



MINUTES

LEGISLATIVE AUDIT SUBCOMMITTEE

Tuesday, November 18, 2025 | 4:00 p.m. | 445 State Capitol

Members Present:

President J. Stuart Adams, Co-chair
Speaker Mike Schultz, Co-chair
Sen. Luz Escamilla
Rep. Angela Romero
Rep. Casey Snider

Members Absent:

Sen. Kirk A. Cullimore

Staff Present:

Brian J. Dean, Deputy Auditor General
Donna Hernandez, Office Manager
Darin R. Underwood, Deputy Auditor General
Kade R. Minchey, Auditor General

Note: A copy of related materials and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Speaker Schultz called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

2. Audit Report Presentations

Mr. Darin Underwood, Deputy Auditor General, introduced A Performance Audit of Statewide Standards for Future Water Needs (Report 2025-27)

[A Performance Audit of Statewide Standards for Future Water Needs: A Review of 40-year Plans and Municipal Water Exactions \(Report 2025-27\)](#)

Mr. Underwood, Mr. August Lehman, Audit Supervisor, and Mr. Tyson Cabulagan, Senior Audit Methodologist, presented the findings of the audit.

Mr. Lehman responded to questions from Speaker Schultz regarding four-year plans and setting standards for water shortage moving forward.

Mr. Underwood responded to a question from Representative Snider regarding compliance mechanisms for the legislature.

Mr. Underwood commented on the response letter from Utah League of Cities and Towns after reviewing this audit.

Director Joel Ferry, Department of Natural Resources, and Mr. Todd Adams, Deputy Director, Department of Natural Resources, responded to the findings of the audit.

MOTION:

Speaker Schultz moved to refer A Performance Audit of Statewide Standards for Future Water Needs to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee as the lead committee and to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environmental Quality Appropriations Subcommittee as the review committee. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0 - 1.

Yeas - 5

Sen. J. Adams
Sen. L. Escamilla
Rep. A. Romero
Rep. M. Schultz
Rep. C. Snider

Nays - 0

Absent - 1

Sen. K. Cullimore

3. Committee Business

MOTION: Speaker Schultz made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2025, meeting. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0 - 1.

Yeas - 5

Sen. J. Adams
Sen. L. Escamilla
Rep. A. Romero
Rep. M. Schultz
Rep. C. Snider

Nays - 0

Absent - 1

Sen. K. Cullimore

4. Audit Report Presentations

Ms. Leah Blevins, Audit Manager, introduced A Performance Audit of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (Report 2025-22)

[A Performance Audit of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind: USDB's Governance and Strategic Planning Must Improve \(Report 2025-22\)](#)

Ms. Blevins and Mr. Jake Davis, Lead Performance Auditor, presented the findings of the audit.

Mr. Davis responded to questions from Senator Escamilla regarding: - the number of students enrolled in Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB), - the focus of the Office of the Legislative Auditor General's recommendations, - and fiscal responsibility.

President Adams commented on the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) reviewing the recommendations, what works and doesn't work, and taking accountability for the results.

Representative Romero commented on the importance of governance, the responsibility of USBE, and the need for USBE to step up.

Ms. LeAnn Wood, USBE Board Member, responded to the findings of the audit.

Mr. Darin Nielsen, USDB Interim Assistant Superintendent, responded to the findings of the audit.

Mr. Nielsen responded to a question from Representative Romero regarding data collection methods and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Mr. Nielsen and Ms. Wood responded to questions from Senator Escamilla regarding: - Mr. Nielsen's job title and his role in USDB's oversight, - the appointment of the superintendent, - what needs to happen so that students feel their needs are getting served, - and the legislature's need to receive direct communication from USDB to ensure the responsibilities are met.

The fire alarm went off at 4:50 p.m. and the room was evacuated.

President Adams called the committee back to order at 4:55 p.m.

Speaker Schultz thanked Mr. Nielsen and Ms. Woods for their work and dedication to the population they serve.

MOTION: President Adams moved to refer A Performance Audit of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind to the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee as the lead committee and to the Education Interim Committee as the review committee. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0 - 1.

Yeas - 5

Sen. J. Adams
Sen. L. Escamilla
Rep. A. Romero
Rep. M. Schultz
Rep. C. Snider

Nays - 0

Absent - 1

Sen. K. Cullimore

5. Audit Report Presentations

Mr. Darin Underwood, Deputy Auditor General, introduced the High-Risk Two-Year Follow-Up -2025 (Report 2025-25)

[High-Risk List: Identifying and Mitigating Critical Vulnerabilities in Utah - 2025](#)

Mr. Underwood, Mr. Andrew Poulter, Performance Audit Supervisor, and Mr. Kyle Prep, Performance Auditor, presented the findings of the audit.

President Adams commented on high-priority issues for the legislature.

Mr. Kade Minchey, Legislative Auditor General commented on the importance of this High-Risk report.

MOTION: Speaker Schultz moved to refer the High-Risk Two-Year Follow-Up to the Legislative Management Committee as the lead committee and to the Executive Appropriations Committee as the review committee. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0 - 1.

Yeas - 5

Sen. J. Adams
Sen. L. Escamilla
Rep. A. Romero
Rep. M. Schultz
Rep. C. Snider

Nays - 0

Absent - 1

Sen. K. Cullimore

6. Audit Report Presentations

Mr. Brian Dean, Deputy Auditor General, introduced a combined presentation on two audits: A Performance Audit of the Correctional Health Services Behavioral Healthcare in State Prisons (Report 2025-23) and A Performance Audit of Utah Department of Corrections Security Operations for Behavioral Healthcare in State Prisons (Report 2025-24).

