Requester Information

Legislator Name: Eliason, Steve

Created Date: January 29th 2026 **Submitted Date:** January 30th 2026

Section 1: Requester Details

Description:

This RFA requests one time funding for the Utah Department of Health and Human Services to support the Strengthening Family Resilience After Loss initiative. This appropriation will sustain and modestly expand an early-intervention pilot program that connects children and families to critical supports following the death of a parent or caregiver. Launched in October 2024, the initiative leverages existing systems—schools, 211 Utah, and trained service navigators—to ensure bereaved families are identified quickly and connected to resources such as Social Security survivor benefits, mental health support, and community services. Early results demonstrate growing demand and effectiveness, with increased school referrals and improved statewide capacity through navigator training. This appropriation would maintain continuity of current services, expand access to charter schools and additional school districts, connect Utah to best practices and lessons from other states and the United States Social Security Administration and improve data, training, and coordination across systems in a fiscally responsible, prevention-focused manner that strengthens family stability and reduces long-term reliance on the social safety net.

Legislative designee contact information:

Name: Catherine Jaynes

Organization: Children's Collaborative

Position: Executive Director

Section 2: Funding Information

How will the appropriation be used?

Category	One-time		Ongoing
Personnel Services	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
In-State Travel	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Out-of-State Travel	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Supplies and Equipment	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Technology Purchases	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Infrastructure/Capital Investments	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Other Charges/Pass Thru	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $304,000.00	$0.00

Expenditure Total

One-time 2026	One-time 2027	Ongoing 2027
$0.00	**$304,000.00**	**$0.00**

Funding Sources:

General Fund

Amount Requested:

2026 (One-time)	$0.00
2027 (One-time)	$304,000.00
2027 (Ongoing)	$0.00

Revenue Total

One-time 2026	One-time 2027	Ongoing 2027
$0.00	**$304,000.00**	**$0.00**

Is this a multi-year project?

Yes

Is this project scalable if the Legislature does not fund the full requested amount?

Yes

A short explanation describing how the project might be scaled?

Yes. If funded at a lower level, the initiative would prioritize sustaining statewide service navigation, training, and external coordination, including continued connection to best practices from other states and coordination with the Social Security Administration. Scaling would occur primarily through the pace of geographic expansion and the number of school districts onboarded, rather than by reducing core expertise or system-level learning. This approach ensures Utah continues to benefit from national best practices while adjusting local implementation to available funding.

Section 3: Agency Information

Subjects:

02605u

Health and Wellbeing

Agency:

250 / Department of Health and Human Services

Type of entity to receive pass-through funding:

Private Not for Profit

Grant recipient

Yes

Requested Direct Award Grant Recipient

Utah's Promise, an affiliate of the United Way

Section 4: Performance Outcome Measurement

Who would benefit the most from this request (who is the target audience)?

Children and families in Utah who experience the death of a parent or primary caregiver would directly benefit from this request. Secondary beneficiaries include schools, community-based organizations, and service providers that support bereaved children and families and rely on coordinated referral and navigation systems. The initiative also benefits the state by reducing downstream reliance on public assistance through earlier stabilization and connection to existing supports.

What is this project or program intended to accomplish?

This initiative is intended to ensure that children and families experiencing the loss of a parent or caregiver are identified early and connected quickly to financial, emotional, and community supports that promote family stability. The program focuses on service navigation, training, and coordination—helping families access benefits and services they are already eligible for, including Social Security survivor benefits. It strengthens the capacity of schools and community partners to respond effectively to bereavement while reducing fragmentation across systems. The long-term goal is to prevent avoidable secondary crises such as poverty, housing instability, and untreated mental health needs.

How will the Legislature know whether the project or program achieved its intended purpose?

Success will be measured through short-term, measurable indicators, including the number of bereaved families identified and referred through schools and 211 Utah, the number of families receiving service navigation, and the number of providers trained in bereavement-informed practices. Additional metrics include successful connections to survivor benefits and other stabilizing supports, as well as geographic expansion to additional school districts. The overseeing state agency will receive regular reporting on referrals, engagement, and outcomes to assess effectiveness and inform future funding decisions.

Section 5: Other Supporting Documents

Intent Language Documents

The Legislature intends that $304,000 from the General Fund provided by this item be used to sustain and expand a statewide bereavement initiative that identifies children and families experiencing the death of a parent or caregiver and connects them to existing financial, emotional, and community supports. Funding may be used for service navigation, training, coordination, data and reporting, and engagement with national best practices, including coordination with federal benefit programs, in order to strengthen family stability and reduce long-term public costs.

Previous Funding Documents

https://cobi.utah.gov/2024/3602/issues/21475 The Bereavement Initiative previously received state funding to support initial development and implementation, including establishment of referral pathways, service navigation, and coordination across schools, 211 Utah, and community partners. That funding enabled Utah to launch a first-in-the-nation system of support for bereaved children and families in 2024. The current request seeks to sustain and expand this existing initiative in response to demonstrated demand and early results.

Full Time Employees

0