

HB0185S04 compared with HB0185S01

~~{Omitted text}~~ shows text that was in HB0185S01 but was omitted in HB0185S04
inserted text shows text that was not in HB0185S01 but was inserted into HB0185S04

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1 **Carbon Credit Amendments**
2026 GENERAL SESSION
STATE OF UTAH
Chief Sponsor: Troy Shelley
Senate Sponsor:

2
3 **LONG TITLE**

4 **General Description:**

5 This bill addresses requirements related to the sale of a carbon credit ~~{transactions}~~ .

6 **Highlighted Provisions:**

7 This bill:

- 8 ▶ defines and modifies terms;
- 9 ▶ ~~{ creates the Carbon Credit Investment Fund; }~~
- 10 ▶ ~~{ imposes a 19% assessment on the sale of a carbon credit administered by the State Tax~~
11 ~~Commission and deposits the revenue into the Carbon Credit Investment Fund; }~~
- 12 ▶ creates the Carbon Credit Litigation Fund and specifies the purpose of the fund;
- 13 ▶ ~~{ authorizes the Attorney General to establish a volunteer task force to investigate issues~~
14 ~~related to carbon credit transactions; }~~
- 15 ▶ establishes reporting requirements for a ~~{ person selling }~~ state entity that sells or ~~{ exchanging an~~
16 ~~in-state }~~ exchanges a carbon credit;
- 17 ▶ ~~{ creates a carbon credit broker licensing requirement for a carbon credit transaction; }~~
- 18 ▶

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~~{ establishes a criminal penalty for selling a carbon credit without a carbon credit broker license; }~~

- 20 ▶ ~~{ creates a right of first refusal for the Office of Energy Development (office) to purchase an in-state carbon credit; }~~
- 22 ▶ ~~{ requires the office to submit a proposal for purchasing an in-state carbon credit to: }~~
- 23 • requires the state auditor to report on the sale of carbon credits by state entities to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality Appropriations Subcommittee; and
- 25 • ~~{ the state treasurer; }~~
- 26 ▶ ~~{ voids a sale or exchange of an in-state carbon credit that violates state requirements; }~~
- 27 ▶ ~~{ requires a state entity that owns or controls a carbon credit to report a digital identification number and valuation of the carbon credit to the office; }~~
- 29 ▶ ~~{ requires a state entity that sells a carbon credit to deposit the revenue from the sale into the General Fund; }~~
- 31 ▶ ~~{ creates a restricted account for the office to purchase in-state carbon credits and administer licensing and assessment requirements; and }~~
- 33 ▶ makes technical and conforming changes.

15 Money Appropriated in this Bill:

16 None

17 Other Special Clauses:

18 None

19 Utah Code Sections Affected:

20 AMENDS:

40 ~~{59-1-306, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 258}~~

21 **67-3-1, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 17**

22 79-6-1301, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 146, 375

23 79-6-1302, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 146, 375

24 79-6-1303, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 146, 375

25 ENACTS:

45 ~~{51-14-101, Utah Code Annotated 1953}~~

46 ~~{51-14-201, Utah Code Annotated 1953}~~

47 ~~{51-14-202, Utah Code Annotated 1953}~~

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26 67-5-41 , Utah Code Annotated 1953
49 ~~{79-6-1304 , Utah Code Annotated 1953}~~
50 ~~{79-6-1305 , Utah Code Annotated 1953}~~
51 ~~{79-6-1306 , Utah Code Annotated 1953}~~

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

54 Section 1. Section 1 is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 14. Carbon Credit Investment Fund

Part 1. General Provisions

51-14-101. Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

- 59 (1) "Completion rate" means the percentage of a degree granting institution's students that:
60 (a) graduate from the degree granting institution; or
61 (b) transfer to another degree granting institution.
62 (2) "Degree granting institution" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53H-1-101.
64 (3) "Division" means the Division of Finance created in Section 63A-3-101.
65 (4) "Fund" means the Carbon Credit Investment Fund created in Section 51-14-201.
66 (5)
(a) "Principal" means money deposited into the fund in accordance with Section 51-14-201.
68 (b) "Principal" does not include earnings like interest, dividends, or asset appreciation credited to the
fund.
70 (6) "Rural county" means a county with a population of 50,000 or less.

71 Section 2. Section 2 is enacted to read:

Part 2. Establishment of Carbon Credit Investment Fund

51-14-201. Carbon Credit Investment Fund -- Creation -- Distribution.

- 74 (1) There is created a Carbon Credit Investment Fund that consists of:
75 (a) revenue deposited into the fund from the carbon credit assessment described in Section 79-6-1306;
77 (b) interest and dividends earned on money in the fund; and
78 (c) appropriations from the Legislature.

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- 79 (2) The state treasurer shall invest the money in the fund in accordance with Section 51-13-202.
81 (3) At the beginning of each fiscal year, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, the division shall
distribute money from the fund, as follows:
83 (a) 5% to the Carbon Credit Litigation Fund created in Section 67-5-41; and
84 (b) 5% to degree granting institutions:
85 (i) located in a rural county;
86 (ii) with a student enrollment composition of at least:
87 (A) 45% of students from a rural county; and
88 (B) 25% first generation students; and
89 (iii) with a completion rate of no less than 55%.
90 (4) The division shall, subject to appropriation by the Legislature, distribute 50% of the annual earnings
from the investment in the fund to rural counties.

92 Section 3. Section 3 is enacted to read:

93 **51-14-202. Carbon Credit Investment Fund -- Investment -- Administrative costs.**

- 95 (1) The state treasurer shall:
96 (a) invest money in the fund to maximize the growth of the principal;
97 (b) invest and manage fund assets as a prudent investor would by:
98 (i) considering the purpose, terms, distribution requirements, and other circumstances of the fund; and
100 (ii) exercising reasonable care, skill, and caution in order to meet the standard of care of a prudent
investor; and
102 (c) except as provided in Subsection 51-14-201(4), deposit into the fund the interest, dividends, or other
earnings attributable to the fund.
104 (2) The state treasurer may deduct any administrative costs incurred by managing the fund from
earnings generated by investments in the fund.

