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# UTAH LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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



## CHANGES IN THE UTAH LEGISLATURE LANDSCAPE

A few significant changes are in store for the Utah Legislature. Let's begin with the registration of House Speaker Brad Wilson. Wilson has served in the Utah House since 2010 and has presided as Speaker for the last five. He has set his registration date on November 15th and is likely to run for the open US Senate seat that Mitt Romney has announced he will not seek again in 2024. Speaker Wilson has been a steady, calm leader in his time at the helm and has led Utah through some challenging and propitious times.

When asked, Governor Cox said this of Wilson: "He's the type of person that would make an incredible senator. I believe he's one of the best Speakers of the House that we've ever had in this state, and it's been an honor to work with him."

Wilson's resignation will leave the Utah House to hold a speaker election on or before November 15th. We are told it will have a ripple effect down the leadership hallway so that we may have a whole new team before the end of the year.

The Senate also has a significant opening in their Republican caucus. After 11 years of legislative service, Sen. Jake Anderegg is resigning from the Utah Senate to focus on his career and family. An election will take place in early October to fill his position.

We will certainly miss both these statesmen and wish them all the best.

## SEPTEMBER INTERIM

Lawmakers stepped off of Capitol Hill to hold September interim meetings this month and headed to Utah Tech in Southern Utah. The interim day was flanked by the Utah Legislatures "Long Term Planning Conference" which was held a day later. A full interim report can be viewed [here](#).

# — A CLOSER LOOK —

## GOVERNOR COX MONTHLY NEWS CONFERENCE

Last week, Governor Cox joined members of the media to address questions most concerning to Utahns. He addressed rising housing costs, the “decline of democracy,” and civil discourse, Sen. Mitt Romney’s decision not to run for reelection. He expressed his support for FrontRunner expansion in southern Utah County and what he plans on doing if the federal government shuts down national parks.

Cox told a group of reporters on Thursday his “top concern” right now is rising housing costs for Utahns. He stated Utah is currently eighth in the nation for the highest median home sales cost. The governor pointed to actions taken by the state and Legislature to help fight housing costs, such as the first-time homebuyer downpayment program that passed the legislature this year. He said state officials plan to observe action already implemented to see what is working and what is not and that they’ll **“be doing more over the course of the next year.”**

During the press conference, Cox said he believes the nation is in a “declining democracy,” noting increased threats to elected officials and Americans’ exhaustion with politics.

**“If we don’t wake up as a society, we don’t stop playing with fire, stop the hatred that we’re exhibiting towards our fellow Americans who have some disagreements; we can end up in a very dark place.”**

Recently, the governor started an initiative called “Disagree Better” as part of his position as chair of the National Governors Association, which aims to reduce polarization and foster productive discourse.

**“I believe that political polarization is the main driver ... in failed and declining democracies and a republic like ours.”**

Finally, he and state legislators are working on a plan to keep the state’s national parks open even through a possible federal government shutdown at the end of the month. That includes Zion and Bryce Canyon national parks in Southern Utah.

