

Feb. 2022

# UTAH LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Weekly Newsletter of RRJ Consulting  
*Utah's Leading Lobbying Firm*



## WEEK 5 OF THE 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Week five has come to an end and we are looking forward to the long weekend. With only two weeks left of the session, the pace has really picked up. Lawmakers are spending more time on the floor, sometimes into the evening. We're tracking several issues closely and will continue working hard to represent our clients.

## A SHIFT IN THE COVID-19 RESPONSE

Governor Cox held a COVID briefing this week to announce the transition of beginning to treat COVID-19 as a seasonal respiratory virus. With the declining case counts and hospitalizations, mass testing sites and vaccination sites will begin closing and responsibility for management will shift from the Department of Health to the healthcare system.

## REVENUE ESTIMATES

This week, the Governor's Office, Utah Senate and House of Representatives released revenue numbers for state fiscal year (FY) 2022-23. Utah's strong economy is leading the nation. Some highlights include:

General Fund revenue projections:

- \$128 million newly available one-time revenue in FY 2022.
- \$123 million newly available ongoing revenue in FY 2023.

Education Fund revenue projections:

- \$304 million newly available one-time revenue in FY 2022.
- \$261 million newly available ongoing revenue in FY 2023.

It's significant to note that of the newly projected available ongoing revenues, about 70% are in the Education Fund, and 30% are in the General Fund.

## BUDGET FLEXIBILITY

Because statewide needs are outpacing sales tax revenue, lawmakers are looking at ways to increase flexibility in the state budget. Currently, income tax revenue may only be used for a few purposes including public education, higher education, and programs for children and individuals with disabilities. Everything else is funded through the general fund. As shown in revenue estimates, most of the available revenue is in the education fund, which could limit funding things like transportation, healthcare programs, and affordable housing.

## WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

On Monday, we not only celebrated Valentines Day, but also recognized Utah's role in women's right to vote. On February 14, 1870, Seraph Young made history as the first woman to cast a vote.



## GREAT SALT LAKE FLYOVER

This session there has been significant discussion on how to preserve and conserve Utah's water resources. This week, legislators got a birds eye view of the shrinking Great Salt Lake from Blackhawk helicopters. While there is much work to be done, we celebrate all that has been done this session to address this problem.

## UTAH HIGHWAY PATROL

The Senate and House of Representatives thanked Utah Highway Patrol officers this week for their work to keep us safe. Utah Highway Patrol oversees the Capitol and works tirelessly to protect all who come to the see the People's House.

## GAIL HALVORSEN

This week, Gail Halvorsen, famously known as the Candy Bomber, passed away. He leaves behind a legacy of kindness and selflessness.

## PRESIDENT'S DAY

Happy President's Day! We're grateful to have a long weekend and wish you a safe and restful holiday.



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### *Looking Ahead*

**NEXT WEEK** – LAWMAKERS WILL FOCUS ON BALANCING THE BUDGET AND DEBATING FISCAL NOTE BILLS

**MARCH 4** – FINAL DAY OF THE 2022 GENERAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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