status of the title as the title is proposed to be insured;

117 (ii) identifies the conditions that must be met before a title insurance policy will be  
118 issued; and

119 (iii) obligates the insurer to issue a title insurance policy if the conditions described in  
120 Subsection (5)(b)(ii) are met;

121 (c) clearing underwriting objections and taking the necessary steps to satisfy any  
122 conditions to the issuance of a title insurance policy;

123 (d) preparing the issuance of a title insurance policy; or

124 (e) handling the closing or settlement of a real estate transaction when:

125 (i) it is customary for a title licensee to handle the closing or settlement; and

126 (ii) the title licensee's compensation for handling the closing or settlement is

127 customarily part of the payment or retention from the insurer.

128 (6) "New or newly affiliated title licensee" means a title licensee that:

129 (a) is licensed as a title licensee for the first time on or after May 14, 2019; or

130 (b) (i) is licensed as a title licensee before May 14, 2019; and

131 (ii) enters into an affiliated business arrangement for the first time on or after May 14,  
132 2019.

133 (6) "Ownership affiliated business arrangement" means an affiliated business  
134 arrangement based on a person or a person's affiliate having a direct or beneficial ownership  
135 interest of more than 1% in a title licensee.

136 (7) "RESPA" means the federal Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act, 12 U.S.C. Sec.  
137 2601 et seq. and any rules made thereunder.

138 (8) "Section 8 of RESPA" means 12 U.S.C. Sec. 2607 and any rules promulgated  
139 thereunder.

140 (9) "Sufficient capital and net worth" means:

141 (a) for a new or newly affiliated title licensee:

142 (i) \$100,000 for the first five years after becoming a new or newly affiliated title  
143 licensee; or

144 (ii) after the first five years after becoming a new or newly affiliated title licensee, the  
145 greater of:

146 (A) \$50,000; or

147 (B) on February 1 of each year, an amount equal to 5% of the title licensee's average  
148 annual gross revenue over the preceding two calendar years, up to \$150,000; or

149 (b) for title licensee licensed before May 14, 2019, who is not a new or newly affiliated

150 title licensee:

151 (i) beginning on February 1, 2020, an amount equal to 0.5% of the title licensee's  
152 average annual gross revenue over the preceding two calendar years, increasing by an amount  
153 equal to 0.5% of the title licensee's annual gross revenue over the preceding two calendar years  
154 each February 1 thereafter until February 1, 2029, up to \$150,000; and

155 (ii) beginning on February 1, 2029, the greater of:

156 (A) \$50,000; or

157 (B) an amount equal to 5% of the title licensee's average annual gross revenue over the  
158 preceding two calendar years, up to \$150,000.

159 (10) (a) "Title evidence" means a written or electronic document that identifies and  
160 describes or compiles the documents, records, judgments, liens, and other information from the  
161 public records relevant to the history and current condition of a title to be insured.

162 (b) "Title evidence" does not include a pro forma commitment.

163 (11) "Title licensee" means the same as that term is defined in Section [31A-2-402](#).

164 Section 3. Section **31A-23a-1102** is enacted to read:

165 **31A-23a-1102. Regulation of affiliated business -- Applicable law.**

166 (1) Except as provided in this part, for purposes of state law, Section 8 of RESPA  
167 governs an affiliated business arrangement involving a title licensee.

168 (2) The division shall enforce the provisions of this part, including Section 8 of  
169 RESPA.

170 (3) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the  
171 division may make rules necessary to implement the provisions of this part.

172 Section 4. Section **31A-23a-1103** is enacted to read:

173 **31A-23a-1103. Affiliated business arrangements.**

174 (1) An affiliated business arrangement between a person and a title licensee violates  
175 Section 8 of RESPA for purposes of state law if:

176 (a) the title licensee does not have sufficient capital and net worth in a reserve account  
177 in the title licensee's name; or

178 (b) more than 70% of the title's licensee's annual title insurance business is affiliated  
179 business on or after the later of:

180 (i) two years after a title licensee begins an affiliated business arrangement; or