106 ~~{Section 4. Section 59-1-306 is amended to read: }~~

107 **59-1-306. Definition -- State Tax Commission Administrative Charge Account -- Amount of**
administrative charge -- Deposit of revenue into the restricted account -- Interest deposited into
General Fund -- Expenditure of money deposited into the restricted account.

- 111 (1) As used in this section, "qualifying tax, fee, or charge" means a tax, fee, or charge the commission
administers under:
113 (a) Title 10, Chapter 1, Part 3, Municipal Energy Sales and Use Tax Act;

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- 114 (b) Title 10, Chapter 1, Part 4, Municipal Telecommunications License Tax Act;
115 (c) Section 19-6-714;
116 (d) Section 19-6-805;
117 (e) Chapter 12, Sales and Use Tax Act, other than a tax under Chapter 12, Part 1, Tax Collection, or
Chapter 12, Part 18, Additional State Sales and Use Tax Act;
119 (f) Section 59-27-105;
120 (g) Chapter 31, Cannabinoid Licensing and Tax Act;
121 (h) Chapter 32, Local Impact Mitigation Tax Act;
122 (i) Chapter 33, Wind or Solar Electric Generation Facility Capacity Tax;
123 (j) Section 63H-1-205;
124 (k) Title 63N, Chapter 3, Part 6, Housing and Transit Reinvestment Zone Act; ~~[or]~~
125 (l) Title 69, Chapter 2, Part 4, Prepaid Wireless Telecommunications Service Charges; ~~[or]~~
127 (m) Title 79, Chapter 6, Part 11, Energy Project Assessment~~[-]~~ ; and
128 (n) Section 79-6-1306.
- 129 (2) There is created a restricted account within the General Fund known as the "State Tax Commission
Administrative Charge Account."
- 131 (3) Subject to the other provisions of this section, the restricted account shall consist of administrative
charges the commission retains and deposits in accordance with this section.
- 134 (4) For purposes of this section, the administrative charge is a percentage of revenue the commission
collects from each qualifying tax, fee, or charge of not to exceed the lesser of:
- 137 (a) 1.5%; or
138 (b) an equal percentage of revenue the commission collects from each qualifying tax, fee, or charge
sufficient to cover the cost to the commission of administering the qualifying taxes, fees, or charges.
- 141 (5) The commission shall deposit an administrative charge into the restricted account.
142 (6) Interest earned on the restricted account shall be deposited into the General Fund.
143 (7) The commission shall expend money appropriated by the Legislature to the commission from the
restricted account to administer qualifying taxes, fees, or charges or to offset general operational
expenses.

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

30 **67-3-1. Functions and duties.**

31 (1)

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- (a) The state auditor is the auditor of public accounts and is independent of any executive or administrative officers of the state.
- 33 (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.
- 35 (2) The state auditor shall examine and certify annually in respect to each fiscal year, financial statements showing:
- 37 (a) the condition of the state's finances;
- 38 (b) the revenues received or accrued;
- 39 (c) expenditures paid or accrued;
- 40 (d) the amount of unexpended or unencumbered balances of the appropriations to the agencies, departments, divisions, commissions, and institutions; and
- 42 (e) the cash balances of the funds in the custody of the state treasurer.
- 43 (3)
- (a) The state auditor shall:
- 44 (i) audit each permanent fund, each special fund, the General Fund, and the accounts of any department of state government or any independent agency or public corporation as the law requires, as the auditor determines is necessary, or upon request of the governor or the Legislature;
- 48 (ii) perform the audits in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and other auditing procedures as promulgated by recognized authoritative bodies; and
- 50 (iii) as the auditor determines is necessary, conduct the audits to determine:
- 51 (A) honesty and integrity in fiscal affairs;
- 52 (B) accuracy and reliability of financial statements;
- 53 (C) effectiveness and adequacy of financial controls; and
- 54 (D) compliance with the law.
- 55 (b) If any state entity receives federal funding, the state auditor shall ensure that the audit is performed in accordance with federal audit requirements.
- 57 (c)
- (i) The costs of the federal compliance portion of the audit may be paid from an appropriation to the state auditor from the General Fund.

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- (ii) If an appropriation is not provided, or if the federal government does not specifically provide for payment of audit costs, the costs of the federal compliance portions of the audit shall be allocated on the basis of the percentage that each state entity's federal funding bears to the total federal funds received by the state.
- 63 (iii) The allocation shall be adjusted to reflect any reduced audit time required to audit funds passed through the state to local governments and to reflect any reduction in audit time obtained through the use of internal auditors working under the direction of the state auditor.
- 67 (4)
- (a) Except as provided in Subsection (4)(b), the state auditor shall, in addition to financial audits, and as the auditor determines is necessary, conduct performance and special purpose audits, examinations, and reviews of any entity that receives public funds, including a determination of any or all of the following:
- 71 (i) the honesty and integrity of all the entity's fiscal affairs;
- 72 (ii) whether the entity's administrators have faithfully complied with legislative intent;
- 73 (iii) whether the entity's operations have been conducted in an efficient, effective, and cost-efficient manner;
- 75 (iv) whether the entity's programs have been effective in accomplishing the intended objectives; and
- 77 (v) whether the entity's management, control, and information systems are adequate, effective, and secure.
- 79 (b) The auditor may not conduct performance and special purpose audits, examinations, and reviews of any entity that receives public funds if the entity:
- 81 (i) has an elected auditor; and
- 82 (ii) has, within the entity's last budget year, had the entity's financial statements or performance formally reviewed by another outside auditor.
- 84 (5) The state auditor:
- 85 (a) shall administer any oath or affirmation necessary to the performance of the duties of the auditor's office; and
- 87 (b) may:
- 88 (i) subpoena witnesses and documents, whether electronic or otherwise; and
- 89 (ii) examine into any matter that the auditor considers necessary.

