



INTERIM HIGHLIGHTS

Office of Legislative Research
and General Counsel

Office of the Legislative
Auditor General

SEPTEMBER INTERIM COMMITTEES

Business and Labor

STUDY:

- Studied possible changes to the sunrise process for newly regulated occupations and professions and directed staff to prepare legislative proposals to meet committee objectives.

ACTIONS:

- Voted to reauthorize Title 13, Chapter 16, Motor Fuel Marketing Act, with a sunset date of July 1, 2012.
- Recommended draft legislation, "Impact of Administrative Rules on Small Businesses."

*Chairs: Sen. Scott K. Jenkins / Rep. Stephen D. Clark
Staff: Allison Morgan (analyst)/Patricia Owen (attorney)/Phalin Flowers (secretary)*

Education

STUDIES:

- The Governor's office discussed issues related to the State Board of Education Nominating and Recruiting Committee.
- The State Board of Education and an early college high school representative briefed the committee on early college charter high schools which partner with higher education institutions to offer a college level curriculum.
- Representatives of the State Board of Education, State Board of Regents, and the Department of Workforce Services presented information on the <http://careers.utah.gov/careers/> website which provides job information.

REPORTS:

- The State Board of Education and State Board of Regents reported on the challenges of meeting the demand for teachers and provided recommendations on improving teacher quality.
- The State Treasurer reported on assets and earnings of the State School Fund.

*Chairs: Sen. Howard A. Stephenson / Rep. Margaret Dayton
Staff: Constance Steffen & Phillip Dean (analysts)/Dee Larsen (attorney)/Glenda Whitney (secretary)*

Government Operations

STUDY:

- The Division of Purchasing and General Services discussed the purposes and provisions of the Utah Procurement Code.

REPORT:

- The Legislative Auditor General presented the September 2006 audit, "A Performance Audit of the State's Purchasing Card Program," which recommends continuing the program but with stricter adherence to program controls.

ACTION:

- Recommended draft legislation, "Open and Public Meetings Act," which clarifies that a public body includes those created by the Utah Constitution, and amends requirements for written minutes and recordings of open meetings.

*Chairs: Sen. Parley Hellewell / Rep. Douglas C. Aagard
Staff: Benjamin Christensen (analyst)/Eric Weeks (attorney)/Brooke Ollerton (secretary)*

Health and Human Services

STUDY:

- Considered draft legislation, "Consumer Access to Health Care Charges Amendments," and "Producer and Affiliate Disclosure Amendments."

REPORT:

- The Health Data Committee reported on implementation of 2005 S.B. 132, "Health Care Consumer's Report."

ACTION:

- Recommended draft legislation, "Health Care Cost and Quality Data."

*Chairs: Sen. Allen M. Christensen / Rep. Bradley G. Last
Staff: Mark Andrews (analyst)/Catherine Dupont, Thomas Vaughn (attorneys)/Joy Miller (secretary)*

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Judiciary

STUDY:

- Discussed a proposal for legislation that would amend the definition of material that is harmful to minors, to include inappropriate violence in interactive videos and electronic games.

ACTION:

- Directed staff to proceed with a re-codification of Title 78, Judicial Code.

Chairs: Sen. David L. Thomas / Rep. James A. Ferrin
Staff: Jerry Howe (analyst)/Esther Chelsea-McCarty (attorney)/Brooke Ollerton (secretary)

Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

STUDIES:

- Reviewed human trafficking issues and the impact on Utah.
- Discussed potential legislation to restrict sex offenders' residences and activities in proximity to schools, parks, and libraries.

REPORTS:

- Utah Department of Corrections (UDC) provided a statutorily required status report on housing inmates in county jails.
- UDC reported on its sex offender program and the safety issues raised by the residence locations of the 6,908 registered sex offenders in the state and the limited funding for resources to supervise them.
- The Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice presented a statutorily required report on forfeited property.

ACTIONS:

- Recommended that public safety dispatchers employed by the state receive a four-step wage increase to reduce turnover and increase the long term quality of this public safety function.
- Recommended that a dedicated credit be established for the Bureau of Criminal Identification in the Department of Public Safety to receive concealed weapons permit application fees.

Chairs: Sen. D.C. Buttars / Rep. DeMar "Bud" Bowman
Staff: Stewart E. Smith (analyst)/Susan Creager Allred (attorney)/Wendy Bangerter (secretary)

Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment

REPORTS:

- Discussed the testing for whirling disease by the Department of Agriculture and Food and the Division of Wildlife Resources.
 - The Department of Natural Resources reported on the status of an agreement between Nevada and Utah on the division of interstate ground-water resources in the Snake Valley area.
- (Continued next column)*

ACTION:

- Recommended draft legislation, "Joint Resolution Regarding Action on Groundwater in Snake Valley."

Chairs: Sen. Thomas V. Hatch / Rep. Roger E. Barrus
Staff: Brian Allred (analyst)/Emily R. Brown (attorney)/Joy Miller (secretary)

Political Subdivisions

STUDIES:

- Discussed recommendations of an ad hoc workgroup regarding the implementation of 2006 H.B. 77, "School District Boundaries," which allows the governing body of certain cities and counties to submit for voter approval a proposal to establish a new school district which meets certain requirements.
- Discussed Title 20A, Chapter 11, Part 12, "Political Activities of Public Entities Act," which prohibits public entities from making expenditures from public funds for political purposes or to influence a ballot proposition.
- Discussed issues relating to the use of Social Security numbers by political subdivisions.

