



# 2026 Judiciary Interim Committee

Approved Study Item List and Review Process | May 20, 2026

## 2026 Judiciary Interim Committee Study Items

Study Item	Description
<b>1. Attorney Opinion Letters in Real Estate Escrow</b>	Examine issues related to HB503 “Real Estate Modifications” (2026), which would have allowed title insurance producers to handle real estate escrows using an attorney opinion letter instead of a traditional title insurance policy in certain transactions.
<b>2. Child Welfare Case Timelines</b>	Study the efficiency of child welfare cases moving through the court system, focusing on time spent at each stage and the causes of delay. This item relates to HB576 “Child Welfare Timeline Compliance Amendments” (2026), which sought to address court compliance with child welfare timelines.
<b>3. Criminal Fines</b>	Review criminal fines, fees, and restitution in Utah’s criminal justice system. Examine whether the criminal surcharge should be changed to a flat fee.
<b>4. Domestic Relations Commissioners</b>	Study the appropriate scope of domestic relations commissioner authority in family court proceedings. Concerns have been raised that some proceedings involve complex financial or equitable determinations beyond the intended scope of the commissioner role, and that delays in obtaining judicial review can generate substantial attorney fees. Explore options to clarify commissioner authority, establish thresholds for mandatory judicial assignment, and set standards for timely de novo review.
<b>5. General Provisions for the Utah Code</b>	Study the benefits of adding a general provisions title to the Utah Code. OLRGC has been working on a proposal to add a title that would include provisions applicable to the entire Utah Code, including definitions, drafting and interpretation rules, and severability and savings clauses.
<b>6. Justice Court Closures</b>	Study the impact on district courts of absorbing caseloads from closed municipal justice courts. Examine whether expanding the role of district court commissioners would help manage the anticipated increase in cases.
<b>7. Juvenile Detention</b>	Study issues related to HB465 “Juvenile Court Amendments” (2026), including juvenile detention facility capacity. Explore the policy proposed in HB465 to allow a juvenile court to suspend detention orders as an incentive for compliance with specified conditions, such as drug treatment.
<b>8. Pretrial Release and Failure to Appear Rates</b>	Study issues related to HB593 “Bail Amendments” (2026). Specifically, examine implementation requirements for pretrial services programs to comply with the bill’s updated arraignment procedures for repeat offenders, including the elimination of own recognizance release. Review failure to appear (FTA) rates in Utah courts across case types and judicial districts, trends over time, and how Utah compares to other states.



<b>9. Statute of Limitations</b>	Related to SB213 “Utah Payment of Wages Act Statute of Limitations” (2026), study the appropriate limitations period for wage claim lawsuits. Examine how statutes of limitations are organized throughout the Utah Code and whether those provisions should be clarified or consolidated.
<b>10. Victims’ Services Funding and Impact Statements</b>	As federal funding for victims’ services declines, the committee could explore sustainable funding alternatives. Separately, examine whether the priority of victim impact statements in the justice system should be more clearly defined.

## Study Item Review Process

[JR7-1-401](#) requires the committee to review the study items approved by the Legislative Management Committee, allows the committee to modify the list, and requires the committee to adopt the original or amended list.

### Possible Motions

- **Adopt** the list of study items as-is; or
- **Modify** the list, and **then adopt** the amended the list (two separate motions)

## Authorization for Chairs to Open Committee Bill Files

In accordance with [JR7-1-602](#), the committee may also vote to authorize the chairs to independently open committee bill files for approved study items. The chairs must jointly agree to open a bill file and give the committee notice of any opened bill files at the next interim meeting. The committee has granted this authority to the chairs in recent years, though sometimes limiting the number of committee bills that chairs may independently open.

**\*\*New Rule\*\*** [HJR1](#) (2026) limits interim committees to **five committee bill files**.

### Possible Motions

- **Grant authority** to the chairs to open committee bill files;
- **Grant *limited* authority** to the chairs to open committee bill files; or
- **No action**