



## 2024 AUGUST INTERIM

Aug. 20-21, 2024

**UAC is the advocate for all 29 Utah counties.** If you have questions about legislative action, please reach out to the legislative team or visit [uacnet.org](http://uacnet.org). November is the last interim meeting of the year.

<p><b><u>2024 4th Special Session</u></b></p>	<p>Legislators called themselves into an emergency special session on Aug. 21 to address the recent <a href="#">supreme court opinion</a> in the case of LWVU v. Utah State Legislature. The Utah Association of Counties submitted an amicus brief to the court, which is mentioned on page 26 of the opinion.</p> <p><a href="#">SB4002</a>, <i>Ballot Proposition Amendments</i> (E. Vickers), and <a href="#">SB4003</a>, <i>Statewide Referendum Requirements</i> (K. Cullimore) upon signature of the governor, will amend ballot proposition and statewide referendum processes. <a href="#">SJR401</a> <i>Proposal to Amend the Utah Constitution - Voter Legislative Power</i> (K. Cullimore), will place a proposed amendment to the Utah Constitution on general election ballots in November for consideration of voters. <a href="#">SB4001</a>, <i>Justice Court Jurisdiction</i> (J. Plumb) amends the jurisdiction of justice courts to include infractions of the Motor Vehicle Act.</p>
<p><b><u>Business and Labor</u></b></p>	<p>The Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel (OLRGC) presented an <a href="#">analysis of insurance coverage for ambulance supplies</a>, including a description of how emergency services are billed. Fire chiefs from Lehi and Draper Cities, Andy Smith, Executive Director, Grand County EMS, and Mike Sonntagg, Executive Director, Utah Health Insurance Association described their desire for insurance providers to be required to reimburse for supplies. Insurance providers would like an audit currently in progress to be completed before action is taken. No action was taken by the committee.</p>



<p><b><u>Federalism Commission</u></b></p>	<p>Redge Johnson and Kathy Davis, PLPCO, updated the Commission on recent RS 2477 litigation. OLRGC provided an <a href="#">overview of the recent US Supreme Court decisions</a> on the administrative state and a federal rule that requires states to significantly reduce emissions that significantly contribute to air quality problems in other states.</p> <p>Sheriff Chad Jensen briefed the commission on the <a href="#">impact of illegal immigration</a> on Utah.</p> <p>The commission also discuss a proposed bill for the 2025 General Session titled <a href="#">Presumption of State Jurisdiction Amendments</a>.</p>
<p><b><u>Government Operations</u></b></p>	<p>Ricky Hatch discussed a need for clarification of naming conventions (professional designations, nicknames, etc) on ballots. As state statute is largely silent, county clerks often make determinations on what is appropriate. Sen. Thatcher suggested that the language “commonly known by,” which was added in recent years, fixed the problem. Committee members suggested that at minimum, professional designations should be left off the ballot. Committee chairs committed to consider opening a bill.</p>
<p><b><u>Health and Human Services</u></b></p>	<p>Jennifer Strohecker, State Medicaid Director, discussed <a href="#">initiatives for justice-involved Utah Medicaid recipients</a>. OLRGC presented <a href="#">information on healthcare for incarcerated individuals</a>, including recent legislation from the 2024 session which led to the Utah Re-entry/Justice Involved waiver receiving approval, allowing incarcerated individuals with medicaid coverage for up to 90 days prior to their release date. Ten other states have similar programs, and 13 have proposals pending.</p>
<p><b><u>Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice</u></b></p>	<p>The Department of Public Safety provided a report on <a href="#">first responders mental health services</a>. OLRGC provided an update on the <a href="#">School Security Task Force</a>.</p>
<p><b><u>Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment</u></b></p>	<p>Dick Garlish, President, Rocky Mountain Power, was asked by Sen. Sandall to return to the committee with proposal to create a new structure for assessing rate increases, one that doesn't make Utahns pay for the company's expenses in states with different energy policies. We should see something substantive in November interim.</p> <p>OLRGC provided an <a href="#">overview of the recent US Supreme Court decisions</a> regarding homelessness and the administrative state.</p>



