

Senator Wayne L. Niederhauser proposes the following substitute bill:

**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING UTAH'S
INTERCONNECTED SKI AND SNOWBOARD INDUSTRY**

2012 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Wayne L. Niederhauser

House Sponsor: Ryan D. Wilcox

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor expresses support for interconnection of the seven Salt Lake County and Summit County ski resorts.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ expresses support for low-impact interconnection of the seven resorts in Salt Lake County and Summit County to enhance the ski and snowboard resort industry's contribution to Utah's economy, jobs, and tax base;
- ▶ urges interconnection of the Salt Lake County and Summit County ski resorts using best environmental practices;
- ▶ supports thorough consideration of multiple uses in the Wasatch Mountains in the evaluation of resort interconnections;
- ▶ urges meaningful and balanced public involvement in any associated planning and decision-making processes regarding resort interconnections; and
- ▶ supports a comprehensive set of solutions to transportation problems in the Wasatch Mountains, including short term and long term alternatives, potential year-round utilization and support of Utah's vibrant human-powered outdoor recreation.



26 **Special Clauses:**

27 None



29 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

30 WHEREAS, tourism is one of Utah's major "export industries" that sells services or
31 products to destination visitors and brings money into the state to support our local economy
32 and provide jobs for current and future Utahns;

33 WHEREAS, over 20 million people visited the state of Utah in 2010, spending over
34 \$6.5 billion, or 5.5% of Utah's gross domestic product, contributing over \$840 million in state
35 and local taxes, and sustaining as much as 10% of the jobs in the state;

36 WHEREAS, the ski and snowboard industry is a major contributor to Utah's tourism
37 industry, contributing over \$1.2 billion to the state's economy as a result of over 4 million skier
38 days, and growth in the ski and snowboard industry will bring additional spending, revenue,
39 and jobs to the state;

40 WHEREAS, tourists who ski or snowboard in Utah spend money on lift tickets,
41 equipment rentals, hotels, restaurants, car rentals, and other matters, and this money circulates
42 through the economy, supporting over 20,000 local jobs;

43 WHEREAS, the seven ski resorts in Summit County and Salt Lake County are all
44 located in close proximity to one another, offering the opportunity to connect these resorts, an
45 opportunity that leading competing winter tourism states do not have;

46 WHEREAS, connecting the ski resorts in Summit County and Salt Lake County will
47 create a skiing experience unavailable anywhere else in North America and reposition Utah's
48 ski and snowboard experience to be even more competitive and attractive relative to other
49 states, leading to increased tourist visitation and spending, which will in turn lead to an
50 increase in revenue and jobs;

51 WHEREAS, it is recognized that Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons are critical
52 watersheds from which more than 500,000 Utah residents, businesses, and visitors throughout
53 Salt Lake County receive their drinking water, and that best management practices would be
54 required in any potential resort connections;

55 WHEREAS, the balance of multiple uses in the Wasatch Mountains, including
56 developed recreation, such as skiing and picnicking, and dispersed recreation, such as hiking,

57 mountain biking, and back country skiing, are highly valued by residents, visitors, and
58 businesses in Utah and contribute significantly to the state's economy and quality of life;

59 WHEREAS, the roads to ski areas in Summit County and Salt Lake County are
60 congested during certain times of the year, and studies should be conducted by numerous
61 federal, state, local, and private sector entities to comprehensively evaluate alternatives to solve
62 transportation problems;

63 WHEREAS, connecting the ski resorts in Summit County and Salt Lake County will
64 improve access to the ski resorts and allow the unique opportunity of skiing at multiple resorts
65 in a single day;

66 WHEREAS, connecting the ski resorts in Summit County and Salt Lake County is an
67 issue of state concern because the connection will cross county boundaries, have a
68 tremendously positive impact on the state economy, and may contribute positively to state
69 roadways and airsheds;

70 WHEREAS, connecting ski resorts will allow the winter sports industry to grow while
71 making the most efficient and sustainable use of ski terrain, roads, facilities, and parking lots;

72 WHEREAS, connecting the ski resorts in Summit County and Salt Lake County may
73 require review and approval of permits by Summit County, Salt Lake County, Salt Lake City,
74 Park City, the town of Alta, and the United States Forest Service;

75 WHEREAS, the public will be engaged in meaningful and balanced ways in any
76 potential decision-making processes regarding resort interconnections, and these processes will
77 be open and transparent;

78 WHEREAS, many skiers drive from Summit County to ski in the Cottonwood
79 Canyons, or from one Cottonwood Canyon resort to ski in Summit County or at another
80 Cottonwood Canyon resort, contributing to congestion on canyon roads;

81 WHEREAS, connecting the ski resorts in Summit County and Salt Lake County will
82 decrease traffic on congested canyon roads and lead to cleaner air and water by reducing
83 automobile-related pollution, and provide emergency evacuation options for Big and Little
84 Cottonwood canyons;

85 WHEREAS, the 1988 Governor's Task Force on Interconnect concluded that
86 interconnecting the Wasatch ski resorts "would provide a substantial boost to Utah's ski
87 industry and have a positive influence on the state's economy"; and

88 WHEREAS, the Wasatch Mountains Inter-Resort Transportation Study, completed by
89 Mountainland Association of Governments in 1990, found that connecting the Wasatch resorts
90 "hold[s] the promise of substantial public benefits in the form of reductions in automobile
91 traffic on congested canyon roadways, watershed and environmental pollution abatement,
92 increased slow-season occupancy of existing facilities, and the potential for future economic
93 expansion":

94 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
95 Governor concurring therein, support connecting the seven ski resorts in Summit County and
96 Salt Lake County with an inter-resort transportation system based on sound research and
97 balanced public input, and careful evaluation of its impact on transportation, the economy, job
98 creation, the environment, multiple uses, and visitor experience.

99 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and Governor encourage Summit
100 County, Salt Lake County, Salt Lake City, Park City, the town of Alta, and the United States
101 Forest Service to fairly consider the benefits of connecting the various resorts and
102 expeditiously approve a low-impact inter-resort transportation system based on appropriate
103 analysis and balanced public input.

104 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Summit
105 County Council, the Summit County Manager, the mayor of Park City, the Park City Council,
106 the Salt Lake County Council, the town of Alta, the Mayor of Salt Lake County, the Salt Lake
107 City Council, the Mayor of Salt Lake City, the Chief of the National Forest Service, the
108 Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest Supervisor, the Speaker of the United States House of
109 Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, and all members of the Utah
110 Congressional Delegation.