REPORT:

- The State Risk Manager reported on governmental immunity limits as required by the passage of 2006 S.B. 113, "Governmental Immunity Limits."

Chairs: Sen. Carlene M. Walker / Rep. Brad L. Dee
Staff: Joseph Wade (analyst)/Robert Rees (attorney)/Wendy Bangerter (secretary)

Public Utilities and Technology

REPORT:

- Received reports from private and public entities regarding uranium ore recycling, including the importation and processing of Japanese natural uranium ore, Utah's regulatory mechanisms, and environmental and safety concerns.

Chairs: Sen. Gregory S. Bell / Rep. Sheryl L. Allen
Staff: Richard North (analyst)/Christopher Parker (attorney)/Tracey Fredman (secretary)

Revenue and Taxation

STUDIES:

- Reviewed current state and local programs that abate and defer the property taxes of the poor and elderly.
- Reviewed state statutes governing ballot proposition language for ballots authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds.

ACTION:

- Recommended draft legislation, "Uniform Fees on Property Amendments - Mailing Requirement."

Chairs: Sen. Curtis S. Bramble / Rep. Wayne A. Harper
Staff: Bryant Howe & Phillip Dean (analysts)/Rebecca Rockwell & Angela D. Oakes (attorneys)
Phalin Flowers (secretary)

Transportation

STUDIES:

- Discussed a study of the feasibility of tolling a highway in the proposed Mountain View Corridor and the potential toll revenue.
- Considered draft legislation, "Driver License and ID Card--Sunset of Race Checkoff Provisions."

ACTION:

- Recommended H.B. 342, "Traffic Code Revisions," from the 2006 General Session.

Chairs: Sen. Sheldon L. Killpack / Rep. Joseph G. Murray
Staff: Mark Steinagel (analyst)/Shannon Halverson & Christopher Parker (attorneys)
Tracey Fredman (secretary)

Workforce Services & Community and Economic Development

STUDIES:

- Discussed draft legislation, "Industrial Assistance Fund."
- Discussed procedures for addressing invalid Social Security numbers reported as a part of wage data.

ACTIONS:

- Passed a motion to continue the discussion of draft legislation, "Employment Security Act Amendments," in the October committee meeting to receive input from the business community.
- Recommended draft legislation, "Unemployment Compensation--Social Security Offset," and "Family Employment Program Amendments."

Chairs: Sen. John W. "Bill" Hickman / Rep. David N. Cox
Staff: Art Hunsaker (analyst)/Jim Wilson (attorney)/Glenda Whitney (secretary)

FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION

The Legislature met in Special Session on September 19th and passed the following two bills:

HB 4001, COUNTY OPTION FUNDING FOR REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Sponsor: Representative Rebecca D. Lockhart

HB 4001 address transportation funding for counties. This bill amends the Sales and Use Tax Act, the Transportation Finances Act, and counties' authority in this area, as follows:

- prohibits a county legislative body from using property taxes to fund fixed guideways; and
- authorizes a county legislative body to impose a local option sales and use tax of up to .25%, on or after April 1, 2007, for certain transportation uses, with the following provisions:
 - requires a county imposing the tax to establish a prioritization process with weighted criteria;
 - requires at least 25% of the revenues collected in a county of the first or second class to be expended on corridor preservation;
 - specifies the purposes for which revenues may be expended; and
 - establishes procedures and requirements for imposing the tax.

SB 4001, INCOME TAX AMENDMENTS

Sponsor: Senator Curtis S. Bramble

SB 4001 amends the Individual Income Tax Act and enacts the Single Rate Individual Income Tax Act. This legislation includes the following provisions:

- modifies the tax brackets for taxable years on and after January 1, 2006;
- requires that these individual income tax brackets to be adjusted for changes in the Consumer Price Index, beginning on and after January 1, 2009;
- modifies additions to and subtractions from federal taxable income for purposes of calculating state individual income taxes; and
- enacts the Single Rate Individual Income Tax Act for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2007, to allow a taxpayer to calculate and pay a single rate individual income tax on the basis of adjusted gross income or pay a multi-rate individual income tax on the basis of federal taxable income.

Legislative Management Committee

REPORT:

- Received a letter from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) advising that it will deliver to the committee by October 1, 2006 a statutorily mandated report entitled "Evaluation of Closure, Post-Closure, and Perpetual Care and Maintenance for Commercial Hazardous Waste and Radioactive Waste Treatment and Disposal Facilities."
- Directed staff to send this DEQ report to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee for review.

- Bureau of Criminal Identification concealed weapons fees issues;
- Attorney General FTE report; and
- Division of Juvenile Justice Services local programs review.

ACTIONS:

- Authorized the payment of salary and expenses for all legislators who attended the September 5, 2006 special meetings of the Senate and House of Representatives.
- Approved the following requests from appropriations subcommittees:
 - Health and Human Services - to add a November 14, 2006 meeting;
 - Executive Offices and Criminal Justice - to add the following four items to its September 22, 2006 meeting agenda;
 - Department of Public Safety crime lab funding issues;

UPCOMING DATES

October 18, 2006 - Interim Day

November 15, 2006 - Interim Day

December 1, 2006 (Friday) - Last day for legislators to designate up to three priority bills

December 1, 2006 (Friday) - Last day for governmental entities to request bills

December 20, 2006 (Wednesday) - Last day for Executive Appropriations Committee to set initial budget

January 15, 2007 (Monday) - First day of 2007 General Session



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For more information about legislative activities, visit the Utah State Legislature's website at: www.le.utah.gov.

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Next Interim Day – October 18