

1 **Joint Resolution Encouraging Strong Family Units**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Nicholeen P. Peck**

Senate Sponsor:

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**LONG TITLE****General Description:**

This resolution promotes strengthening households of married parents with children.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This resolution:

- ▶ highlights the correlation between percentage of households of married parents with children and child poverty;
- ▶ promotes career and technical programs to increase upward social mobility and financial stability;
- ▶ promotes the Success Sequence to teach students how to create strong family units; and
- ▶ encourages policies creating family stability and a strong foundation for Utah children.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

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

20 WHEREAS, the bonds between parents and children are fundamental to human  
21 development;

22 WHEREAS, humans have a psychological and social need for feelings of belonging, love,  
23 and strong familial relationships;

24 WHEREAS, for most individuals, family provides essential support during challenging  
25 times;

26 WHEREAS, the United Nations determined that "family is the basic group unit of society,"  
27 underscoring the family's pivotal role in societal well-being;

28 WHEREAS, according to the National Census, in 1980, 77% of children lived with married  
29 parents;

30 WHEREAS, in 2020, nationally, 63% of children lived with married parents;

31        WHEREAS, there is a correlation between the decline in percentage of children living with  
32 married parents and the increase in income inequality, the increase in poverty rates, and the  
33 decrease in economic mobility;

34        WHEREAS, Archbridge Institute ranks Utah as the best in the nation for social mobility;

35        WHEREAS, investing in career and technical programs provide Utahns greater access to  
36 higher-paying jobs, leading to upward mobility and increased family stability;

37        WHEREAS, according to a 2024 United States Department of Health and Human Services  
38 report, 80% of Utah households are headed by two parents, compared to 63% nationally;

39        WHEREAS, according to economist Melissa Kearny, the higher percentage of two-parent  
40 households is correlated with low poverty rates, high social mobility, and lower income  
41 inequality;

42        WHEREAS, findings from the Marriage and Religion Research Institute indicate that  
43 children raised by married parents experience better long-term outcomes, such as higher  
44 educational attainment, improved emotional well-being, and greater economic stability  
45 compared to those raised in single-parent households;

46        WHEREAS, Utah is committed to creating strong families with children raised by married  
47 parents;

48        WHEREAS, Utah promotes the Success Sequence where children are encouraged to  
49 complete at least a high school education, obtain full-time work, and marry before having  
50 children;

51        WHEREAS, the Success Sequence teaches students the importance of education, financial  
52 responsibility, and intact, healthy marriages;

53        WHEREAS, Utah's early-childhood tax credit provides financial relief to families during  
54 the early, formative years of a child's life;

55        WHEREAS, Utah is not immune to the national trend of decreasing birthrates and decline  
56 of households of married parents with children;

57        WHEREAS, these trends are a cause for concern for the future of Utah children;

58        WHEREAS, many single-parent families find themselves in a less-than-ideal situation  
59 when raising children;

60        WHEREAS, single-parent families work diligently and often raise remarkable children  
61 despite the hardships they face; and

62        WHEREAS, single-parent families should never be stigmatized;

63        NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah  
64 promotes the adoption of policies that promote and strengthen married, two-parent families.

65        BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah commits to provide  
66        children with the greatest opportunities for success in life by prioritizing intact families in  
67        legislation language, including maintaining the terms mother, father, and parents in Utah code  
68        and adding those terms into legislation when possible in order to maintain a state focus on  
69        families and to direct attention towards creating strong families for Utah's children.

70        BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah encourages and  
71        promotes two-parent families, strong marriages, and healthy family communication.

72        BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah promotes career  
73        and technical programs, the Success Sequence, and continuing and expanding the  
74        early-childhood tax credits to create financial security, upward mobility, and family stability  
75        that creates a strong foundation for Utah children.