

R. Neil Walter proposes the following substitute bill:

**Public Funds Reporting Amendments**

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: R. Neil Walter**

Senate Sponsor:

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill modifies the duties of the state auditor.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

▸ directs the state auditor to annually prepare a report that states, for each entity that holds public funds, the entity's total balance of cash, cash equivalents, and investments.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**67-3-1**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapters 3, 158

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

Section 1. Section **67-3-1** is amended to read:

**67-3-1 . Functions and duties.**

(1)(a) The state auditor is the auditor of public accounts and is independent of any executive or administrative officers of the state.

(b) The state auditor is not limited in the selection of personnel or in the determination of the reasonable and necessary expenses of the state auditor's office.

(2) The state auditor shall examine and certify annually in respect to each fiscal year, financial statements showing:

(a) the condition of the state's finances;

(b) the revenues received or accrued;

(c) expenditures paid or accrued;

- 30 (d) the amount of unexpended or unencumbered balances of the appropriations to the  
31 agencies, departments, divisions, commissions, and institutions; and
- 32 (e) the cash balances of the funds in the custody of the state treasurer.
- 33 (3)(a) The state auditor shall:
- 34 (i) audit each permanent fund, each special fund, the General Fund, and the accounts  
35 of any department of state government or any independent agency or public  
36 corporation as the law requires, as the auditor determines is necessary, or upon  
37 request of the governor or the Legislature;
- 38 (ii) perform the audits in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and  
39 other auditing procedures as promulgated by recognized authoritative bodies; and
- 40 (iii) as the auditor determines is necessary, conduct the audits to determine:
- 41 (A) honesty and integrity in fiscal affairs;  
42 (B) accuracy and reliability of financial statements;  
43 (C) effectiveness and adequacy of financial controls; and  
44 (D) compliance with the law.
- 45 (b) If any state entity receives federal funding, the state auditor shall ensure that the  
46 audit is performed in accordance with federal audit requirements.
- 47 (c)(i) The costs of the federal compliance portion of the audit may be paid from an  
48 appropriation to the state auditor from the General Fund.
- 49 (ii) If an appropriation is not provided, or if the federal government does not  
50 specifically provide for payment of audit costs, the costs of the federal compliance  
51 portions of the audit shall be allocated on the basis of the percentage that each  
52 state entity's federal funding bears to the total federal funds received by the state.
- 53 (iii) The allocation shall be adjusted to reflect any reduced audit time required to  
54 audit funds passed through the state to local governments and to reflect any  
55 reduction in audit time obtained through the use of internal auditors working  
56 under the direction of the state auditor.
- 57 (4)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (4)(b), the state auditor shall, in addition to  
58 financial audits, and as the auditor determines is necessary, conduct performance and  
59 special purpose audits, examinations, and reviews of any entity that receives public  
60 funds, including a determination of any or all of the following:
- 61 (i) the honesty and integrity of all the entity's fiscal affairs;  
62 (ii) whether the entity's administrators have faithfully complied with legislative intent;  
63 (iii) whether the entity's operations have been conducted in an efficient, effective, and

- 64 cost-efficient manner;
- 65 (iv) whether the entity's programs have been effective in accomplishing the intended  
66 objectives; and
- 67 (v) whether the entity's management, control, and information systems are adequate,  
68 effective, and secure.
- 69 (b) The auditor may not conduct performance and special purpose audits, examinations,  
70 and reviews of any entity that receives public funds if the entity:
- 71 (i) has an elected auditor; and
- 72 (ii) has, within the entity's last budget year, had the entity's financial statements or  
73 performance formally reviewed by another outside auditor.
- 74 (5) The state auditor:
- 75 (a) shall administer any oath or affirmation necessary to the performance of the duties of  
76 the auditor's office; and
- 77 (b) may:
- 78 (i) subpoena witnesses and documents, whether electronic or otherwise; and
- 79 (ii) examine into any matter that the auditor considers necessary.
- 80 (6) The state auditor may require all persons who have had the disposition or management  
81 of any property of this state or its political subdivisions to submit statements regarding  
82 the property at the time and in the form that the auditor requires.
- 83 (7) The state auditor shall:
- 84 (a) except where otherwise provided by law, institute suits in Salt Lake County in  
85 relation to the assessment, collection, and payment of revenues against:
- 86 (i) persons who by any means have become entrusted with public money or property  
87 and have failed to pay over or deliver the money or property; and
- 88 (ii) all debtors of the state;
- 89 (b) collect and pay into the state treasury all fees received by the state auditor;
- 90 (c) perform the duties of a member of all boards of which the state auditor is a member  
91 by the constitution or laws of the state, and any other duties that are prescribed by the  
92 constitution and by law;
- 93 (d) stop the payment of the salary of any state official or state employee who:
- 94 (i) refuses to settle accounts or provide required statements about the custody and  
95 disposition of public funds or other state property;
- 96 (ii) refuses, neglects, or ignores the instruction of the state auditor or any controlling  
97 board or department head with respect to the manner of keeping prescribed