<p><a href="#"><u>Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee</u></a></p>	<p>The Division of Water Rights and the Division of Water Resources (DWRe) updated Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality on <a href="#"><u>dam safety and emergency dam operations</u></a>. 227 dams in the state are “High Hazard” and 107 have some rehabilitation need.</p> <p>The estimated total cost to upgrade dams (without current contracts) is at least \$444.4 million. The DWRe board evaluates and ranks recommendations for funding, which comes from the State Minimum Standards Rehabilitation Grant, FEMA High Hazard Potential Dam Grant, and a NRCS Collaboration through PL-56. Ongoing dam safety funds have been \$3.8 million since 2007, with periodic one-time funding in recent years.</p> <p>This year, Panguitch Dam and Kolob Creek experienced incidents. Panguitch Dam was regulated by relieving ice pressure, stabilizing the wall, and decreasing the water level in the reservoir. The dam currently has a storage restriction to keep the water below the crack, but is still in need of repair. Though the exact cause is unknown, some combination of wind events and ice seems to be the likely cause.</p> <p>Water under the spillway damaged the concrete at Kolob Creek dam. Temporary repairs were made, and the reservoir was lowered. The owner would like to replace the spillway and enlarge the reservoir.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Political Subdivisions</u></a></p>	<p>Brian McKenzie and Lannie Chapman assisted Rep. Dunnigan in presenting proposed changes to voting precincts, such as increasing the maximum precinct size, and allowing county clerks to make minor adjustments in between normal boundary setting processes. The committee expressed concern that the experience of voters across the state may become increasingly varied with the larger size, and encouraged Rep. Dunnigan to explore that possibility.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology</u></a></p>	<p>TransCanyon presented on the <a href="#"><u>Cross-Tie Transmission Line, a proposed 500-kilovolt (kV)</u></a> line connecting Utah and Nevada. The presentation covered details of the project, including: objectives, technical specifications, local impact, and timeline.</p> <p>Endbridge Gas recently purchased Dominion Energy. Endbridge gave an <a href="#"><u>overview of their company</u></a> and why they are excited to be doing business in Utah.</p>



<p><b><u>Revenue and Taxation</u></b></p>	<p>Revenue and Taxation heard a <a href="#">report from LFA</a> regarding TRT reporting by counties, emphasizing that reporting improved after follow-up this summer.</p> <p>The Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute (GPI) presented an <a href="#">initial review of the tourism taxes report</a> they will release this fall. GPI will share this presentation with USACCC, auditors, and tourism directors at the UAC annual conference in September. Key findings include revenue generated by residents v. non-residents for restaurant and lodging taxes, how the economy influences revenue generation, regional differences in elasticity and price points, and revenue generated by travelers outside of tourism taxes.</p> <p>Challenges outlined by the report include regional variances in revenue collections, disparate impacts or needs due to different types of tourists, and prescriptive allowable uses of funds.</p> <p>The state auditor presented an audit of Grand County TRT expenditures that did not fit allowable uses under the code. Committee members highlighted that while some interpretations may have differed, if counties cannot spend the TRT they have within the bounds set by the legislature, it is unlikely that more flexibility or dollars will be allowed.</p> <p>The Tax Commission suggested a variety of tax technical changes, including harmonization of mineral production withholding taxes with other processes. They also highlighted challenges with property tax exemptions for primary residences and religious properties and suggested a consistent deadline for all exemptions. The committee asked the Tax Commission to work with the assessors to determine the best date option. <a href="#">Burt Harvey presented a summary of proposed changes to property tax relief.</a></p>
<p><b><u>School Security Task Force</u></b></p>	<p>OLRGC provided an update on the <a href="#">School Security Task Force</a>.</p>

