



Legislative Roundup

Monday, March 14, 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

The 2011 Legislative Session ended March 10, 2011. The \$12 billion FY 2012 budget has been set pending action by the Governor. The Legislature addressed growth in education and Medicaid, and did so without general tax increase or accelerations, and without significantly drawing down rainy day funds. The Legislature narrowed the use of one-time resources for ongoing commitments from \$313 million to about \$50 million.

The Appropriations Summary and Budget Highlights can be found [HERE](#).

Alerts and News from the Hill

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](#)

Call your elected officials

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

Asset Building

EITC/VITA has received \$100,000 of ongoing money.

The Individual Development Account (IDA) program has been funded at FY 2011 levels of \$89,500.

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 and signed by the Governor.

SB 189, which would create a refundable low-income tax credit and adjusts the states sales and use tax rate passed Senate Committee, but failed on the Senate floor. CAP Utah will be part of the discussion to pursue this piece of legislation during the Interim Session.

Education

Legislators funded the Governor's request for public education, including 2.2% increase in funding for more than 14,000 additional students.

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 failed in the House. This controversial resolution asked for an amendment to the Utah Constitution to move the control and supervision of the public education system from the municipalities to the Governor.

HB 2 funds optional extended-day kindergarten (though some of this funding will be shared with computer-based early-intervention programs.)

SB 65 was brought back after dying on the Senate floor and passed the Senate and House. The bill will create the Statewide Online Education Program to enable a student to earn high school graduation credit through the completion of online courses.

Work Supports

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.

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.

DWS took a \$3.3 million cut to eligibility services which 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.

Housing

Both the Olene Walker Housing Loan Fund and the Pamela Atkinson Trust Fund are being funded at the 2011 level.

HB 101 which would provide protections to Mobile Homeowners failed in committee and will be studied during interim. HB 332 which would essentially dismantle low-income utility assistance has been abandoned by the sponsor and also will be studied during interim.

SB 154 which would have provided benefits and protections to Utah's renters failed in a 2-2-2 vote in committee. This bill will be heard during interim and CAP Utah will advocate hard to protect renters in Utah.

HB 287 has been amended to send the bill to interim. Legislation would distribute the Department of Community and Culture throughout the Governor's Office of Economic Development and the Department of Workforce Services.

Rep. Seelig's HB 403 has passed both the House and Senate. The bill will prohibit landlords from taking action against a renter for assisting public safety agencies while participating in the Good Landlord Program. Also, protects owners from municipalities that would limit the owner's participation in benefits from the Good Landlord Program if they don't pursue renters that contact the police.

SB 220 would create the Intermountain Weatherization Training Fund and has passed the Senate and House.

Health and Human Services

Rep. Menlove's HB211 has passed both chambers and is headed to the Governor's desk. This bill will 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 was held in the Senate Rules Committee. The bill would have allowed 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, has passed the House and Senate.

Immigration

Immigration was a hot topic up at the Capitol this session and in the end a Utah approach was crafted from HB 497 and HB 116 which provide for enforcement and a guest worker program.

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

Interim Session

During the Interim Session CAP Utah will be paying close attention to the following bills/issue areas to be discussed by the Legislature. All of the items to be studied can be found in HJR 24 and found [HERE](#):

- Fit Premises
- Mobile Home Park Law
- Unemployment Rate Impact
- Workers' Compensation Insurance
- Financial Literacy

- Rural Programs
- Debt Penalties
- Foreclosure
- Utility Payment Assistance
- Hiring Homeless Tax Credit
- Eliminating the Department of Community and Culture
- Impact of Legislation on Families

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