

May 2023

UTAH LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Monthly Newsletter of RRJ Consulting
Utah's Leading Lobbying Firm



MAY INTERIM

Lawmakers met for the first interim of 2023 to discuss key issues facing the state and begin exploring areas of opportunity. Many committees approved study items and opened bill files to begin exploring various topics.

As part of the Business and Labor interim committee meeting, one of RRJ's clients, The Utah Bankers Association, testified and explained the recent banking crisis and the importance of FDIC insured accounts.

Highlights can be found at le.utah.gov. The Legislature will meet again from June 12-14.

GREAT SALT LAKE COMMISSIONER

Governor Cox, with the input of President Adams and Speaker Wilson, appointed Brian Steed to fill the new role of Great Salt Lake Commissioner. Brian will oversee state efforts related to the lake. He is a great pick and will use his expertise and experience to streamline and help better manage the Great Salt Lake.

#1 OVERALL BEST STATE

Last month, U.S. News and World Report released their 2023 Best States rankings. The Beehive State took home the first place trophy as the "Best Overall State." Our top-notch recreation, booming economy, opportunity for growth and prosperity, fiscal stability, and thriving education system have created a state that is the envy of the nation. We love Utah and are proud to call it home!

DELTA EXPANDS SLC PRESENCE

Delta has expanded its presence in Salt Lake City with the opening of five additional gates and increasing frequency to popular cities including Austin, Charlotte, Nashville, Philadelphia, and more! This summer, Delta will operate upwards of 230 flights daily from Salt Lake to nearly 90 locations across the world.

You can find us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram! @rrj_consulting

A CLOSER LOOK

A SPECIAL SESSION

While the Legislature is constitutionally required to meet for a 45-day session beginning the third Tuesday in January, issues often arise that warrant immediate attention, and cannot wait until the next general session. As such, the Governor may call the Legislature into a special session, or the Legislature may call themselves into special session with a two-thirds vote.

The Legislature convened for the 1st special session of the 65th legislature on May 17, 2023 to discuss timely issues impacting the state.

FLOODING

On April 18, 2023, Governor Cox declared a state of emergency due to flooding. This executive order allows the state to utilize additional resources to help with flood mitigation, prevention, and clean up. The Legislature must extend states of emergency if longer than 30 days. The emergency declaration will now expire in mid-August with monthly reports from the Governor to the Legislature.



The Utah House of Representatives meets for a special session on May 17, 2023



The Utah State Senate meets for a special session and to approve Gov. Cox's appointments

FUNDING REALLOCATIONS

During each legislative session, the Legislature crafts and passes a budget to meet the needs of the state. However, sometimes issues arise that require a shifting of funds and revenue during the year. Due to the overwhelming snow fall this winter, UDOT exhausted their snowplow removal funds. The Legislature backfilled these budgets and provided additional funds to assist with floods, mudslides, and other emergency issues.

TECHNICAL CHANGES

H.B. 225 *Firearm Possession Amendments*, passed during the 2023 session, had unintended consequences that the Legislature addressed.

Additionally, lawmakers made a slight change to retirement benefits of firefighters, which was an oversight from a 2018 bill. Highlights from the special session can be viewed at le.utah.gov.