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- 90 (6) The state auditor may require all persons who have had the disposition or management of any
property of this state or its political subdivisions to submit statements regarding the property at the
time and in the form that the auditor requires.
- 93 (7) The state auditor shall:
- 94 (a) except where otherwise provided by law, institute suits in Salt Lake County in relation to the
assessment, collection, and payment of revenues against:
- 96 (i) persons who by any means have become entrusted with public money or property and have failed to
pay over or deliver the money or property; and
- 98 (ii) all debtors of the state;
- 99 (b) collect and pay into the state treasury all fees received by the state auditor;
- 100 (c) perform the duties of a member of all boards of which the state auditor is a member by the
constitution or laws of the state, and any other duties that are prescribed by the constitution and by
law;
- 103 (d) stop the payment of the salary of any state official or state employee who:
- 104 (i) refuses to settle accounts or provide required statements about the custody and disposition of public
funds or other state property;
- 106 (ii) refuses, neglects, or ignores the instruction of the state auditor or any controlling board or
department head with respect to the manner of keeping prescribed accounts or funds; or
- 109 (iii) fails to correct any delinquencies, improper procedures, and errors brought to the official's or
employee's attention;
- 111 (e) establish accounting systems, methods, and forms for public accounts in all taxing or fee-assessing
units of the state in the interest of uniformity, efficiency, and economy;
- 113 (f) superintend the contractual auditing of all state accounts;
- 114 (g) subject to Subsection (8)(a), withhold state allocated funds or the disbursement of property taxes
from a state or local taxing or fee-assessing unit, if necessary, to ensure that officials and employees
in those taxing units comply with state laws and procedures in the budgeting, expenditures, and
financial reporting of public funds;
- 118 (h) subject to Subsection (9), withhold the disbursement of tax money from any county, if necessary, to
ensure that officials and employees in the county comply with Section 59-2-303.1; and
- 121 (i) withhold state allocated funds or the disbursement of property taxes from a local government entity
or a limited purpose entity, as those terms are defined in Section 67-1a-15 if the state auditor finds

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the withholding necessary to ensure that the entity registers and maintains the entity's registration with the lieutenant governor, in accordance with Section 67-1a-15.

- 126 (8)
- (a) Except as otherwise provided by law, the state auditor may not withhold funds under Subsection (7)(g) until a state or local taxing or fee-assessing unit has received formal written notice of noncompliance from the auditor and has been given 60 days to make the specified corrections.
- 130 (b) If, after receiving notice under Subsection (8)(a), a state or independent local fee-assessing unit that exclusively assesses fees has not made corrections to comply with state laws and procedures in the budgeting, expenditures, and financial reporting of public funds, the state auditor:
- 134 (i) shall provide a recommended timeline for corrective actions;
- 135 (ii) may prohibit the state or local fee-assessing unit from accessing money held by the state; and
- 137 (iii) may prohibit a state or local fee-assessing unit from accessing money held in an account of a financial institution by filing an action in a court with jurisdiction under Title 78A, Judiciary and Judicial Administration, requesting an order of the court to prohibit a financial institution from providing the fee-assessing unit access to an account.
- 142 (c) The state auditor shall remove a limitation on accessing funds under Subsection (8)(b) upon compliance with state laws and procedures in the budgeting, expenditures, and financial reporting of public funds.
- 145 (d) If a local taxing or fee-assessing unit has not adopted a budget in compliance with state law, the state auditor:
- 147 (i) shall provide notice to the taxing or fee-assessing unit of the unit's failure to comply;
- 149 (ii) may prohibit the taxing or fee-assessing unit from accessing money held by the state; and
- 151 (iii) may prohibit a taxing or fee-assessing unit from accessing money held in an account of a financial institution by:
- 153 (A) contacting the taxing or fee-assessing unit's financial institution and requesting that the institution prohibit access to the account; or
- 155 (B) filing an action in a court with jurisdiction under Title 78A, Judiciary and Judicial Administration, requesting an order of the court to prohibit a financial institution from providing the taxing or fee-assessing unit access to an account.
- 158 (e) If the local taxing or fee-assessing unit adopts a budget in compliance with state law, the state auditor shall eliminate a limitation on accessing funds described in Subsection (8)(d).

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- 161 (9) The state auditor may not withhold funds under Subsection (7)(h) until a county has received formal
written notice of noncompliance from the auditor and has been given 60 days to make the specified
corrections.
- 164 (10)
- (a) The state auditor may not withhold funds under Subsection (7)(i) until the state auditor receives a
notice of non-registration, as that term is defined in Section 67-1a-15.
- 167 (b) If the state auditor receives a notice of non-registration, the state auditor may prohibit the local
government entity or limited purpose entity, as those terms are defined in Section 67-1a-15, from
accessing:
- 170 (i) money held by the state; and
- 171 (ii) money held in an account of a financial institution by:
- 172 (A) contacting the entity's financial institution and requesting that the institution prohibit access to the
account; or
- 174 (B) filing an action in a court with jurisdiction under Title 78A, Judiciary and Judicial Administration,
requesting an order of the court to prohibit a financial institution from providing the entity access to
an account.
- 177 (c) The state auditor shall remove the prohibition on accessing funds described in Subsection (10)(b) if
the state auditor received a notice of registration, as that term is defined in Section 67-1a-15, from
the lieutenant governor.
- 180 (11) Notwithstanding Subsection (7)(g), (7)(h), (7)(i), (8)(b), (8)(d), or (10)(b), the state auditor:
- 182 (a) shall authorize a disbursement by a local government entity or limited purpose entity, as those terms
are defined in Section 67-1a-15, or a state or local taxing or fee-assessing unit if the disbursement is
necessary to:
- 185 (i) avoid a major disruption in the operations of the local government entity, limited purpose entity, or
state or local taxing or fee-assessing unit; or
- 187 (ii) meet debt service obligations; and
- 188 (b) may authorize a disbursement by a local government entity, limited purpose entity, or state or local
taxing or fee-assessing unit as the state auditor determines is appropriate.
- 191 (12)