181 (ii) June 1, 2021.  
182 (2) In addition to Subsection (1), the division may find that an affiliated business  
183 arrangement between a person and a title licensee violates Section 8 of RESPA after evaluating  
184 and weighing the following factors in light of the specific facts before the division:  
185 (a) whether the title licensee:  
186 (i) is staffed with its own employees to conduct title insurance business;  
187 (ii) manages its own business affairs;  
188 (iii) has a physical office for business that is separate from any associate's office and  
189 pays market rent;  
190 (iv) provides the essential functions of title insurance business for a fee, including  
191 incurring the risks and receiving the rewards of any comparable title licensee; and  
192 (v) performs the essential functions of title insurance business itself;  
193 (b) if the title licensee contracts with another person to perform a portion of the title  
194 licensee's title insurance business, whether the contract:  
195 (i) is with an independent third party; and  
196 (ii) provides payment for the services that bears a reasonable relationship to the value  
197 of the services or goods received; and  
198 (c) whether the person from whom the title licensee receives referrals under the  
199 affiliated business arrangement also sends title insurance business to other title licensees.  
200 Section 5. Section **31A-23a-1104** is enacted to read:  
201 **31A-23a-1104. Annual affiliated business report.**  
202 Before March 1 each year, each title licensee shall submit a report to the division that:  
203 (1) contains the following for the preceding calendar year:  
204 (a) the name and address of any associate that owns a financial interest in the title  
205 licensee;  
206 (b) for each associate identified under Subsection (1)(a), the percentage of the title  
207 licensee's affiliated business that is the result of an affiliated business arrangement with the  
208 associate;  
209 (c) a description of any affiliated business arrangement the title licensee has with a  
210 person other than an associate identified under Subsection (1)(a);  
211 (d) the percentage of the title's licensee's annual title insurance business that is

212 affiliated business;

213 (e) proof of sufficient capital and net worth; and

214 (f) any other information required by the division by rule.

215 (2) is certified by an officer of the title licensee that the information contained in the

216 report is true to the best of the officer's knowledge, information, and belief.

217 Section 6. Section **31A-23a-1105** is enacted to read:

218 **31A-23a-1105. Investigations.**

219 (1) To enforce the provisions of this part, including Section 8 of RESPA, the division

220 may conduct a public or private investigation within or outside of the state as the division

221 considers necessary to determine whether a person has violated a provision of this part,

222 including Section 8 of RESPA.

223 (2) For the purpose of an investigation described in Subsection (1), the division may:

224 (a) administer an oath or affirmation;

225 (b) issue a subpoena that requires:

226 (i) the attendance and testimony of a witness; or

227 (ii) the production of evidence;

228 (c) take evidence;

229 (d) require the production of a book, paper, contract, record, other document, or

230 information relevant to the investigation; and

231 (e) serve a subpoena by certified mail.

232 (3) (a) A court of competent jurisdiction shall enforce, according to the practice and  
233 procedure of the court, a subpoena issued by the division.

234 (b) The division shall pay any witness fee, travel expense, mileage, or any other fee  
235 required by the service statutes of the state where the witness or evidence is located.

236 Section 7. Section **31A-23a-1106** is enacted to read:

237 **31A-23a-1106. Disciplinary action.**

238 (1) Subject to the requirements of Section [31A-23a-1107](#), the division may impose a  
239 sanction described in Subsection (2) against a person if the person is:

240 (a) a title licensee or a person previously licensed as a title licensee for an act the  
241 person committed while licensed; and

242 (b) violates a provision of this part, including Section 8 of RESPA.



- 243 (2) The division may, against a person described in Subsection (1):  
244 (a) impose an educational requirement;  
245 (b) impose a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 for each violation;  
246 (c) do any of the following to a title licensee:  
247 (i) suspend;  
248 (ii) revoke; or  
249 (iii) place on probation;  
250 (d) issue a cease and desist order; and  
251 (e) impose any combination of sanctions described in this Subsection (2).  
252 (3) (a) If the presiding officer in a disciplinary action under this part issues an order  
253 that orders a fine as part of a disciplinary action against a person, including a stipulation and  
254 order, the presiding officer shall state in the order the deadline, that is no more than one year  
255 after the day on which the presiding officer issues the order, by which the person shall comply  
256 with the fine.  
257 (b) If a person fails to comply with a stated deadline:  
258 (i) the person's license is automatically suspended:  
259 (A) beginning the day specified in the order as the deadline for compliance; and  
260 (B) ending the day on which the person complies in full with the order; and  
261 (ii) if the person fails to pay a fine required by an order, the division may begin a  
262 collection process:  
263 (A) established by the division by rule made in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3,  
264 Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act; and  
265 (B) subject to Title 63A, Chapter 3, Part 5, Office of State Debt Collection.  
266 (4) The division may delegate to an administrative law judge the authority to conduct a  
267 hearing under this part.  
268 Section 8. Section **31A-23a-1107** is enacted to read:  
269 **31A-23a-1107. Adjudicative proceedings -- Review -- Coordination with**  
270 **department.**  
271 (1) (a) Before an action described in Section [31A-23a-1106](#) may be taken, the division  
272 shall:  
273 (i) give notice to the person against whom the action is brought; and

274 (ii) commence an adjudicative proceeding.