[A Performance Audit of Correctional Health Services Behavioral Healthcare in State Prisons: A Review of Oversight and Adequacy of Care \(Report 2025-23\)](#)

[A Performance Audit of Utah Department of Corrections Security Operations for Behavioral Healthcare in State Prisons: A Review of Safety and Facilitation of Care \(Report 2025-24\)](#)

Mr. Dean and Mr. Brendon Ressler, Lead Performance Auditor, presented the findings of the audits.

Mr. Dean responded to a question from Senator Escamilla regarding potential responsibility issues and whether clarification of the responsibilities is required.

Mr. Dean commented on the need for more robust accountability on the tracking of suicides and attempted suicides.

Mr. Ressler responded to a follow-up question from Senator Escamilla regarding reports of suicides and attempted suicides.

Mr. Dean responded to questions from Senator Escamilla regarding the delivery of care by a licensed professional and current staffing levels.

Dr. Stacey Bank, Executive Medical Director, Department of Health and Human Services, responded to the findings of the audit.

Dr. Marcus Wisner, Correctional Health Services Director responded to the findings of the audit.

Dr. Wisner responded to a question from Senator Escamilla regarding how two different agencies share the responsibility of providing adequate care and the clinical care vision for results.

Senator Escamilla commented on medication issues, staffing issues, and licensure needs.

Ms. Rebecca Brown, Deputy Executive Director, Utah Department of Corrections, responded to the findings of the audit.

MOTION: Speaker Schultz moved to refer A Performance Audit of Correctional Health Services Behavioral Healthcare in State Prisons to the Social Services Appropriations Subcommittee as the lead committee and to the Health and Human Services Interim Committee as the review committee. Speaker Schultz also moved to refer A Performance Audit of Utah Department of Corrections Security Operations for Behavioral Healthcare in State Prisons to the Criminal Justice Appropriations Subcommittee as the lead committee and to the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Committee as the review committee. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0 - 1.

Yeas - 5

Sen. J. Adams
Sen. L. Escamilla
Rep. A. Romero
Rep. M. Schultz
Rep. C. Snider

Nays - 0

Absent - 1

Sen. K. Cullimore

7. Audit Report Presentations

Mr. Jesse Martinson, Audit Manager, introduced A Performance Audit of the Utah Medical Cannabis Program (Report 2025-26)

[A Performance Audit of the Utah Medical Cannabis Program: A Review of Inspections, Enforcement, and Board Determinations \(Report 2025-26\)](#)

Mr. Martinson and Ms. McKenzie Cantlon, Performance Audit Supervisor, presented the findings of the audit.

Mr. Martinson and Ms. Cantlon responded to questions from Senator Escamilla regarding the frequency of board meetings, the effectiveness of the frequency, and the inspection and enforcement processes.

Ms. Cantlon responded to a question from Representative Romero regarding inconsistencies in the inspections.

Mr. Kelly Pehrson, Commissioner, Utah Department of Agriculture and Food and Mr. Brandon Forsyth, Division Director, Utah Department of Agriculture and Food responded to the findings of the audit.

Mr. Pehrson responded to a question from Senator Escamilla regarding the clarity of statutory guidance for appeals

Senator Escamilla commented on maintaining safe access to medical care.

President Adams commented on initiative changes to the law regarding cannabis being positive and advised that, by contrast, a current initiative in the Supreme Court would make it so the legislature will have no authority to make any changes.

MOTION: Speaker Schultz moved to refer A Performance Audit of the Utah Medical Cannabis Program to the Health and Human Services Interim Committee as the lead committee and to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee as the review committee. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0 - 1.

Yeas - 5

Sen. J. Adams
Sen. L. Escamilla
Rep. A. Romero
Rep. M. Schultz
Rep. C. Snider

Nays - 0

Absent - 1

Sen. K. Cullimore

MOTION: Speaker Schultz moved to prioritize the following audits and grant flexibility to the Auditor General to begin them as staff expertise and resources become available: - A performance audit of oil and gas tax credits and exemptions, - a systemic performance audit of the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, - A performance audit of Off Highway Vehicles funds, - A performance audit of Salt Lake City's use of Enterprise Funds. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0 - 1.

Yeas - 5

Sen. J. Adams
Sen. L. Escamilla
Rep. A. Romero
Rep. M. Schultz
Rep. C. Snider

Nays - 0

Absent - 1

Sen. K. Cullimore

MOTION: Speaker Schultz stated that, in accordance with Utah Code 36-12-15.2, we prioritize a comprehensive performance audit of the state's election system and controls. President Adams stated that this was a statutory requirement to be done every two years. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0 - 1.

Yeas - 5

Sen. J. Adams
Sen. L. Escamilla
Rep. A. Romero
Rep. M. Schultz
Rep. C. Snider

Nays - 0

Absent - 1

Sen. K. Cullimore

MOTION: Speaker Schultz moved to adjourn at 5:54 p.m. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0 - 1.

Yeas - 5

Sen. J. Adams
Sen. L. Escamilla
Rep. A. Romero
Rep. M. Schultz
Rep. C. Snider

Nays - 0

Absent - 1

Sen. K. Cullimore