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- (a) The state auditor may seek relief under the Utah Rules of Civil Procedure to take temporary custody of public funds if an action is necessary to protect public funds from being improperly diverted from their intended public purpose.
- 194 (b) If the state auditor seeks relief under Subsection (12)(a):
- 195 (i) the state auditor is not required to exhaust the procedures in Subsection (7) or (8); and
- 197 (ii) the state treasurer may hold the public funds in accordance with Section 67-4-1 if a court orders the public funds to be protected from improper diversion from their public purpose.
- 200 (13) The state auditor shall:
- 201 (a) establish audit guidelines and procedures for audits of local mental health and substance abuse authorities and their contract providers, conducted [~~pursuant to~~] in accordance with Title 17, Chapter 77, Local Health and Human [~~Services~~] Service, Title 26B, Chapter 5, Health Care - Substance Use and Mental Health, and Title 51, Chapter 2a, Accounting Reports from Political Subdivisions, Interlocal Organizations, and Other Local Entities Act; and
- 207 (b) ensure that those guidelines and procedures provide assurances to the state that:
- 208 (i) state and federal funds appropriated to local mental health authorities are used for mental health purposes;
- 210 (ii) a private provider under an annual or otherwise ongoing contract to provide comprehensive mental health programs or services for a local mental health authority is in compliance with state and local contract requirements and state and federal law;
- 214 (iii) state and federal funds appropriated to local substance abuse authorities are used for substance abuse programs and services; and
- 216 (iv) a private provider under an annual or otherwise ongoing contract to provide comprehensive substance abuse programs or services for a local substance abuse authority is in compliance with state and local contract requirements, and state and federal law.
- 220 (14)
- (a) The state auditor may, in accordance with the auditor's responsibilities for political subdivisions of the state as provided in Title 51, Chapter 2a, Accounting Reports from Political Subdivisions, Interlocal Organizations, and Other Local Entities Act, initiate audits or investigations of any political subdivision that are necessary to determine honesty and integrity in fiscal affairs, accuracy and reliability of financial statements, effectiveness, and adequacy of financial controls and compliance with the law.

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- 227 (b) If the state auditor receives notice under Subsection 11-41-104(7) from the Governor's Office
of Economic Opportunity on or after July 1, 2024, the state auditor may initiate an audit or
investigation of the public entity subject to the notice to determine compliance with Section
11-41-103.
- 231 (15)
- (a) The state auditor may not audit work that the state auditor performed before becoming state auditor.
- 233 (b) If the state auditor has previously been a responsible official in state government whose work has
not yet been audited, the Legislature shall:
- 235 (i) designate how that work shall be audited; and
- 236 (ii) provide additional funding for those audits, if necessary.
- 237 (16) The state auditor shall:
- 238 (a) with the assistance, advice, and recommendations of an advisory committee appointed by the state
auditor from among special district boards of trustees, officers, and employees and special service
district boards, officers, and employees:
- 241 (i) prepare a Uniform Accounting Manual for Special Districts that:
- 242 (A) prescribes a uniform system of accounting and uniform budgeting and reporting procedures for
special districts under Title 17B, Limited Purpose Local Government Entities - Special Districts,
and special service districts under Title 17D, Chapter 1, Special Service District Act;
- 246 (B) conforms with generally accepted accounting principles; and
- 247 (C) prescribes reasonable exceptions and modifications for smaller districts to the uniform system of
accounting, budgeting, and reporting;
- 249 (ii) maintain the manual under this Subsection (16)(a) so that the manual continues to reflect generally
accepted accounting principles;
- 251 (iii) conduct a continuing review and modification of procedures in order to improve them;
- 253 (iv) prepare and supply each district with suitable budget and reporting forms; and
- 254 (v)
- (A) prepare instructional materials, conduct training programs, and render other services considered
necessary to assist special districts and special service districts in implementing the uniform
accounting, budgeting, and reporting procedures; and
- 258 (B) ensure that any training described in Subsection (16)(a)(v)(A) complies with Title 63G, Chapter 22,
State Training and Certification Requirements; and

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- 260 (b) continually analyze and evaluate the accounting, budgeting, and reporting practices and experiences
of specific special districts and special service districts selected by the state auditor and make the
information available to all districts.
- 263 (17)
- (a) The following records in the custody or control of the state auditor are protected records under Title
63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act:
- 266 (i) records that would disclose information relating to allegations of personal misconduct,
gross mismanagement, or illegal activity of a past or present governmental employee if the
information or allegation cannot be corroborated by the state auditor through other documents
or evidence, and the records relating to the allegation are not relied upon by the state auditor in
preparing a final audit report;
- 272 (ii) records and audit workpapers to the extent the workpapers would disclose the identity of
an individual who during the course of an audit, communicated the existence of any waste
of public funds, property, or manpower, or a violation or suspected violation of a law, rule,
or regulation adopted under the laws of this state, a political subdivision of the state, or any
recognized entity of the United States, if the information was disclosed on the condition that the
identity of the individual be protected;
- 279 (iii) before an audit is completed and the final audit report is released, records or drafts circulated
to an individual who is not an employee or head of a governmental entity for the individual's
response or information;
- 282 (iv) records that would disclose an outline or part of any audit survey plans or audit program; and
- 284 (v) requests for audits, if disclosure would risk circumvention of an audit.
- 285 (b) The provisions of Subsections (17)(a)(i), (ii), and (iii) do not prohibit the disclosure of records
or information that relate to a violation of the law by a governmental entity or employee to a
government prosecutor or peace officer.
- 288 (c) The provisions of this Subsection (17) do not limit the authority otherwise given to the state auditor
to classify a document as public, private, controlled, or protected under Title 63G, Chapter 2,
Government Records Access and Management Act.
- 291 (d)
- (i) As used in this Subsection (17)(d), "record dispute" means a dispute between the state auditor and
the subject of an audit performed by the state auditor as to whether the state auditor may release

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a record, as defined in Section 63G-2-103, to the public that the state auditor gained access to in the course of the state auditor's audit but which the subject of the audit claims is not subject to disclosure under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act.