- 98 accounts or funds; or
- 99 (iii) fails to correct any delinquencies, improper procedures, and errors brought to the  
100 official's or employee's attention;
- 101 (e) establish accounting systems, methods, and forms for public accounts in all taxing or  
102 fee-assessing units of the state in the interest of uniformity, efficiency, and economy;
- 103 (f) superintend the contractual auditing of all state accounts;
- 104 (g) subject to Subsection (8)(a), withhold state allocated funds or the disbursement of  
105 property taxes from a state or local taxing or fee-assessing unit, if necessary, to  
106 ensure that officials and employees in those taxing units comply with state laws and  
107 procedures in the budgeting, expenditures, and financial reporting of public funds;
- 108 (h) subject to Subsection (9), withhold the disbursement of tax money from any county,  
109 if necessary, to ensure that officials and employees in the county comply with  
110 Section 59-2-303.1; and
- 111 (i) withhold state allocated funds or the disbursement of property taxes from a local  
112 government entity or a limited purpose entity, as those terms are defined in Section  
113 67-1a-15 if the state auditor finds the withholding necessary to ensure that the entity  
114 registers and maintains the entity's registration with the lieutenant governor, in  
115 accordance with Section 67-1a-15.
- 116 (8)(a) Except as otherwise provided by law, the state auditor may not withhold funds  
117 under Subsection (7)(g) until a state or local taxing or fee-assessing unit has received  
118 formal written notice of noncompliance from the auditor and has been given 60 days  
119 to make the specified corrections.
- 120 (b) If, after receiving notice under Subsection (8)(a), a state or independent local  
121 fee-assessing unit that exclusively assesses fees has not made corrections to comply  
122 with state laws and procedures in the budgeting, expenditures, and financial reporting  
123 of public funds, the state auditor:
- 124 (i) shall provide a recommended timeline for corrective actions;
- 125 (ii) may prohibit the state or local fee-assessing unit from accessing money held by  
126 the state; and
- 127 (iii) may prohibit a state or local fee-assessing unit from accessing money held in an  
128 account of a financial institution by filing an action in a court with jurisdiction  
129 under Title 78A, Judiciary and Judicial Administration, requesting an order of the  
130 court to prohibit a financial institution from providing the fee-assessing unit  
131 access to an account.

- 132 (c) The state auditor shall remove a limitation on accessing funds under Subsection (8)(b)  
133 upon compliance with state laws and procedures in the budgeting, expenditures, and  
134 financial reporting of public funds.
- 135 (d) If a local taxing or fee-assessing unit has not adopted a budget in compliance with  
136 state law, the state auditor:
- 137 (i) shall provide notice to the taxing or fee-assessing unit of the unit's failure to  
138 comply;
- 139 (ii) may prohibit the taxing or fee-assessing unit from accessing money held by the  
140 state; and
- 141 (iii) may prohibit a taxing or fee-assessing unit from accessing money held in an  
142 account of a financial institution by:
- 143 (A) contacting the taxing or fee-assessing unit's financial institution and  
144 requesting that the institution prohibit access to the account; or
- 145 (B) filing an action in a court with jurisdiction under Title 78A, Judiciary and  
146 Judicial Administration, requesting an order of the court to prohibit a financial  
147 institution from providing the taxing or fee-assessing unit access to an account.
- 148 (e) If the local taxing or fee-assessing unit adopts a budget in compliance with state law,  
149 the state auditor shall eliminate a limitation on accessing funds described in  
150 Subsection (8)(d).
- 151 (9) The state auditor may not withhold funds under Subsection (7)(h) until a county has  
152 received formal written notice of noncompliance from the auditor and has been given 60  
153 days to make the specified corrections.
- 154 (10)(a) The state auditor may not withhold funds under Subsection (7)(i) until the state  
155 auditor receives a notice of non-registration, as that term is defined in Section  
156 67-1a-15.
- 157 (b) If the state auditor receives a notice of non-registration, the state auditor may  
158 prohibit the local government entity or limited purpose entity, as those terms are  
159 defined in Section 67-1a-15, from accessing:
- 160 (i) money held by the state; and
- 161 (ii) money held in an account of a financial institution by:
- 162 (A) contacting the entity's financial institution and requesting that the institution  
163 prohibit access to the account; or
- 164 (B) filing an action in a court with jurisdiction under Title 78A, Judiciary and  
165 Judicial Administration, requesting an order of the court to prohibit a financial

