UTAH LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEES CONCLUDE

Last week, appropriations subcommittees concluded their work and will now present their recommendations to the Executive Appropriations Committee, which will meet early this week. Once the Executive Appropriations Committee hears and consider the recommendations, they will work to craft the final state budget.

Requests for new funding come from several different sources – state agencies, legislators, and from legislative staff recommendations. A single funding request is usually vetted through several channels and the EAC stands as a final filter. While we still await final revenue estimates, we expect this to be a tighter budget year.

The final budget will be passed before the session concludes on March 1.

WATER UPDATE

Due to winter storms, Utah's statewide reservoir capacity is at 82%. Every major watershed throughout the state received above average precipitation in January. Next week, we anticipate Legislature will consider and debate several pieces of water-related legislation as part of their "Water Week."

Did you know that 95% of Utah's water comes from snowpack? Here's to hoping for a few more big winter storms this season!

TOURISM DAY

Tourism Day on the Hill was this week. It's no surprise that tourism plays a huge role in Utah's economy. In 2022, the tourism industry brought in nearly $12 billion in direct visitor spending, $2.1 billion in tax revenue, and over 150,000 travel and tourism jobs.

A CLOSER LOOK

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

In an era dominated by technological advancements, the role of artificial intelligence (AI) has become increasingly significant across various sectors. As we navigate this rapidly evolving landscape, the need for comprehensive state legislation on artificial intelligence has never been more critical. That's why we've been following a few pieces of legislation very closely.

S.B. 149

Sen. Kirk Cullimore has introduce S.B. 149 *Artificial Intelligence Amendments*, which does a few things including:

- Establishing liability for artificial intelligence use that violates consumer protection laws.
- Creates the Office of Artificial Intelligence policy and a regulatory AI analysis program.
- Enables temporary mitigation of regulatory impacts during AI pilot testing.
- Establishes the Artificial Learning Laboratory Program to assess technologies, risks, and develop policy.
- Requires disclosure when an individual interacts with AI in a regulated occupation.
- Grants the office rule-making authority over AI programs.

This bill would essentially establish a few guidelines, but also set up a framework to help the state better understand AI and how to navigate the changing landscape and develop policies and regulations.

The Legislature is committed to striking a healthy balance between protecting personal information and harnessing the benefits of AI technology. We will continue following along closely as S.B. 149, and other pieces of legislation related to AI, make their way through the process.

> "Our innovative workforce and thriving tech sector greatly contribute to our economy and industrious spirit. As we take steps to strengthen our business-friendly environment, we must simultaneously take steps to protect against potential threats."

– Rep. Jefferson Moss
House Majority Leader