- 297 (ii) The state auditor may submit a record dispute to the director of the Government Records Office, created in Section 63A-12-202, for a determination of whether the state auditor may, in conjunction with the state auditor's release of an audit report, release to the public the record that is the subject of the record dispute.
- 301 (iii) The state auditor or the subject of the audit may seek judicial review of the director's determination, described in Subsection (17)(d)(ii), as provided in Section 63G-2-404.
- 304 (18) If the state auditor conducts an audit of an entity that the state auditor has previously audited and finds that the entity has not implemented a recommendation made by the state auditor in a previous audit, the state auditor shall notify the Legislative Management Committee through the Legislative Management Committee's Audit Subcommittee that the entity has not implemented that recommendation.
- 309 (19) The state auditor shall, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint the state privacy auditor described in Section 67-3-13.
- 311 (20) Except as provided in Subsection (21), the state auditor shall report, or ensure that another government entity reports, on the financial, operational, and performance metrics for the state system of higher education and the state system of public education, including metrics in relation to students, programs, and schools within those systems.
- 315 (21)
- (a) Notwithstanding Subsection (20), the state auditor shall conduct regular audits of:
- 316 (i) the scholarship granting organization for the Carson Smith Opportunity Scholarship Program, created in Section 53E-7-402;
- 318 (ii) the State Board of Education for the Carson Smith Scholarship Program, created in Section 53F-4-302; and
- 320 (iii) the scholarship program manager for the Utah Fits All Scholarship Program, created in Section 53F-6-402, including an analysis of the cost effectiveness of the program, taking into consideration the amount of the scholarship and the amount of state and local funds dedicated on a per-student basis within the traditional public education system.

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- (b) Nothing in this subsection limits or impairs the authority of the State Board of Education to administer the programs described in Subsection (21)(a).
- 327 (22) The state auditor shall, based on the information posted by the Office of Legislative Research and
General Counsel under Subsection 36-12-12.1(2), for each policy, track and post the following
information on the state auditor's website:
- 330 (a) the information posted under Subsections 36-12-12.1(2)(a) through (e);
331 (b) an indication regarding whether the policy is timely adopted, adopted late, or not adopted;
333 (c) an indication regarding whether the policy complies with the requirements established by law for the
policy; and
335 (d) a link to the policy.
- 336 (23)
- (a) A legislator may request that the state auditor conduct an inquiry to determine whether a
government entity, government official, or government employee has complied with a legal
obligation directly imposed, by statute, on the government entity, government official, or
government employee.
- 340 (b) The state auditor may, upon receiving a request under Subsection (23)(a), conduct the inquiry
requested.
- 342 (c) If the state auditor conducts the inquiry described in Subsection (23)(b), the state auditor shall post
the results of the inquiry on the state auditor's website.
- 344 (d) The state auditor may limit the inquiry described in this Subsection (23) to a simple determination,
without conducting an audit, regarding whether the obligation was fulfilled.
- 347 (24) The state auditor shall:
- 348 (a) ensure compliance with Title 63G, Chapter 31, Distinctions on the Basis of Sex, in accordance with
Section 63G-31-401; and
350 (b) report to the Legislative Management Committee, upon request, regarding the state auditor's actions
under this Subsection (24).
- 352 (25) The state auditor shall report compliance with Sections 67-27-107, 67-27-108, and 67-27-109 by:
354 (a) establishing a process to receive and audit each alleged violation; and
355 (b) reporting to the Legislative Management Committee, upon request, regarding the state auditor's
findings and recommendations under this Subsection (25).
- 357

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(26) The state auditor shall ensure compliance with Section 63G-1-704 regarding the display of flags in or on government property.

359 (27)

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

364 (b) The state auditor shall make the report described in Subsection (27)(a) publicly available on a website that the state auditor maintains.

366 (28) The state auditor shall:

367 (a) maintain a list of carbon credit transaction information reported to the state auditor under Subsection 79-6-1302(1); and

369 (b) report carbon credit transaction information to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality Appropriations Subcommittee in accordance with Subsection 79-6-1302(2).

372 Section 2. Section 2 is enacted to read:

373 **67-5-41. Carbon Credit Litigation Fund-- Report.**

374 **(1) As used in this section:**

148 (1){(a)} {As used in this section, "carbon"} "Carbon credit" means the same as that term is defined in Section 79-6-1301.

376 (b) "Fund" means the Carbon Credit Litigation Fund created in Subsection (2).

377 (c) "Greenhouse gas" means the same as that term is defined in Section 79-6-1301.

150 (2) There is created an expendable special revenue account called the Carbon Credit Litigation Fund.

152 (3) The fund consists of:

153 (a) money deposited into the fund {from the Carbon Credit Investment Fund created in Section 51-14-201} as a result of any judgment, settlement, or compromise of claims under Subsection (5);

155 (b) interest and dividends earned on money in the fund; and

156 (c) money appropriated to the fund by the Legislature.

