



Legislative Update

Monday, February 21, 2011

This update is published regularly during the General Session, monthly during the interim, and other times as needed. This update highlights the various issues that will be heard by the legislature during the Legislative Session that may affect low-income Utahns.

Our legislative priorities list can be found [HERE](#).

The Budget

There are 18 days left in the 2011 Legislative Session. The budget discussions continue and Appropriations Subcommittees have finalized their budget cut recommendations and priority lists. The new revenue numbers should be out this week and the Legislature will then start backfilling the cuts to the programs at the top of the priority lists.

Budget numbers can be found [HERE](#).

Alerts and News from the Hill

Asset Building

EITC/VITA has survived the first round of cuts and will

CAP Utah keeps a running Legislative Agenda list on its website that tracks priority bills and provides updates on the status of any legislation that may affect low-income Utahns. It can be found [HERE](#) and will be updated regularly throughout the session.

Legislative Agendas and Minutes can be found on the [Utah Legislature's Website](#)

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Governor's office - (800) 705-2464

House - (800) 908-4261

Senate - (801) 538-1035

Who is your legislator?

Find out by inserting your address [here](#).

Advocates Calendar

likely get additional, ongoing funding. The Individual Development Account (IDA) program has had initial funding cuts restored.

SCR 2 - "Financial Responsibility and Concurrent Resolution," Senator Jones' bill that encourages Utahns to take advantage of the financial stability resources in the state, has passed both chambers.

Education

Education funding is a big concern up at the capitol and various bills are seeking to address the need to fund enrollment increases. The Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee has yet to come to a consensus about cuts.

SB 38 "K-3 Reading Amendments" has passed both chambers and is awaiting the Governor's signature. The bill would amend deadlines related to the mid-year assessment of first, second, and third grade students.

SJR 9 is currently circled on the 2nd reading calendar of the Senate. This controversial resolution asks for an amendment to the Utah Constitution to move the control and supervision of the public education system from the municipalities to the Governor.

Attempts to extend optional full-day kindergarten have yet to be successful. HB 111 is currently being held in the House Education Committee.

Work Supports

SB 19 , which allows the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to restructure the regional workforce councils, has passed both chambers and is awaiting the Governor's signature.

Cuts to the DWS budget will come in the form of a reduction of 142 full-time employees over the next year through attrition and through the Department finding other efficiencies. This leaves the General Assistance program intact, though it is still funded at it's 2011 level.

The Family Investment Coalition's Advocate's Caucus will be held every Wednesday during the General Session from 12:15 - 1:15 in the Olmstead Room of the Senate (East) Building. We will discuss the budget, our legislative priorities, and collaborate with other advocates. For more information, contact Drew Martinez.

Housing

Currently, both the Olene Walker Housing Fund (OWHF) and the Pamela Atkinson Homeless Trust Fund (PAHTF) are expected to be funded at their 2011 levels.

HB245, which would centralize the housing choice vouchers for the state, has been modified. Instead of creating one centralized waiting list, the application itself will be made standard across programs so that applicants only have to fill out one application, though each program will maintain its own waiting list. This bill is on the House 3rd Reading Calendar.

SB154 - "Utah Fit Premises Act Notice Requirements," which would put more requirements on owners to provide information and disclosures to tenants about their rights before a rental agreement is signed, is still in the Senate Rules Committee.

CAP Utah is watching several other bills related to affordable housing and homelessness. No significant action has been taken on any of these bills at this time.

Health and Human Services

Rep. Menlove's HB211 has passed both chambers and is headed to the Governor's desk. This bill would require clients of Utah's Primary Care Network (PCN) to participate in community service hours to continue to receive coverage, if they are so able.

Sen. Robles' SB41 is still being held in the Senate Rules Committee. The bill would allow legal immigrant children to receive medical assistance and CHIP in Utah regardless of how long they have been in the country.

HB 256, a bill that would reduce barriers to enrolling and staying on CHIP and Medicaid through the use of technology, is on the House Third Reading Calendar.

Immigration

Immigration is a hot topic up at the Capitol this session

and there are multiple bills that seek to address the immigration issue, ranging from enforcement to guest worker programs.

Probably the most controversial bill, Sen. Sandstrom's HB 70, which seeks to install similar enforcement mechanisms as the Arizona Immigration Bill, has passed the House and is on its way to the Senate.

SB 47, a bill that would make driver's license exams for refugees available in a variety of languages has passed both chambers and is headed to the Governor's Office.

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