

# UTAH LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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



## THE TIME CHANGE DEBATE

The time change debate is difficult to resolve due to legal restrictions, divided public opinion, and conflicting economic interests. While states can opt out of daylight saving time (DST) and stay on standard time, they cannot adopt permanent DST without congressional approval.

Many states, including Utah, have passed legislation to make DST permanent, but they remain stuck waiting for federal action. Public opinion is also split—some favor permanent standard time for health benefits and natural sleep alignment, while others prefer permanent DST for more evening sunlight.

Meanwhile, industries like retail and tourism support extended daylight hours, while agriculture and early-morning businesses benefit from standard time. Watch HB120 -Time Change Amendments as it works its way through the legislature.

## SCHOOL FEES

House Bill 344, titled "School Fees Amendments," proposes several changes to the management of school fees within Utah's public education system. The key provisions of the bill include:

- **Fee-Free Course Options:** Starting in the 2026-2027 school year, each Local Education Agency (LEA) must ensure that students have at least one option to complete all required courses and credits without incurring any fees or needing a waiver.
- **Transparent Fee Disclosure:** LEAs are required to clearly disclose any fees associated with courses or activities in their registration materials, providing transparency for students and parents.
- **Prohibition of Certain Fees:** The bill prohibits LEAs from charging students fees for specific non-fee courses and from imposing general fees or increasing existing fees to compensate for fees that are no longer permitted.

# — A CLOSER LOOK —

## TRANSIENT ROOM TAX

The Transient Room Tax (TRT) is crucial for tourism in Utah because it helps fund essential infrastructure and services that directly benefit tourists. Here's why it's important:

- **Funding Tourism Promotion:** TRT revenues are often used to promote Utah as a tourism destination. This includes marketing campaigns, visitor information centers, and other promotional efforts that attract tourists to the state.
- **Supporting Local Amenities:** The tax helps maintain and improve local amenities that enhance the tourist experience, such as parks, cultural attractions, and recreational facilities. These amenities make Utah more appealing to visitors and encourage longer stays.
- **Investing in Infrastructure:** TRT funds are often directed towards infrastructure projects that support tourism, such as transportation improvements, convention centers, and event venues. These investments can increase accessibility and convenience for tourists.
- **Boosting Local Economy:** Tourism generates significant economic activity in Utah, supporting jobs in hospitality, retail, and other related sectors. The TRT contributes to the overall economic health of communities by funding initiatives that support tourism-related businesses.
- **Balancing Budgets:** For local governments, TRT revenues can help offset the costs associated with hosting tourists, such as increased demand on public services and facilities. This allows communities to maintain a high standard of living for residents while accommodating visitors.

Overall, the Transient Room Tax plays a pivotal role in sustaining and growing Utah's tourism industry by funding initiatives that enhance visitor experiences, support local economies, and promote the state as a desirable destination.