157 {(4) }

385 **(4) The state treasurer shall:**

(a) {The state treasurer shall} invest money in the fund in accordance with Title 51, Chapter 7, State Money Management Act{-}; and

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- 159 (b) ~~{The state treasurer shall}~~ deposit interest or other earnings derived from investment of fund money
into the fund.
- 161 (5) Notwithstanding Section 67-5-40, the following shall be deposited into the fund after reimbursement
to the attorney general for expenses related to the litigation described in Subsection (5)(a) or (b):
- 164 (a) all money received by the attorney general as a result of any judgment, settlement, or compromise of
claims pertaining to alleged violations of law related to the sale or marketing of carbon credits; and
- 167 (b) all money received by the attorney general as a result of any judgment, settlement, or compromise
of claims pertaining to alleged violations of law under Title 79, Chapter 6, Part 13, Carbon Credit
Transactions.
- 170 (6)
- (a) The attorney general or the attorney general's designee shall authorize the expenditure of fund
money in accordance with this section.
- 172 (b) The money in the fund may not be used for an administrative expense of the Office of the Attorney
General, ~~{except for}~~ unless the administrative expense is directly related to a purpose described in
Subsection (7).
- 174 (7) The attorney general may use money in the fund to:
- 175 ~~{(a) {investigate violations of Title 79, Chapter 6, Part 13, Carbon Credit Transactions;}}~~
- 176 (b)~~{(a)}~~ prevent a federal requirement for the state to adopt or participate in:
- 177 (i) a cap and trade program for carbon credits;
- 178 (ii) mandatory carbon emissions reporting; ~~{or}~~
- 408 ~~(iii) a claim against the state related to greenhouse gas emissions; or~~
- 179 ~~(iii){(iv)} a climate remediation program; and~~
- 180 (c)~~{(b)}~~ recover a carbon credit or the profit of a carbon credit transferred out of the state in a
fraudulent sale.
- 182 (8)
- ~~{(a) {The attorney general may establish a volunteer task force consisting of representatives from~~
~~public and private agencies or organizations in the state to address any of the activities described in~~
~~Subsection (7).}}~~
- 185 ~~{(b) {The attorney general may employ necessary support staff to implement and administer the fund~~
~~and the activities of a task force.}}~~
- 187 ~~{(9) }~~

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(a) ~~{The}~~ By November 30 of each year, the attorney general shall submit an annual report to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality Appropriations Subcommittee regarding the status of the fund.

190 (b) The report shall include:

191 (i) contributions received, expenditures made, and programs and services funded; and

192 (ii) if the attorney general establishes a task force {under Subsection (8)} to study an issue related to this section, {all} activities and programs initiated through the task force.

419 Section 3. Section **79-6-1301** is amended to read:

195 **Part 13. Carbon Credit Transactions**

421 **79-6-1301. Definitions.**

As used in this part:

198 (1)

(a) "Carbon credit" means a payment or offer of payment, or other financial compensation or benefit, for a carbon emission offset.

425 (b) "Carbon credit" includes a natural asset credit.

200 (b){(c)} "Carbon credit" does not include a payment or offer of payment related to:

201 (i) a right or interest associated with a regulated pollutant, as that term is defined in Title V of the 1990 Clean Air Act; or

203 (ii) an industrial or commercial use of liquefied carbon dioxide.

204 ~~{(2) {"Carbon credit broker" means a person licensed under Section 79-6-1305, that sells, attempts to sell, or assists in the sale of a carbon credit.}}~~

206 (3){(2)} "Carbon emission offset" means:

207 (a) a reduction in the amount of greenhouse gas present in the atmosphere; or

208 (b) an amount of greenhouse gas prevented from entering the atmosphere.

209 ~~[(4)] (4){(3)}~~ "Digital identification number" means an identification number assigned to [an environmental commodity] a carbon credit by a governmental or accredited third-party verification entity that certifies or registers [an environmental commodity] a carbon credit for sale or exchange.

213 ~~[(2)]~~

~~(a) "Environmental commodity" means a representation of the financial value of:~~

214 ~~[(i) a reduction in the amount of greenhouse gas present in the atmosphere; or]~~

215 ~~[(ii) an amount of greenhouse gas prevented from entering the atmosphere.]~~

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- 216 [(b) "Environmental commodity" does not include a right or interest associated with a regulated
pollutant, as that term is defined in Title V of the 1990 Clean Air Act.]
- 218 [(3)] (5){(4)} "Greenhouse gas" means:
- 219 (a) carbon dioxide or a gas emission converted into a carbon dioxide equivalent; or
- 220 (b) methane.
- 221 (6){(5)} {"~~In-state carbon credit~~} "Natural asset company" means {a carbon credit generated from:} the
same as that term is defined in Section 63L-13-101.
- 222 (a){(6)}
- (a) {a carbon emission offset related to a resource or facility located in the state:} "Natural asset credit"
means a payment or offer of payment, or other financial compensation or benefit:
- 223 (b){(i)} {activities receiving state funds:} for the preservation of a natural and biological process on a
parcel of land; or
- 224 (7){(ii)} {"~~Regulatory carbon credit market~~" means a financial market regulated } by a {government
entity } natural asset company for an activity described in {which a person may purchase a carbon
credit} Section 63L-13-203.
- 226 [{(4)}(8)} "Natural asset credit" does not include:
- 451 (i) the commercial extraction, production, or sale of a natural or agricultural resource; or
- 453 (ii) a right or interest associated with the beneficial use or appropriation of water.
- 454 [(4)] (7) "State entity" means a department, commission, board, council, agency, institution of higher
education, officer, corporation, fund, division, office, committee, authority, laboratory, library, unit,
bureau, panel, or other administrative unit of the state.
- 229 [(5)] (9){(8)}
- (a) "State funds" means:
- 230 (i) money appropriated by the Legislature[-] ; and
- 231 (ii) a bond issued by a state entity that creates a carbon emission offset.
- 232 (b) "State funds" does not include money or financial benefit in the form of:
- 233 (i) a tax incentive;
- 234 (ii) a permit or an activity related to the development of a permit issued by a state entity; or
- 236 (iii) a federal grant administered by a state entity.
- 237 {(10) "~~Tax commission~~" means the State Tax Commission created in Section 59-1-201. }
- 238

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~~{(11) "Voluntary carbon credit market" means a financial market not regulated by a government entity in which a person may purchase a carbon credit.}~~

465 Section 4. Section **79-6-1302** is amended to read:

466 **79-6-1302. {Reporting requirement --} Requirements for sale {-- Right to purchase } by**
state entity -- Administration by state auditor -- {Sale or exchange in violation void} Report.

