

**Senator Daniel Hemmert** proposes the following substitute bill:

**PROPOSAL TO AMEND UTAH CONSTITUTION --  
PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT FOR WILDFIRE  
PREVENTION**

2020 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Daniel Hemmert**

House Sponsor: Casey Snider

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This joint resolution of the Legislature proposes to amend the Utah Constitution to enact a provision relating to a property tax abatement for wildfire prevention efforts.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This resolution proposes to amend the Utah Constitution to:

- ▶ authorize the Legislature to provide a property tax abatement for a land owner who engages in efforts to prevent wildfire.

**Special Clauses:**

This resolution directs the lieutenant governor to submit this proposal to voters.

This resolution provides a contingent effective date of January 1, 2021 for this proposal.

**Utah Constitution Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**ARTICLE XIII, SECTION 3**

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*Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, two-thirds of all members elected to each of the two houses voting in favor thereof:*



26 Section 1. It is proposed to amend Utah Constitution, Article XIII, Section 3, to read:

27 **Article XIII, Section 3. [Property tax exemptions and abatements.]**

28 (1) The following are exempt from property tax:

29 (a) property owned by the State;

30 (b) property owned by a public library;

31 (c) property owned by a school district;

32 (d) property owned by a political subdivision of the State, other than a school district,  
33 and located within the political subdivision;

34 (e) property owned by a political subdivision of the State, other than a school district,  
35 and located outside the political subdivision unless the Legislature by statute authorizes the  
36 property tax on that property;

37 (f) property owned by a nonprofit entity used exclusively for religious, charitable, or  
38 educational purposes;

39 (g) places of burial not held or used for private or corporate benefit;

40 (h) farm equipment and farm machinery as defined by statute;

41 (i) water rights, reservoirs, pumping plants, ditches, canals, pipes, flumes, power  
42 plants, and transmission lines to the extent owned and used by an individual or corporation to  
43 irrigate land that is:

44 (i) within the State; and

45 (ii) owned by the individual or corporation, or by an individual member of the  
46 corporation; and

47 (j) (i) if owned by a nonprofit entity and used within the State to irrigate land, provide  
48 domestic water, as defined by statute, or provide water to a public water supplier:

49 (A) water rights; and

50 (B) reservoirs, pumping plants, ditches, canals, pipes, flumes, and, as defined by  
51 statute, other water infrastructure;

52 (ii) land occupied by a reservoir, ditch, canal, or pipe that is exempt under Subsection  
53 (1)(j)(i)(B) if the land is owned by the nonprofit entity that owns the reservoir, ditch, canal, or  
54 pipe; and

55 (iii) land immediately adjacent to a reservoir, ditch, canal, or pipe that is exempt under  
56 Subsection (1)(j)(i)(B) if the land is:

57 (A) owned by the nonprofit entity that owns the adjacent reservoir, ditch, canal, or  
58 pipe; and

59 (B) reasonably necessary for the maintenance or for otherwise supporting the operation  
60 of the reservoir, ditch, canal, or pipe.

61 (2) (a) The Legislature may by statute exempt the following from property tax:

62 (i) tangible personal property constituting inventory present in the State on January 1  
63 and held for sale in the ordinary course of business;

64 (ii) tangible personal property present in the State on January 1 and held for sale or  
65 processing and shipped to a final destination outside the State within 12 months;

66 (iii) subject to Subsection (2)(b), property to the extent used to generate and deliver  
67 electrical power for pumping water to irrigate lands in the State;

68 (iv) up to 45% of the fair market value of residential property, as defined by statute;

69 (v) household furnishings, furniture, and equipment used exclusively by the owner of  
70 that property in maintaining the owner's home; and

71 (vi) tangible personal property that, if subject to property tax, would generate an  
72 inconsequential amount of revenue.

73 (b) The exemption under Subsection (2)(a)(iii) shall accrue to the benefit of the users  
74 of pumped water as provided by statute.

75 (3) The following may be exempted from property tax as provided by statute:

76 (a) property owned by a disabled person who, during military training or a military  
77 conflict, was disabled in the line of duty in the military service of the United States or the State;

78 (b) property owned by the unmarried surviving spouse or the minor orphan of a person  
79 who:

80 (i) is described in Subsection (3)(a); or

81 (ii) during military training or a military conflict, was killed in action or died in the line  
82 of duty in the military service of the United States or the State; and

83 (c) real property owned by a person in the military or the person's spouse, or both, and  
84 used as the person's primary residence, if the person serves under an order to federal active duty  
85 out of state for at least 200 days in a continuous 365-day period.

86 (4) The Legislature may by statute provide for the remission or abatement of the taxes  
87 of the poor.

88           (5) The Legislature may by statute provide for the remission or abatement of property  
89 taxes of an owner of land who incurs expenses for measures to prevent wildfire on the owner's  
90 land.

91           Section 2. **Submittal to voters.**

92           The lieutenant governor is directed to submit this proposed amendment to the voters of  
93 the state at the next regular general election in the manner provided by law.

94           Section 3. **Contingent effective date.**

95           If the amendment proposed by this joint resolution is approved by a majority of those  
96 voting on it at the next regular general election, the amendment shall take effect on January 1,  
97 2021.