

**JOINT RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING SUPPORT FOR THE
HOUSES ACT**

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Ken Ivory

Senate Sponsor: Ronald M. Winterton

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This resolution proclaims the Legislature of the state of Utah supports the enactment of the HOUSES Act by the United States Congress.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ highlights the benefits to Utah's communities and families if, pursuant to the HOUSES Act, the state were able to acquire federally-controlled lands for the development of attainable housing; and
- ▶ urges the members of the United States Congress to enact the HOUSES Act so that Utah may solve the state's housing shortage and provide a much needed funding source for Utah's growing communities.

Special Clauses:

None

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

WHEREAS, nearly two-thirds of Utah's land is controlled by the federal government;
WHEREAS, in 1976, the United States Congress established the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program (PILT) to compensate states for the loss of tax and other revenues that states would generate if Congress had honored an obligation to transfer title of the public lands back



28 to the states;

29 WHEREAS, the state of Utah received as little as \$0.38 per acre in PILT funds in fiscal
30 year 2022, far below the amount those lands would return through value-based taxation if those
31 lands and their facilities were subject to county taxation;

32 WHEREAS, as a result of having such a minimal amount of lands subject to taxation or
33 other revenues because of federal retention of these lands, Utah's counties are dependent upon
34 the promise of PILT for as much as 40% of the county's total budget to fund education, police,
35 fire, sanitation, social services, and other essential public services;

36 WHEREAS, as a result of the federal government's unilateral policy change in 1976 to
37 permanently retain nearly two-thirds of Utah's lands under federal control, some counties in
38 Utah have as little as 5% in taxable lands to fund essential public services;

39 WHEREAS, because the state of Utah cannot develop nor tax federally-controlled
40 public lands, Utah's local governments are unable to secure a sufficient and consistent source of
41 funding to provide essential public services and address critical issues, including funding
42 education and fostering an environment for affordable housing;

43 WHEREAS, due to skyrocketing inflation and an increase in demand, housing is
44 becoming unattainably expensive for Utah's residents;

45 WHEREAS, in a 2022 study, the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute at the University of
46 Utah found that 76% of Utah's households could not afford a median-priced home in the state;

47 WHEREAS, with Utah rated as the fastest-growing state in the nation over the past ten
48 years, Utah's housing crisis will only worsen unless more attainable housing is made available
49 to Utah's families;

50 WHEREAS, United States Senator Mike Lee from Utah introduced to Congress the
51 Helping Open Underutilized Space to Ensure Shelter Act of 2023 (HOUSES Act);

52 WHEREAS, the HOUSES Act will allow Utah to acquire parcels of
53 federally-controlled land to use for the development of attainable housing;

54 WHEREAS, with greater access to tax revenues, the HOUSES Act will provide Utah's
55 communities with a stable source of funding for vital essential services; and

56 WHEREAS, with the development of more housing that is affordable and accessible,
57 the HOUSES Act will help alleviate the severe housing shortage impacting Utah's families:

58 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah

59 supports the efforts of United States Senator Mike Lee and looks forward to working with the
60 members of the Utah congressional delegation on the specific parameters of the HOUSES Act.

61 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature recognizes the tremendous benefits
62 that the HOUSES Act would provide to Utah's communities and families.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to the President of
64 the United States of America, the Vice President of the United States of America, the Speaker
65 of the United States House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the United States
66 Senate, and the members of the Utah congressional delegation.