243 [(1) Except as provided in Subsection (2), before a state entity may sell or exchange an environmental
commodity, the state entity shall:]

245 [(a) obtain a digital identification number for the environmental commodity;]

246 [(b) report a digital identification number for the environmental commodity to the office; and]

248 [(c) report to the office any state funds that the state entity used for the creation of the environmental
commodity.]

250 (1) Before a ~~{person-}~~ state entity may sell or exchange ~~{an in-state-}~~ a carbon credit, the ~~{person-}~~
state entity shall:

251 ~~{(a) {obtain a carbon credit broker license described in Section 79-6-1305 or hire a carbon credit
broker;}-}~~

253 (b){(a)} obtain a digital identification number for the ~~{in-state-}~~ carbon credit;and

254 (c){(b)} report to the ~~{office-}~~ state auditor, in a form and manner approved by the ~~{office-}~~ state
auditor:

255 (i) a digital identification number for the ~~{in-state-}~~ carbon credit;

256 (ii) a description of the carbon emission offset, including the source of the carbon emission offset, that
is the subject of the ~~{in-state-}~~ carbon credit;and

258 ~~{(iii) {any state funds or facilities that the person used for the creation of the in-state carbon credit;}-}~~

260 (iv){(iii)} the terms of a negotiated sale or exchange of the ~~{in-state-}~~ carbon credit with an attempted
buyer~~{; and}~~ .

262 (v){(2)} ~~{any information required by-}~~ Before November 30 of each year, the ~~{office-related-}~~
state auditor shall report to ~~{a negotiated sale or exchange of an in-state carbon credit with an
attempted buyer;-}~~ the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality Appropriations
Subcommittee:

264 (d){(a)} ~~{wait at least 45 days after-}~~ the ~~{day on which-}~~ revenue generated from the ~~{person reports
a negotiated-}~~ sale ~~{or exchange of an in-state-}~~ of carbon ~~{credit-}~~ credits by state entities reported

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under Subsection ~~{(1)(c) before completing the sale or exchange, subject to the office's right of first refused described in Subsection (2).}~~ (1)(b); and

268 (2) (b)

~~{(a) {The office may exercise} a {right} summary of {first refusal to purchase an in-state} the carbon credit transactions reported to the {office} state auditor under Subsection ~~{(1)(c) for the amount agreed upon between the attempted seller and the attempted buyer} (1)(b).~~~~

489 (2)

271 ~~{(b) {If the office exercises a right of first refusal under Subsection (2)(a), the office shall provide written notification of the office's decision to exercise the right of first refusal:}~~

~~{to the person that reports the negotiated sale to the office under Subsection (1)(c); and}~~

276 ~~{(ii) {within 45 days after the day on which the negotiated sale is reported to the office.}}~~

277 ~~{(e) {If the office fails to provide notification in accordance with Subsection (2)(b), the office may not exercise the right of first refusal described in Subsection (2)(a).}}~~

279 ~~{(3) {Subject to the reporting requirements described in Subsection (1)(c) and the office's right of first refusal described in Subsection (2), the seller of an in-state carbon credit shall execute the sale or exchange of the in-state carbon credit in accordance with the terms the seller reports to the office under Subsection (1)(c)(iv) no later than:}~~

283 ~~{(a) {30 days after the day on which the seller receives notification that the office waives the office's right of first refusal; or}~~

285 ~~{(b) {if the office does not provide the notification described in Subsection (2)(b), 75 days after the day on which the seller reports the terms of the negotiated sale to the office.}}~~

287 ~~{(4) {Before purchasing an in-state carbon credit under Subsection (2)(a), the office shall submit a proposal for review to:}~~

289 ~~{(a) {the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality Appropriations Subcommittee; and}~~

291 ~~{(b) {the state treasurer.}}~~

292 ~~{(5) {In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the office shall make rules regarding:}~~

294 ~~{(a) {the form and manner of reporting an in-state carbon credit to the office under Subsection (1)(c); and}~~

296 ~~{(b) {the office's right of first refusal described in Subsection (2).}}~~

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297 ~~{(6) {A sale or exchange of an in-state carbon credit that violates a requirement of this part is void.}}~~
299 ~~{(2) This section does not apply to an environmental commodity created from an activity on school
and institutional trust lands, as that term is defined in Section 53C-1-103.}~~

491 Section 5. Section **79-6-1303** is amended to read:

492 **79-6-1303. {Property of the state -- Management -- Valuation of state-owned carbon credit
required -- Deposit of proceeds from sale} Management.**

304 ~~[(1) If the state or a state entity appropriates or expends state funds {f} for the creation of an
environmental commodity { } that create a carbon credit, the state owns a portion of {f} an
environmental commodity { } the carbon credit} that is proportional to the amount of state funds
appropriated or expended {f} for the creation of the environmental commodity { } :]~~

308 ~~[(2)~~

~~(a) Except as provided in Subsection (3), the state treasurer may sell, exchange, or hold {f} an
environmental commodity { } a carbon credit, or any portion thereof, owned by the state in
accordance with Subsection (2)(b):]~~

311 ~~[(b) The state treasurer shall ensure that {f} an environmental commodity { } a carbon credit} owned by
the state is sold, exchanged, or held:]~~

313 ~~[(i) for the benefit of the citizens of the state:]~~

314 ~~[(ii) to promote energy independence for the state:]~~

315 ~~[(iii) to maximize the natural resources of the state; and]~~

316 ~~[(iv) consistent with Part 3, State Energy Policy:]~~

317 ~~[(3) {f} An environmental commodity] A carbon credit created or purchased by a state entity shall
remain under the control of the state entity.~~

