

### **Health Workforce Advisory Council (HWAC)**

Tuesday, February 24, 2026 | 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

Virtual Meeting | Anchor Location: Multi-Agency State Office Building (MASOB)

Legislative Meeting 3 of 3

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**Council Members Present (virtual):** Heather Borski, Teresa Garrett, Carrie Torgersen, Vic Hockett, Michelle Hofmann, Mia Nafziger, Mark Steinagel, Chris Williams, Sue Jackson, and Kristina Callis Duffin

**Council Members Absent:** Igor Limansky, Kendra Muir, Tyler Goddard, Sarah Woolsey, and Francis Gibson

**Staff Present:** Marc Watterson, Ashley Moretz, and Kendyl Brockman

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**This meeting was recorded per the Open Public Meetings Act.**

#### **Welcome- Heather Borski**

Heather welcomed the group to the 3rd and final legislative review meeting for the HWAC. Heather asked for a motion to approve of the 1/27/26 and 2/10/26 meeting minutes. There was no discussion of the motion.

**Motion** to approve of the 1/27/26 and 2/10/26 meeting minutes passed with all in favor.

#### **Bill Read Out- Teresa Garrett**

Teresa provided a brief summary of the following bills that were reviewed and discussed by the Legislative Review Subcommittee.

- [H.B. 515 Graduate Student Supplemental Loans](#): The Legislative Review Subcommittee supports this bill in concept with a few recommendations. Teresa shared that this bill was held in committee. They support the bill's intent to bolster Utah's healthcare workforce through a state-subsidized loan program. This initiative addresses the financial gap left by the reclassification of graduate health programs as "non-professional," offering a sustainable alternative to high-interest private debt. The subcommittee recommends the HWAC support the bill in concept with the following recommendations:
  - Update Terminology: Change "unspent" to "unobligated" to accurately reflect funds that are committed to future projects but not yet paid out.
  - Expand Eligibility: Include medical and osteopathic students. Despite their "professional" status, tuition often exceeds federal loan caps; inclusion prevents reliance on predatory private loans or program withdrawal.
- [S.B. 261 Pharmacy Practice Amendment](#): The Legislative Review Subcommittee supports this bill as written because it helps to broaden the prescriptive authority of pharmacists. This bill reduces barriers to essential services like vaccinations, ensuring more Utahns have convenient access to those healthcare services. The subcommittee recommends that the HWAC support this bill as written.
- [S.B. 31 Office of Professional Licensure Review Amendments](#): The committee discussed the complexity of SB 31 and the bill sponsor's efforts to balance stakeholder interests as the

legislation moves to the House. A key focus of recent amendments involves the scope of practice for Physician Assistants (PAs) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), aiming to align current facility practices with statutory definitions for minor surgical and cosmetic procedures. To provide a "safe harbor" while a formal scope of practice study is conducted, the bill sponsor introduced a protective amendment; however, due to opposition from a national professional association that interpreted the measure as a restriction, APRNs were removed from the latest substitute. Consequently, the amendment currently applies only to PAs, leaving nurse practitioners potentially vulnerable to disciplinary action for procedures falling outside the strict definitions of the Nurse Practice Act.

### **Limited Discussion and Preparing HWAC Comments- All**

Teresa Garrett moved to approve the Legislative Review Subcommittee's recommendations and communicate them to the Utah State Legislature. In response to a clarifying question from Heather Borski regarding requested bill changes, Michelle Hofmann noted that the subcommittee recommended specific technical updates to H.B. 515 and supported holding the bill for further study. However, Mia observed that from a behavioral health workforce perspective, USAAV+ considers this a priority and does not recommend a delay for study. Teresa further specified the subcommittee's recommended refinements for H.B. 515: updating terminology from "unspent" to "unobligated" and expanding eligibility to include medical students to help offset program costs.

Teresa updated her motion to support in concept H.B. 515 and support as written S.B. 261 and communicate those recommendations to the respective legislators. Kendyl clarified that these specific recommendations for H.B. 515 should be included in the formal communication to the bill sponsors.

**Motion** to support in concept H.B. 515 and support as written S.B. 261 and communicate those recommendations to the respective legislators pass with all in favor.

Teresa provided an update on [H.B. 359 Health Care Preceptor Amendments](#). The bill received a hearing on Friday, February 20th. While the legislation received significant community participation and support in concept, it was ultimately held in committee and referred for interim study. This outcome provides an opportunity for the Legislative Review Subcommittee to conduct a debrief and refine the proposal for future sessions. Members noted that the current funding climate posed a challenge, but emphasized that the study period will allow for building a stronger coalition and addressing technical concerns raised during the hearing.

Discussion highlighted several areas for improvement, particularly regarding eligibility and the logistics of stipend distribution. Key concerns included:

- Refining the bill language to ensure it encompasses all preceptors and students at relevant institutions located within Utah
- Addressing suggestions that stipend funds be partitioned based on the specific professional groups contributing to the program.

- Navigating the complex landscape of "pass-through" payments for preceptors at large health systems versus direct payments for small, rural, or community-based providers.

The committee plans to engage more deeply with educational leaders and professional associations to align the bill with existing private-sector solutions. There is a specific interest in collaborating with statewide educator groups to collect data on preceptor needs, especially as new medical programs emerge in the state.

An agenda item was requested for the upcoming quarterly meeting to further evaluate statewide preceptorship strategies and legislative outcomes.

**Closure/ Questions/ Comments- Heather Borski, All**

**Motion** passed with all in favor to close the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kendyl Brockman