

1 **Joint Resolution to Initiate a Law School at Utah Valley University**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Brady Brammer

House Sponsor: David Shallenberger

3 **LONG TITLE**

4 **General Description:**

5 This resolution directs Utah Valley University to conduct a feasibility study for establishing
6 a law school.

7 **Highlighted Provisions:**

8 This resolution:

- 9 ▶ recognizes the need for increased access to legal education in the state;
- 10 ▶ acknowledges Utah Valley University's mission to serve working professionals;
- 11 ▶ directs Utah Valley University to study the feasibility of establishing a law school at the
12 Thanksgiving Point campus;
- 13 ▶ requires evaluation of facility needs, faculty requirements, accreditation pathways, and
14 market viability;
- 15 ▶ directs Utah Valley University to design programming focused on evening and weekend
16 instruction for working professionals; and
- 17 ▶ requires a report to the Legislature on findings and recommendations.

18 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

19 None

20 **Other Special Clauses:**

21 None

22 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

23 WHEREAS, access to legal education is essential for developing a robust legal profession
24 to serve Utah's growing population;

25 WHEREAS, Utah's population is projected to reach 4.2 million by 2030, increasing demand
26 for legal services across the state;

28 WHEREAS, Utah currently has two law schools, both located in the northern Wasatch
29 Front, limiting geographic and programmatic diversity;

30 WHEREAS, Utah Valley University serves as the state's largest public university and
31 maintains a mission of providing accessible, career-focused education;

32 WHEREAS, Utah Valley University operates facilities at Thanksgiving Point in Lehi,
33 providing modern educational space in a central location along the Wasatch Front;

34 WHEREAS, many working professionals seek legal education but cannot accommodate
35 traditional daytime law school schedules;

36 WHEREAS, part-time, evening, and weekend law programs successfully serve working
37 professionals at accredited institutions nationwide;

38 WHEREAS, the American Bar Association accredits law schools that meet rigorous
39 standards for faculty, curriculum, facilities, and student services;

40 WHEREAS, establishing a law school requires careful evaluation of accreditation
41 requirements, faculty recruitment, facility adequacy, and financial sustainability;

42 WHEREAS, a law school at Utah Valley University could expand access to legal education
43 for non-traditional students, working professionals, and underserved communities;

44 WHEREAS, Utah's technology sector, growing business community, and expanding state
45 and local government operations create sustained demand for legal professionals;

46 WHEREAS, a feasibility study should examine initial enrollment projections, tuition
47 models, faculty hiring needs, library and technology requirements, and pathways to American
48 Bar Association accreditation;

49 WHEREAS, collaboration with the Utah Board of Higher Education and the Utah System
50 of Higher Education would ensure alignment with statewide higher education priorities; and

51 WHEREAS, a comprehensive feasibility study would provide the Legislature and the Utah
52 Board of Higher Education with information necessary to evaluate this proposal:

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah directs
54 Utah Valley University, in consultation with the Utah Board of Higher Education, to conduct a
55 comprehensive feasibility study for establishing a law school.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the feasibility study shall address:

57 (1) facility requirements, including adequacy of existing Thanksgiving Point campus
58 facilities, library resources, classroom technology, and necessary modifications or
59 expansions;

60 (2) faculty requirements, including the number of full-time and adjunct faculty needed for
61 American Bar Association accreditation, anticipated faculty salaries, and faculty

- 62 recruitment strategies;
- 63 (3) student needs, including projected enrollment for initial and subsequent classes, student
64 support services, bar examination preparation resources, and career services;
- 65 (4) staffing requirements, including administrative personnel, library staff, academic
66 support staff, and operational personnel;
- 67 (5) accreditation pathways, including American Bar Association provisional and full
68 accreditation requirements, a timeline for achieving accreditation, and compliance
69 strategies;
- 70 (6) market viability, including demand analysis for legal education in Utah, employment
71 outcomes for graduates, potential impacts on existing Utah law schools, and regional
72 workforce needs;
- 73 (7) initial class size recommendations based on faculty capacity, facility limitations, and
74 market demand;
- 75 (8) tuition cost projections, including estimated tuition for the initial years, comparison with
76 other law schools in the region, and financial aid considerations;
- 77 (9) program design focused on evening and weekend instruction to serve working
78 professionals and non-traditional students;
- 79 (10) operating budget projections for the first five years, including revenue assumptions and
80 expense categories;
- 81 (11) capital investment requirements and potential funding sources;
- 82 (12) timelines for program development, accreditation process, and student enrollment;
- 83 (13) efficiencies, benefits, and viability of a law school at Utah Valley University or at
84 another institution or as a shared school with multiple universities within the Utah
85 System of Higher Education; and
- 86 (14) any other considerations necessary for legislative evaluation of this proposal.

87 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Utah Valley University shall submit a written
88 report of findings and recommendations to the Education Interim Committee and the
89 Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee no later than November 30, 2026.

90 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the feasibility study shall consider how a law
91 school at Utah Valley University would complement existing legal education in Utah
92 and serve populations not currently reached by traditional law school programs.

93 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Utah Valley University shall pay all costs
94 related to the feasibility study using only funds the Legislature appropriates from
95 non-tax based funds.