

1 **JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FALL PREVENTION**
2 **EFFORTS AND DESIGNATING FALL PREVENTION**
3 **AWARENESS DAY**

4 2018 GENERAL SESSION

5 STATE OF UTAH

6 **Chief Sponsor: Jani Iwamoto**

7 House Sponsor: Stewart E. Barlow

8
9 **LONG TITLE**

10 **General Description:**

11 This joint resolution recognizes the efforts of the fall-related injury prevention working
12 group, and recognizes September 22, 2018, as Fall Prevention Awareness Day.

13 **Highlighted Provisions:**

14 This resolution:

- 15 ▶ highlights the impact of fall-related injuries on Utah seniors;
- 16 ▶ recognizes the efforts of the fall-related injury prevention working group; and
- 17 ▶ recognizes September 22, 2018, as Fall Prevention Awareness Day.

18 **Special Clauses:**

19 None

20
21 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

22 WHEREAS, nearly one-third of Utah adults who are more than 65 years old fall each
23 year;

24 WHEREAS, the effects of a fall are particularly pronounced among older adults,
25 leading to hospitalizations, traumatic brain injury, and death;

26 WHEREAS, 40% of traumatic brain injuries in Utah seniors are the result of a fall;

27 WHEREAS, for each year from 2013 through 2015, Utah seniors experienced
28 fall-related injuries that led to an average of 10,840 calls to emergency medical services, 9,315
29 visits to emergency departments, 3,174 hospitalizations, and 172 deaths;

30 WHEREAS, more than \$105 million was spent on emergency department and hospital
31 care to treat fall-related injuries in 2013, including over \$1.5 million in costs to the state
32 Medicaid program;

33 WHEREAS, individuals 65 years of age or older are many times more likely to die
34 from injuries related to falls than injuries related to traffic accidents, firearms, or other causes
35 of unintentional injury;

36 WHEREAS, the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute at the University of Utah estimates
37 that by 2040, the population of Utahns who are 65 and older will more than double to 700,000
38 individuals, and the population of Utahns who are 85 and older will more than triple to 125,000
39 individuals;

40 WHEREAS, the people of the state of Utah are committed to caring for Utah's older
41 citizens, who are friends, neighbors, and family members;

42 WHEREAS, simple actions such as removing household hazards, performing regular
43 strength and balance exercises, consulting with a primary care provider about fall risk, having
44 regular vision checkups, and asking for assistance from family and friends can significantly
45 reduce the risk of falling;

46 WHEREAS, the Legislature of the state of Utah recognized the urgent need to reduce
47 fall-related injuries by passing Senate Joint Resolution 8 in the 2017 General Session;

48 WHEREAS, the National Council on Aging has designated the first day of fall of each
49 year as the national Fall Prevention Awareness Day;

50 WHEREAS, the fall-related injury prevention working group, an alliance of public
51 health and private partners, has met to develop strategies to address fall-related injuries, leading
52 to the creation of a new information campaign, which includes a fall prevention website and
53 brochure, aimed at increasing awareness of the prevalence of older adult falls and connecting
54 families to fall prevention resources; and

55 WHEREAS, the work of the fall-related injury prevention working group has also led
56 to improved coordination of care between Emergency Medical Services, health care providers,
57 health insurers, and public health agencies:

58 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah,
59 recognizes September 22, 2018, as Fall Prevention Awareness Day.

60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a reception will be held in the Capitol Board Room
61 on February 7, 2018, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. to share the work of the fall-related injury
62 prevention working group and to learn more about the importance of fall prevention.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature applauds the efforts of the
64 fall-related injury prevention working group, and urges the Department of Health and the
65 working group to continue to study strategies to reduce falls and fall-related injuries among
66 Utahns.

67 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Department
68 of Health, the Division of Aging and Adult Services within the Department of Human Services,
69 the Utah Commission on Aging, the Utah Academy of Family Physicians, the Utah Medical
70 Association, the Utah Nurses Association, the Utah Occupational Therapy Association, and the
71 Utah Pharmacy Association.