

Legislative Accomplishments of the 2024 General Session



Unified Economic Opportunity Commission

The Unified Economic Opportunity Commission (UEOC) started in 2021 to coordinate economic development efforts in Utah. It brings together stakeholders in the executive and legislative branches, private sector, and local government to develop, coordinate, and lead comprehensive statewide economic development strategies.

Going into the 2024 general legislative session, the UEOC worked with more than 170 stakeholders and spent more than 100 hours with legislators to receive input.

Below is a list of legislative and funding accomplishments stemming from UEOC recommendations:

Subcommittee on Talent, Education, & Industry Alignment

Talent Ready Connections, Sen. McKell

\$1 Million One-time

Apprenticeships offer abundant opportunities for students and employers. They empower students to receive paid, hands-on training and help employers create a pipeline of talent that meets their specific workforce demands. This funding expands innovative apprenticeships and other work-based learning in secondary and post-secondary schools.

K-12 Computer Science Initiative, Rep. J. Moss

\$1 Million Ongoing, \$6 Million One-time

Computer science occupations in Utah are projected to grow 42% in the next decade. However, more than 20,000 junior high and high school students in the state cannot access computer science courses. This funding item will increase access to computer science, bolster existing offerings, and increase teachers' access to computer science resources.

Life Sciences Workforce Initiative, Sen. Millner

\$2 Million Ongoing, \$2 Million One-time

From 2001 to 2021, life sciences jobs in Utah increased by 79%. Utah's education systems must ramp up relevant programs to keep up with this rapid growth. This funding supports the universities and colleges as they expand their high-demand life science programs.

SB 122: Youth Apprenticeship Governance Structure Amendments, Sen. Millner

\$33,000 — Paid with a federal grant

At times, what students learn in school does not match the skills the industry needs in the workforce. Apprenticeships are essential for bridging the gap and preparing students for careers. This legislation brings together partners to study and design an apprenticeship framework.

Commission on Housing Affordability

HB 465: Housing Affordability Revisions, Rep. Whyte

The increased demand for housing is outpacing the production of new housing. This consensus bill aims to increase the supply of affordable housing throughout Utah. Specifically, it empowers redevelopment and community reinvestment agencies to develop and rehabilitate more affordable housing.

HB 476: Municipal Land Use Regulation Modifications, Rep. Whyte

When land use decisions stall, new housing development projects also slow. This legislation recognizes the local government's role in making land use decisions for its community while providing greater certainty in the planning and entitlement processes. The bill works towards additional housing supply.

SB 168: Affordable Building Amendments, Sen. Fillmore

\$19,800 Ongoing

This legislation promotes affordable housing construction in two ways. First, it adopts a statewide building code for modular housing. This provides clarity on regulations, streamlines inspections, and accelerates the production time of modular housing. Second, it creates Home Ownership Promotion Zones. This new tool promotes affordable housing and home ownership by using tax increments.

Housing Community Development (HCD) Support Staff, Rep. Whyte

\$238,000 Ongoing

Between the Moderate Income Housing Plan changes and new or expanded grants, the HCD workload has increased significantly; however, they do not have the funding to hire new personnel. This funding allows HCD to better support policy changes by hiring additional staff.

Women in the Economy Subcommittee

HB 153: Child Tax Credit Modifications, Rep. Pulsipher

\$2,300,000 Ongoing

Utah established its Child Tax Credit in 2023 to support families during a child's formative years. This bill bolsters the Child Tax Credit to include families with 4-year-old children. Parents can use the tax credit to offset the costs of any type of childcare, including full-time daycare, part-time preschool, childcare from a friend or family member, caring for a child at home, or providing any other needs.

Homeless Shelter Cities Mitigation, Rep. Whyte

\$5 Million Ongoing

Cities and towns hosting homeless shelters face increased costs related to law enforcement needs and services. In 2018, Utah established the Homeless Mitigation Fund to help offset some of these costs. This additional funding addresses current funding gaps and supports cities in creating additional shelters.

Working Group on Government Efficiency

HB 72, HB 532, & HB 534: Boards and Commissions Bills, Rep Musselman

\$191,100 Ongoing

Staffing boards and commissions take time and money, and Utah has more than 400 to support. These three coordinated pieces of legislation consider each of Utah's Boards and commissions, eliminating those no longer needed, combining duplicative ones, and putting sunset dates on others.

SB 254: Boards and Commissions Amendments, Sen. McCay

\$60,000 Ongoing

As the state consolidates and eliminates boards, it must provide criteria for creating new boards and commissions. This bill requires interim committees to approve new boards unanimously. It also increases the reporting frequency and allows bills to be deactivated and reactivated as needed.

Customer Experience, Department of Government Operations

\$700,000 Ongoing, \$2.5 Million One-time

The Customer Experience Initiative, launched in 2018, transforms how Utah government gathers and implements constituents' feedback. Since its inception, government performance measures — including government effort, customer satisfaction, government empathy, and government reliability — have all improved. This funding item keeps the state focused on its mission to provide a first-in-class customer experience.

Working Group on Growth and Transportation

HB 13: Infrastructure Financing Districts Rep. Dunnigan

\$16,000 Ongoing, \$8,700 One-time

In Utah, most of the approximately 190,000 entitled home lots do not have the needed infrastructure — such as water, sewer, electricity, and roads — to start building. To make lots more buildable and speed up construction time, this bill provides developers access to the public bond markets to pay for public infrastructure. This financing tool encourages the private sector to develop buildable housing lots, lowers the cost of borrowing money for public infrastructure, and keeps risk in the private sector.