- 166 institution from providing the entity access to an account.
- 167 (c) The state auditor shall remove the prohibition on accessing funds described in  
168 Subsection (10)(b) if the state auditor received a notice of registration, as that term is  
169 defined in Section 67-1a-15, from the lieutenant governor.
- 170 (11) Notwithstanding Subsection (7)(g), (7)(h), (7)(i), (8)(b), (8)(d), or (10)(b), the state  
171 auditor:
- 172 (a) shall authorize a disbursement by a local government entity or limited purpose entity,  
173 as those terms are defined in Section 67-1a-15, or a state or local taxing or  
174 fee-assessing unit if the disbursement is necessary to:
- 175 (i) avoid a major disruption in the operations of the local government entity, limited  
176 purpose entity, or state or local taxing or fee-assessing unit; or  
177 (ii) meet debt service obligations; and
- 178 (b) may authorize a disbursement by a local government entity, limited purpose entity,  
179 or state or local taxing or fee-assessing unit as the state auditor determines is  
180 appropriate.
- 181 (12)(a) The state auditor may seek relief under the Utah Rules of Civil Procedure to take  
182 temporary custody of public funds if an action is necessary to protect public funds  
183 from being improperly diverted from their intended public purpose.
- 184 (b) If the state auditor seeks relief under Subsection (12)(a):
- 185 (i) the state auditor is not required to exhaust the procedures in Subsection (7) or (8);  
186 and
- 187 (ii) the state treasurer may hold the public funds in accordance with Section 67-4-1 if  
188 a court orders the public funds to be protected from improper diversion from their  
189 public purpose.
- 190 (13) The state auditor shall:
- 191 (a) establish audit guidelines and procedures for audits of local mental health and  
192 substance abuse authorities and their contract providers, conducted pursuant to Title  
193 17, Chapter 43, Part 2, Local Substance Abuse Authorities, Title 17, Chapter 43, Part  
194 3, Local Mental Health Authorities, Title 26B, Chapter 5, Health Care - Substance  
195 Use and Mental Health, and Title 51, Chapter 2a, Accounting Reports from Political  
196 Subdivisions, Interlocal Organizations, and Other Local Entities Act; and
- 197 (b) ensure that those guidelines and procedures provide assurances to the state that:
- 198 (i) state and federal funds appropriated to local mental health authorities are used for  
199 mental health purposes;

- 200 (ii) a private provider under an annual or otherwise ongoing contract to provide  
201 comprehensive mental health programs or services for a local mental health  
202 authority is in compliance with state and local contract requirements and state and  
203 federal law;
- 204 (iii) state and federal funds appropriated to local substance abuse authorities are used  
205 for substance abuse programs and services; and
- 206 (iv) a private provider under an annual or otherwise ongoing contract to provide  
207 comprehensive substance abuse programs or services for a local substance abuse  
208 authority is in compliance with state and local contract requirements, and state and  
209 federal law.
- 210 (14)(a) The state auditor may, in accordance with the auditor's responsibilities for  
211 political subdivisions of the state as provided in Title 51, Chapter 2a, Accounting  
212 Reports from Political Subdivisions, Interlocal Organizations, and Other Local  
213 Entities Act, initiate audits or investigations of any political subdivision that are  
214 necessary to determine honesty and integrity in fiscal affairs, accuracy and reliability  
215 of financial statements, effectiveness, and adequacy of financial controls and  
216 compliance with the law.
- 217 (b) If the state auditor receives notice under Subsection 11-41-104(7) from the  
218 Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity on or after July 1, 2024, the state auditor  
219 may initiate an audit or investigation of the public entity subject to the notice to  
220 determine compliance with Section 11-41-103.
- 221 (15)(a) The state auditor may not audit work that the state auditor performed before  
222 becoming state auditor.
- 223 (b) If the state auditor has previously been a responsible official in state government  
224 whose work has not yet been audited, the Legislature shall:
- 225 (i) designate how that work shall be audited; and  
226 (ii) provide additional funding for those audits, if necessary.
- 227 (16) The state auditor shall:
- 228 (a) with the assistance, advice, and recommendations of an advisory committee  
229 appointed by the state auditor from among special district boards of trustees, officers,  
230 and employees and special service district boards, officers, and employees:
- 231 (i) prepare a Uniform Accounting Manual for Special Districts that:
- 232 (A) prescribes a uniform system of accounting and uniform budgeting and  
233 reporting procedures for special districts under Title 17B, Limited Purpose