275 (b) If after the adjudicative proceeding is commenced under Subsection (1)(a) the  
276 presiding officer determines that a title licensee has violated a provision of this part, including  
277 Section 8 of RESPA, the division may take an action described in Section [31A-23a-1106](#) by  
278 written order.

279 (2) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 4, Administrative Procedures Act, a person  
280 against whom action is taken under this part may seek review of the action by the executive  
281 director of the Department of Commerce.

282 (3) If a person prevails in a judicial appeal and the court finds that the state action was  
283 undertaken without substantial justification, the court may award reasonable litigation expenses  
284 to that individual or entity as provided under Title 78B, Chapter 8, Part 5, Small Business  
285 Equal Access to Justice Act.

286 (4) (a) An order issued under this section takes effect 30 days after the service of the  
287 order unless otherwise provided in the order.

288 (b) If a person appeals an order issued under this section, the division may stay  
289 enforcement of the order in accordance with Section [63G-4-405](#).

290 (5) (a) Except as provided in Subsection (5)(b), the division shall commence a  
291 disciplinary action under this chapter no later than the earlier of the following:

292 (i) four years after the day on which the violation is reported to the division; or

293 (ii) 10 years after the day on which the violation occurred.

294 (b) The division may commence a disciplinary action under this part after the time  
295 period described in Subsection (5)(a) expires if:

296 (i) (A) the disciplinary action is in response to a civil or criminal judgment or  
297 settlement; and

298 (B) the division initiates the disciplinary action no later than one year after the day on  
299 which the judgment is issued or the settlement is final; or

300 (ii) the division and the person subject to a disciplinary action enter into a written  
301 stipulation to extend the time period described in Subsection (5)(a).

302 (6) (a) Within two business days after the day on which a presiding officer issues an  
303 order under this part that suspends or revokes a title licensee's license, the division shall deliver  
304 written notice to the department that states the action the presiding officer ordered against the

305 title licensee's license.

306 (b) Upon receipt of the notice described in Subsection (6)(a), the department shall  
307 implement the action ordered against the title licensee's license.

308 (7) Upon receipt of a notice described in Subsection (6), the department shall take the  
309 action described in the notice upon the title licensee's license.

310 Section 9. Section **61-2f-401** is amended to read:

311 **61-2f-401. Grounds for disciplinary action.**

312 The following acts are unlawful for a person licensed or required to be licensed under  
313 this chapter:

314 (1) (a) making a substantial misrepresentation, including in a licensure statement;

315 (b) making an intentional misrepresentation;

316 (c) pursuing a continued and flagrant course of misrepresentation;

317 (d) making a false representation or promise through an agent, sales agent, advertising,  
318 or otherwise; or

319 (e) making a false representation or promise of a character likely to influence,  
320 persuade, or induce;

321 (2) acting for more than one party in a transaction without the informed consent of the  
322 parties;

323 (3) (a) acting as an associate broker or sales agent while not affiliated with a principal  
324 broker;

325 (b) representing or attempting to represent a principal broker other than the principal  
326 broker with whom the person is affiliated; or

327 (c) representing as sales agent or having a contractual relationship similar to that of  
328 sales agent with a person other than a principal broker;

329 (4) (a) failing, within a reasonable time, to account for or to remit money that belongs  
330 to another and comes into the person's possession;

331 (b) commingling money described in Subsection (4)(a) with the person's own money;  
332 or

333 (c) diverting money described in Subsection (4)(a) from the purpose for which the  
334 money is received;

335 (5) paying or offering to pay valuable consideration, as defined by the commission, to a

336 person not licensed under this chapter, except that valuable consideration may be shared:

337 (a) with a principal broker of another jurisdiction; or

338 (b) as provided under:

339 (i) Title 16, Chapter 10a, Utah Revised Business Corporation Act;

340 (ii) Title 16, Chapter 11, Professional Corporation Act; or

341 (iii) Title 48, Chapter 3a, Utah Revised Uniform Limited Liability Company Act, as  
342 appropriate pursuant to Section [48-3a-1405](#);

343 (6) for a principal broker, paying or offering to pay a sales agent or associate broker  
344 who is not affiliated with the principal broker at the time the sales agent or associate broker  
345 earned the compensation;

346 (7) being incompetent to act as a principal broker, associate broker, or sales agent in  
347 such manner as to safeguard the interests of the public;

348 (8) failing to voluntarily furnish a copy of a document to the parties before and after the  
349 execution of a document;

350 (9) failing to keep and make available for inspection by the division a record of each  
351 transaction, including:

352 (a) the names of buyers and sellers or lessees and lessors;

353 (b) the identification of real estate;

354 (c) the sale or rental price;

355 (d) money received in trust;