319 ~~{(4) A state entity that owns or controls a carbon credit shall: }~~

320 ~~{(a) obtain a digital identification number for the carbon credit; }~~

321 ~~{(b) obtain a valuation of the carbon credit from a governmental or accredited third-party verification
entity that appraises a carbon credit for sale or exchange; and }~~

323 ~~{(c) report the digital identification number and valuation for the carbon credit to the office. }~~

325 ~~{(5) If a state entity or the state treasurer sells a carbon credit, the proceeds of the sale shall be
deposited into the General Fund. }~~

327 Section 9. Section **9** is enacted to read:

328 **79-6-1304. Carbon Credit Restricted Account.**

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- 329 (1) There is created an account known as the Carbon Credit Restricted Account.
- 330 (2) The account consists of:
- 331 (a) appropriations made to the account by the Legislature;
- 332 (b) the revenue from the broker licensing fee described in Subsection 79-6-1305(5);
- 333 (c) private donations, grants, gifts, bequests, or money made available from any other source to
implement this part; and
- 335 (d) interest or earnings on the money in the restricted account.
- 336 (3)
- 337 (a) The state treasurer shall invest money in the restricted account consistent with Title 51, Chapter 7,
State Money Management Act.
- 338 (b) The state treasurer shall deposit interest or other earnings derived from investment of restricted
account money into the restricted account.
- 340 (4) Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, the office may use money in the restricted account to:
- 342 (a) purchase an in-state carbon credit in accordance with Subsection 79-6-1302(2);
- 343 (b) record and track a digital identification number reported to the office under Subsection
79-6-1302(1);
- 345 (c) administer the broker license program described in Section 79-6-1305; and
- 346 (d) administer the carbon credit assessment described in Section 79-6-1306.
- 347 Section 10. Section **10** is enacted to read:
- 348 **79-6-1305. Carbon credit broker license -- License required for sale -- Bond required --**
Criminal penalty -- Revocation of license.
- 350 (1)
- 351 (a) A person may not sell, offer to sell, or assist in the sale of a carbon credit in this state without first:
- 352 (i) obtaining a carbon credit broker license from the office; and
- 353 (ii) complying with a bonding requirement described in Subsection (4).
- 354 (b) It is a class B misdemeanor for a person to violate Subsection (1)(a).
- 355 (2) The office shall issue a license to sell, offer to sell, or assist in the sale of a carbon credit to a person
that submits an application, on a form created by the office, that includes:
- 357 (a) the applicant's name;
- 358 (b) the applicant's business address;
- 359

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(c) the applicant's affiliation or registration, if any, with a voluntary carbon credit market or regulatory carbon credit market;

361 (d) payment of the bond described in Subsection (4);

362 (e) payment of the fee described in Subsection (5); and

363 (f) any other information required by the office..

364 (3) A carbon credit broker license under this section is:

365 (a) valid for two years; and

366 (b) renewable if a carbon credit broker meets the criteria for licensing described in Subsection (2).

368 (4)

(a) The office shall require a carbon credit broker to post a bond.

369 (b) Subject to Subsection (4)(c), the office shall determine the form and amount of the bond.

371 (c) The minimum amount of the bond shall be \$500.

372 (5)

(a) The office may charge a fee of no more than \$200 for a license under this section.

373 (b) The office shall deposit the revenue from the fee into the Carbon Credit Restricted Account created in Section 79-6-1304.

375 (6)

(a) The office shall maintain a public list of each carbon credit broker.

376 (b) The office shall update the list at least once annually.

377 (7)

(a) The office shall revoke the license of a carbon credit broker that violates any provision of this part.

379 (b) A license may not be reissued to a carbon credit broker until the carbon credit broker has complied with the requirements of this section.

381 (8) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the office may make rules to establish:

383 (a) additional information described in Subsection (2)(f) that a person shall provide in the application described in Subsection (2); and

385 (b) the form of the bond described in Subsection (4).

386 Section 11. Section 11 is enacted to read:

387 **79-6-1306. Carbon credit transaction assessment -- Administration by State Tax Commission -- Distribution -- Rulemaking.**

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- 389 (1)
- (a) Except as provided in Subsection (2), a carbon credit broker shall pay a carbon credit assessment to the tax commission for each sale of a carbon credit.
- 391 (b) The amount of a carbon credit assessment is equal to 19% of the amount of the total purchase price of the carbon credit.
- 393 (c) A carbon credit broker shall:
- 394 (i) collect the assessment from a purchaser at the time the carbon credit is sold;
- 395 (ii) maintain records to determine the amount of the carbon credit assessment due under this section for a period of three years;
- 397 (iii) file a quarterly return in a form approved by the tax commission; and
- 398 (iv) remit to the tax commission the tax collected on or before the first day of each calendar quarter.
- 400 (2) Notwithstanding Subsection (1), a sale of a carbon credit is exempt from a carbon credit assessment if the carbon emission offset that is the subject of the carbon credit sale:
- 402 (a) originated from a project within the state; and
- 403 (b) is transferred to or applied to a project within the state.
- 404 (3) The office shall quarterly determine the amount of the carbon credit assessment that each carbon credit broker owes under this section and report the amount to the tax commission to be collected in accordance with Subsection (1).
- 407 (4)
- (a) The tax commission shall:
- 408 (i) administer, collect, and enforce the carbon credit assessment collected under this section in accordance with Title 59, Chapter 1, General Taxation Policies; and
- 410 (ii) deposit revenue collected under this section into the Carbon Credit Investment Fund created in Section 51-14-201.
- 412 (b) The tax commission may retain and deposit an administrative charge, in accordance with Section 59-1-306, from the revenues the tax commission collects under this section.
- 415 (5) The office may make rules, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, to create procedures for assessing and reporting the amounts to be collected under this section.

508 Section 6. **Effective date.**

Effective Date.

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This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.

3-2-26 9:30 AM