- 234 Local Government Entities - Special Districts, and special service districts  
235 under Title 17D, Chapter 1, Special Service District Act;
- 236 (B) conforms with generally accepted accounting principles; and  
237 (C) prescribes reasonable exceptions and modifications for smaller districts to the  
238 uniform system of accounting, budgeting, and reporting;
- 239 (ii) maintain the manual under this Subsection (16)(a) so that the manual continues to  
240 reflect generally accepted accounting principles;
- 241 (iii) conduct a continuing review and modification of procedures in order to improve  
242 them;
- 243 (iv) prepare and supply each district with suitable budget and reporting forms; and  
244 (v)(A) prepare instructional materials, conduct training programs, and render other  
245 services considered necessary to assist special districts and special service  
246 districts in implementing the uniform accounting, budgeting, and reporting  
247 procedures; and
- 248 (B) ensure that any training described in Subsection (16)(a)(v)(A) complies with  
249 Title 63G, Chapter 22, State Training and Certification Requirements; and
- 250 (b) continually analyze and evaluate the accounting, budgeting, and reporting practices  
251 and experiences of specific special districts and special service districts selected by  
252 the state auditor and make the information available to all districts.
- 253 (17)(a) The following records in the custody or control of the state auditor are protected  
254 records under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management  
255 Act:
- 256 (i) records that would disclose information relating to allegations of personal  
257 misconduct, gross mismanagement, or illegal activity of a past or present  
258 governmental employee if the information or allegation cannot be corroborated by  
259 the state auditor through other documents or evidence, and the records relating to  
260 the allegation are not relied upon by the state auditor in preparing a final audit  
261 report;
- 262 (ii) records and audit workpapers to the extent the workpapers would disclose the  
263 identity of an individual who during the course of an audit, communicated the  
264 existence of any waste of public funds, property, or manpower, or a violation or  
265 suspected violation of a law, rule, or regulation adopted under the laws of this  
266 state, a political subdivision of the state, or any recognized entity of the United  
267 States, if the information was disclosed on the condition that the identity of the



- 268 individual be protected;
- 269 (iii) before an audit is completed and the final audit report is released, records or  
270 drafts circulated to an individual who is not an employee or head of a  
271 governmental entity for the individual's response or information;
- 272 (iv) records that would disclose an outline or part of any audit survey plans or audit  
273 program; and
- 274 (v) requests for audits, if disclosure would risk circumvention of an audit.
- 275 (b) The provisions of Subsections (17)(a)(i), (ii), and (iii) do not prohibit the disclosure  
276 of records or information that relate to a violation of the law by a governmental entity  
277 or employee to a government prosecutor or peace officer.
- 278 (c) The provisions of this Subsection (17) do not limit the authority otherwise given to  
279 the state auditor to classify a document as public, private, controlled, or protected  
280 under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act.
- 281 (d)(i) As used in this Subsection (17)(d), "record dispute" means a dispute between  
282 the state auditor and the subject of an audit performed by the state auditor as to  
283 whether the state auditor may release a record, as defined in Section 63G-2-103,  
284 to the public that the state auditor gained access to in the course of the state  
285 auditor's audit but which the subject of the audit claims is not subject to disclosure  
286 under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act.
- 287 (ii) The state auditor may submit a record dispute to the State Records Committee,  
288 created in Section 63G-2-501, for a determination of whether the state auditor  
289 may, in conjunction with the state auditor's release of an audit report, release to  
290 the public the record that is the subject of the record dispute.
- 291 (iii) The state auditor or the subject of the audit may seek judicial review of a State  
292 Records Committee determination under Subsection (17)(d)(ii), as provided in  
293 Section 63G-2-404.
- 294 (18) If the state auditor conducts an audit of an entity that the state auditor has previously  
295 audited and finds that the entity has not implemented a recommendation made by the  
296 state auditor in a previous audit, the state auditor shall notify the Legislative  
297 Management Committee through the Legislative Management Committee's audit  
298 subcommittee that the entity has not implemented that recommendation.
- 299 (19) The state auditor shall, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint the state  
300 privacy officer described in Section 67-3-13.
- 301 (20) Except as provided in Subsection (21), the state auditor shall report, or ensure that

