

UTAH LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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



BUDGET UPDATE

The Executive Appropriations Committee (EAC) released its budget recommendations. Some highlights include:

- \$20 million – First-time homebuyer program
- \$65 million – CTE Catalyst grant program
- \$2.5 million – School lunch for low-income students
- \$40 million – Utah Fits All scholarship program
- Plus, millions more in infrastructure, energy, public safety, and transportation.

Lawmakers must balance the budget each year. The full Legislature will vote on the full budget before the session adjourns sine die on Friday.

Additionally, we expect another tax cut to be announced this week. H.B. 106, which lowers the income tax rate to 4.5%, passed the House this week and will now be heard by the Senate.

CANCER SCREENING FOR FIREFIGHTERS

H.B. 65, sponsored by Rep. Casey Snider, would create the most robust firefighter cancer screening program in the nation and improve the health and wellbeing of firefighters across the state. The bill expands the list of presumptive cancers from 4 to 15 and directs the Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health to conduct regular cancer screenings. Read more about the proposal [here](#).

VOTE BY MAIL IS HERE TO STAY

Lawmakers released an updated H.B. 300, the election overhaul bill. In the substitute version, vote by mail remains, but voters will need to include the last 4 digits of their ID on their ballot or show a photo ID when voting in person. Voters will also need to “opt-in” to receive a ballot. More information to come, but first, the bill must pass the Senate.

— A CLOSER LOOK —

RAISES FOR EDUCATORS

This week, state leaders announced a \$1,446 salary increase for teachers and a \$1,000 bonus for education support professionals. Additionally, school districts will receive a 4% funding boost to support salary increases and expand resources for all school district employees.

Additionally, the Executive Appropriations Committee recommended the following items to be funded in the budget, which have a direct benefit for teachers all across the state:

- \$77.7 million for educator professional development time.
- \$65 million for the Career and Technical Education Catalyst grant program.
- \$14.3 million for classroom supplies and materials.
- \$12.4 million in stipends for Future Educators grants for student teachers.
- \$7.3 million for the Grow Your Own Educator Pipeline Grant Program.
- \$795,700 for professional liability insurance support for Utah educators.

Teacher compensation in Utah has recently increased significantly. In FY 2020, the starting salary for a Utah teacher was approximately \$44,000. By FY 2024, that figure had grown to nearly \$60,000. Utah has also seen broader investments in education over the past decade, including additional preparation days for teachers, expanded paid maternity leave, stipends for student teachers, and an increase in overall funding.

“Teachers change lives, and they deserve to be valued, supported, and paid fairly for their incredible work. This investment is another step in our commitment to ensuring Utah remains among the best places in the nation to teach and learn. This is not just about funding education; it’s about the future of our students, families and communities – built here.” – Gov. Spencer Cox

