



## Utah's 58th Legislature Enters Final Days

Utah's 58<sup>th</sup> legislature is in its sixth week and quickly coming to a close. Your Taxpayers Association has successfully lobbied a variety of bills to increase transparency, reduce government intervention and prevent new taxes. As Utah enters the last week of the legislative session, your Taxpayers Association continues to closely monitor numerous pieces of legislation and actively engage with legislators to ensure fiscally responsible policy making.

Your Taxpayers Association has been claiming multiple successes over the legislative session. SB 133 (Adams) requires tax commissioners to have significant and relevant tax experience. HB 219 (Froerer) reduces the penalties and interest rates for delinquent property taxes. Your Taxpayers Association supported and advocated for both bills.

SB 77 (Dayton) prohibits school districts from using taxpayer dollars to pay union representatives. Multiple school districts have been paying the salaries of teacher union representatives and relieving them from teaching duties to complete union work, despite the blatant conflict of interest. Union representatives do not represent the interests of school districts and should not be paid with taxpayer dollars. SB 77 passed the Senate and is currently before the House.

Despite the numerous successes of the legislative session, the battle to balance the budget without a tax hike has proved disappointing. Despite promises from House and Senate Republican caucuses to reject tax increases, both the House and Senate have voted to increase the tax on cigarettes by \$1.00 per pack.

Studies have repeatedly shown that increased tobacco taxes are bad tax policy. They fail to generate revenue, push tobacco sales outside the state and implement a high rate over a narrow base. Your Taxpayers Association has aggressively opposed any tax increases to balance the budget.

Another priority for your Taxpayers Association is keeping government out of the business of business. SB 272 (Stevenson) would authorize the Utah Transit Authority to create and finance mixed development projects near UTA stations; thereby allowing the public transportation agency to engage in real estate speculation and private enterprise.

In addition to these specific priorities, your Taxpayers Association is tracking over one hundred pieces of legislation. The following table highlights some of the successes of the Utah Taxpayers Association. Be sure to visit <http://www.utahtaxpayers.org> in order to view the full legislative watchlist and keep updated on the final week of the legislative session.

Bill Number	Title	Sponsor	Description	UTA	Status
HB307	General County Powers Amendment	Hughes	prohibits a county or government instrument from providing services in another county without an interlocal agreement		Passed House
SB 40s1	Cigarette and Tobacco Tax Amendments	Christensen	raises the cigarette tax to \$1.70 per pack		Passed Senate
SB43s3	Post-Retirement Employment Amendments	Liljenquist	prohibits a retired state employee from earning additional years of credit towards retirement, if they are reemployed by a different state agency or the same agency within 6 months of retiring		Passed House and Senate
SB 55	Authorization of Charter Schools by Higher Education Institutions	Adams	allows institutions of higher education to authorize charter schools, in addition to the State Charter School Board.		Passed House and Senate
SB63s3	New Public Employees Tier II Contributory Retirement Act	Liljenquist	creates Tier I/Tier II retirement system. Public safety and legislators only enter into Tier II.		Passed House and Senate
SB77s1	School District Leave Policies	Dayton	prohibits school districts from paying union representatives		Passed Senate
SB119s2	Special Elections Modifications	Stephenson	requires bond elections to be held only on November general election dates		Passed Senate, In House
SB133s1	Qualifications of State Tax Commissioners	Adams	requires tax commissioners to have "significant, relevant tax experience"		Passed House and Senate
SB272	Amendments to Transportation Revisions	Stevenson	allows public transit districts to create and finance transit development projects to help economic development in areas near mass transit centers		Passed Senate Committee
SB196s1	Tobacco Tax Revisions	Ray	Increases the tobacco tax in 2010-2011 by 88.5%; thereafter raises the tobacco tax to the national average plus 0.1%		Passed House