- 302 another government entity reports, on the financial, operational, and performance  
303 metrics for the state system of higher education and the state system of public education,  
304 including metrics in relation to students, programs, and schools within those systems.
- 305 (21)(a) Notwithstanding Subsection (20), the state auditor shall conduct regular audits of:
- 306 (i) the scholarship granting organization for the Carson Smith Opportunity  
307 Scholarship Program, created in Section 53E-7-402;
- 308 (ii) the State Board of Education for the Carson Smith Scholarship Program, created  
309 in Section 53F-4-302; and
- 310 (iii) the scholarship program manager for the Utah Fits All Scholarship Program,  
311 created in Section 53F-6-402, including an analysis of the cost effectiveness of the  
312 program, taking into consideration the amount of the scholarship and the amount  
313 of state and local funds dedicated on a per-student basis within the traditional  
314 public education system.
- 315 (b) Nothing in this subsection limits or impairs the authority of the State Board of  
316 Education to administer the programs described in Subsection (21)(a).
- 317 (22) The state auditor shall, based on the information posted by the Office of Legislative  
318 Research and General Counsel under Subsection 36-12-12.1(2), for each policy, track  
319 and post the following information on the state auditor's website:
- 320 (a) the information posted under Subsections 36-12-12.1(2)(a) through (e);
- 321 (b) an indication regarding whether the policy is timely adopted, adopted late, or not  
322 adopted;
- 323 (c) an indication regarding whether the policy complies with the requirements  
324 established by law for the policy; and
- 325 (d) a link to the policy.
- 326 (23)(a) A legislator may request that the state auditor conduct an inquiry to determine  
327 whether a government entity, government official, or government employee has  
328 complied with a legal obligation directly imposed, by statute, on the government  
329 entity, government official, or government employee.
- 330 (b) The state auditor may, upon receiving a request under Subsection (23)(a), conduct  
331 the inquiry requested.
- 332 (c) If the state auditor conducts the inquiry described in Subsection (23)(b), the state  
333 auditor shall post the results of the inquiry on the state auditor's website.
- 334 (d) The state auditor may limit the inquiry described in this Subsection (23) to a simple  
335 determination, without conducting an audit, regarding whether the obligation was

336 fulfilled.

337 (24) The state auditor shall:

338 (a) ensure compliance with Title 63G, Chapter 31, Distinctions on the Basis of Sex, in  
339 accordance with Section 63G-31-401; and

340 (b) report to the Legislative Management Committee, upon request, regarding the state  
341 auditor's actions under this Subsection (24).

342 (25) The state auditor shall report compliance with Sections 67-27-107, 67-27-108, and  
343 67-27-109 by:

344 (a) establishing a process to receive and audit each alleged violation; and

345 (b) reporting to the Legislative Management Committee, upon request, regarding the  
346 state auditor's findings and recommendations under this Subsection (25).

347 (26)(a) On or before January 31 each year, the state auditor shall prepare a report that  
348 states, for each entity that holds public funds as defined in Section 51-7-3, the entity's  
349 total balance, as of the last day of the immediately preceding fiscal year, of cash, cash  
350 equivalents, and investments, as those terms are defined under the standards  
351 established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.

352 (b) The state auditor shall make the report described in Subsection (26)(a) publicly  
353 available on a website that the state auditor maintains.

354 Section 2. **Effective Date.**

355 This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.