356 (e) agreements or instructions from buyers and sellers or lessees and lessors; and

357 (f) any other information required by rule;

358 (10) failing to disclose, in writing, in the purchase, sale, or rental of real estate, whether  
359 the purchase, sale, or rental is made for that person or for an undisclosed principal;

360 (11) being convicted, within five years of the most recent application for licensure, of a  
361 criminal offense involving moral turpitude regardless of whether:

362 (a) the criminal offense is related to real estate; or

363 (b) the conviction is based upon a plea of nolo contendere;

364 (12) having, within five years of the most recent application for a license under this  
365 chapter, entered any of the following related to a criminal offense involving moral turpitude:

366 (a) a plea in abeyance agreement;

- 367 (b) a diversion agreement;
- 368 (c) a withheld judgment; or
- 369 (d) an agreement in which a charge was held in suspense during a period of time when
- 370 the licensee was on probation or was obligated to comply with conditions outlined by a court;
- 371 (13) advertising the availability of real estate or the services of a licensee in a false,
- 372 misleading, or deceptive manner;
- 373 (14) in the case of a principal broker or a branch broker, failing to exercise reasonable
- 374 supervision over the activities of the principal broker's or branch broker's licensed or
- 375 unlicensed staff;
- 376 (15) violating or disregarding:
  - 377 (a) this chapter;
  - 378 (b) an order of the commission; or
  - 379 (c) the rules adopted by the commission and the division;
- 380 (16) breaching a fiduciary duty owed by a licensee to the licensee's principal in a real
- 381 estate transaction;
- 382 (17) any other conduct which constitutes dishonest dealing;
- 383 (18) unprofessional conduct as defined by statute or rule;
- 384 (19) having one of the following suspended, revoked, surrendered, or cancelled on the
- 385 basis of misconduct in a professional capacity that relates to character, honesty, integrity, or
- 386 truthfulness:
  - 387 (a) a real estate license, registration, or certificate issued by another jurisdiction; or
  - 388 (b) another license, registration, or certificate to engage in an occupation or profession
  - 389 issued by this state or another jurisdiction;
- 390 (20) failing to respond to a request by the division in an investigation authorized under
- 391 this chapter within 10 days after the day on which the request is served, including:
  - 392 (a) failing to respond to a subpoena;
  - 393 (b) withholding evidence; or
  - 394 (c) failing to produce documents or records;
- 395 (21) in the case of a dual licensed title licensee as defined in Section [31A-2-402](#):
- 396 (a) providing a title insurance product or service without the approval required by
- 397 Section [31A-2-405](#); or

398 (b) knowingly providing false or misleading information in the statement required by  
399 Subsection 31A-2-405(2);

400 (22) violating an independent contractor agreement between a principal broker and a  
401 sales agent or associate broker as evidenced by a final judgment of a court;

402 (23) (a) engaging in an act of loan modification assistance that requires licensure as a  
403 mortgage officer under Chapter 2c, Utah Residential Mortgage Practices and Licensing Act,  
404 without being licensed under that chapter;

405 (b) engaging in an act of foreclosure rescue without entering into a written agreement  
406 specifying what one or more acts of foreclosure rescue will be completed;

407 (c) inducing a person who is at risk of foreclosure to hire the licensee to engage in an  
408 act of foreclosure rescue by:

409 (i) suggesting to the person that the licensee has a special relationship with the person's  
410 lender or loan servicer; or

411 (ii) falsely representing or advertising that the licensee is acting on behalf of:

412 (A) a government agency;

413 (B) the person's lender or loan servicer; or

414 (C) a nonprofit or charitable institution; or

415 (d) recommending or participating in a foreclosure rescue that requires a person to:

416 (i) transfer title to real estate to the licensee or to a third-party with whom the licensee  
417 has a business relationship or financial interest;

418 (ii) make a mortgage payment to a person other than the person's loan servicer; or

419 (iii) refrain from contacting the person's:

420 (A) lender;

421 (B) loan servicer;

422 (C) attorney;

423 (D) credit counselor; or

424 (E) housing counselor;

425 (24) as a principal broker, placing a lien on real property, unless authorized by law; ~~[or]~~

426 (25) as a sales agent or associate broker, placing a lien on real property for an unpaid  
427 commission or other compensation related to real estate brokerage services[-]; or

428 (26) failing to timely disclose to a buyer or seller an affiliated business arrangement, as

429 defined in Section [31A-23a-1101](#), in accordance with the federal Real Estate Settlement  
430 Procedures Act, 12 U.S.C. Sec. 2601 et seq. and any rules made thereunder.

431 Section 10. **Repealer.**

432 This bill repeals:

433 Section [31A-23a-503](#), **Controlled business in title insurance.**