HCR 11: Cross-Issue Growth Impacts, Rep. Bolinder

This concurrent resolution encourages state and local governments to look holistically at how their programs, policies, and actions impact growth-related issues in the state. When decision-makers proactively consider cross-issue solutions, Utah can grow in a way that maintains or even enhances its quality of life.

Comprehensive Housing Capacity, Infrastructure, and Market Analysis, Rep. Bolinder

\$250,000 One-time

While there's little question about whether Utah will grow, how Utah grows is still being discussed. This funding item will conduct a comprehensive market analysis on likely and desired growth, capacity, and market infrastructure investment. With the best information available, Utah communities and leaders can make the best possible decisions about how and where growth happens.

Working Group on Water, Energy, & Natural Resources

HB 48: Utah Energy Act Amendments, Rep. Jack

\$665,000 Ongoing

Federal rules, regulations, and designations often prevent Utah from using its resources. Recent years have shown that these federal actions can even work against the goal of clean energy, preventing the mining and processing of critical minerals. This bill supports the state's efforts to address federal rules and regulations that would negatively impact Utah's energy resources.

HB 61: Water Measuring and Accounting Amendments, Rep. Albrecht

When it comes to water resources, we cannot manage what we cannot measure. This bill adds telemetry to the state water policy as an added standard for water measuring. Utah's experts can locate leaks early by measuring water flow through a system and ensuring water reaches its users.

HB 62: Utah Water Ways Amendments, Rep. Owens

\$213,000 One-time

Utah once had a robust water education program for fourth graders. In 2020, that program was suspended due to COVID-19, and the curriculum has since shifted so that relevant water concepts are taught in multiple grades. To continue educating Utah's youth about water, this legislation creates new resources and professional development opportunities focused on water education.

HB 124: High-Cost Infrastructure Development Tax Credit Amendments, Rep. Albrecht

Critical minerals, such as lithium, uranium, and aluminum, are vital energy infrastructure components. This bill expands the High-Cost Infrastructure Tax Credit to incentivize mineral exploration, extraction, and processing.

HB 241: Clean Energy Amendments, Rep. Albrecht

As new federal regulations require states to move away from traditional power sources, Utah must continue to power our economy with reliable, affordable, and dispatchable energy. This legislation recognizes nuclear energy and pumped storage as clean energy throughout the code and in relevant tax credit programs.

HB 280: Water-Related Changes, Rep Snider

\$2.5 Million One-time

As Utah rapidly grows, water will undoubtedly be a major limiting factor. In the past, the various water systems' plans have been siloed district by district. This bill creates a system for integrated water planning coalesced around common goals. Additionally, it begins contemplating how the state can best prioritize and fund its most pressing water needs.

Working Group on Water, Energy, & Natural Resources continued

HB 410: San Rafael State Energy Lab, Rep. Watkins

\$245,000 Ongoing, \$2 Million One-time

The San Rafael Energy Resource Center provides resources needed to develop energy solutions. HB 410 moves the facility's operation under the Office of Energy Development, enhancing the center's statewide focus. With its skilled staff, advanced equipment, and ample research space, the center will continue to advance energy research.

SB 18: Water Modifications, Sen. Sandall

In 2023, legislators fundamentally changed water laws to encourage conservation, allowing water users to count saved water as a beneficial use and monetize saved water. Last year's legislation is already shifting the incentive from "use it or lose it" to "conserve it and benefit." SB 18 supports prior years' efforts by clarifying definitions, granting rulemaking authority related to saved water, and placing parameters around the saved water statute.

Critical Minerals Advanced Mapping & Quantification, Rep. Albrecht

\$400,000 One-time

The Utah Geological Survey (UGS) compiles numerous data types, including mining locations, mineral occurrences, aerial imagery, historic landslide and fault information, and more. This funding increases UGS's ability to map out mineral assets, particularly emphasizing an economic evaluation of Utah's mineral assets. With this small investment, Utah can provide the industry with better information on its assets, supporting new mineral exploration.



Working Group on Technology, Innovation, & Investment

HB 58: Licensing Amendments, Rep. Maloy

\$80,000 Ongoing

This bill continues the years-long effort to streamline the credentialing process for applicants licensed in other jurisdictions to obtain licensure in Utah. Specifically, this bill allows the state to issue a limited supervised training permit. It establishes a process for endorsement, bridging the gap when an individual's license does not meet credentialing requirements. With thoughtful policies around professional licensing, the state can fill critical workforce gaps and empower new Utahns.

SB 149: Artificial Intelligence Amendments, Sen. Cullimore

\$1,010,800 One-time

Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers incredible innovation but has the potential for misuse. This framework creates an AI learning laboratory, allowing companies to develop in the space without undue risk of government action while simultaneously allowing the state to observe and learn how to regulate AI best. This legislation also protects consumers, clarifying that individuals or companies that use AI to commit deceptive acts are liable for the deceptive act. With this framework, the state advances consumer protections and allows Utah to be agile and innovative in this field.

HB 491: Data Privacy Amendments, Rep J. Moss

\$2,360,300 Ongoing, \$600,400 One-time

Securing data privacy is a challenge in today's world. This bill asserts that the state government should do more to protect Utahns' personal data. This legislation defines state agencies' privacy obligations, provides opportunities for individuals to understand and control their personal data, and establishes an ombudsman office to hear privacy complaints. With this strategic framework, Utah can lead the nation in data privacy.

