

Representative Andrew Stoddard proposes the following substitute bill:

1 **JOINT RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING DISCUSSION ON**
2 **THE EFFECTS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

3 2021 GENERAL SESSION
4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Andrew Stoddard**

6 Senate Sponsor: Todd D. Weiler

7 **LONG TITLE**

8 **General Description:**

9 This joint resolution encourages discussion about the effects and prevention of child
10 sexual abuse.

11 **Highlighted Provisions:**

12 This resolution:

- 13 ▶ acknowledges the widespread nature of child sexual abuse in Utah;
14 ▶ explains the impact of child sexual abuse on survivors and communities;
15 ▶ encourages discussion about the effects and prevalence of child sexual abuse; and
16 ▶ encourages discussion about ways in which the government, communities, and
17 citizens of Utah can prevent child sexual abuse and support those affected.

18 **Special Clauses:**

19 None

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

21 WHEREAS, in Utah, it is estimated that one in 10 children will be sexually abused
22 before they turn 18 years old;

23 WHEREAS, a report on rape in Utah published in 2007 by the Utah Commission on



26 Criminal and Juvenile Justice found that almost 80% of females who had been sexually
27 assaulted reported that their first sexual assault occurred before their 18th birthday;

28 WHEREAS, it is estimated that the ramifications of child sexual abuse cost the state of
29 Utah approximately \$1 billion annually;

30 WHEREAS, survivors of child sexual abuse are about four times more likely to develop
31 symptoms of drug abuse and experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder as adults;

32 WHEREAS, survivors of child sexual abuse are about three times more likely to
33 experience a major depressive episode as adults;

34 WHEREAS, survivors of child sexual abuse are at a higher risk of experiencing
35 behavioral health problems, including eating disorders, learning difficulties, fearfulness, social
36 withdrawal, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts;

37 WHEREAS, survivors of child sexual abuse are at a higher risk of experiencing poor
38 physical health outcomes across the lifespan, including asthma, cancer, obesity, and heart
39 disease;

40 WHEREAS, advocacy organizations such as Prevent Child Abuse Utah have indicated
41 that raising awareness of and preventing child sexual abuse is critical for promoting safe and
42 healthy children and families across Utah;

43 WHEREAS, experts have also urged that stopping child sexual abuse is each adult's
44 responsibility and requires the public to be properly educated on the true nature of abuse; and

45 WHEREAS, Utah statute requires an individual who has reason to believe a child has
46 been subjected to abuse or neglect, or observes a child being subjected to conditions or
47 circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, to report the alleged abuse or
48 neglect to the certain authorities:

49 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
50 encourages open and frank discussion about the effects and prevalence of child sexual abuse
51 and supports evidence-based solutions to prevent and reduce the harmful impacts of child
52 sexual abuse.

53 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ways in which the government, communities,
54 and citizens of Utah can prevent child sexual abuse and best support those affected should be
55 further discussed and addressed to ensure that children in Utah are healthy and safe, regardless
56 of race, ethnicity, religion, $\hat{H} \rightarrow \underline{\text{sex}}, \leftarrow \hat{H}$ gender identity, or socioeconomic status.