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Legislative Update

Wednesday, January 20, 2010


This update is published weekly during the General Session, monthly during the interim, and other times as needed.

Alerts and News from the Hill

Our Legislative Priorities...

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA
January 20, 2010

Position Key:
 O = Oppose
 S = Support
 W = Watching



Title	Sponsor	Description	Pos	Status
Asset Building				
Funding for Individual Development Accounts	appropriation	\$50,000 - base budget	S	Still awaiting budget decisions
Funding for BTC/Volunteer Income Tax Assistance	appropriation	\$100,000 - base budget	S	Still awaiting budget decisions
Children				
Childcare Assistance	appropriation	Maintain FY10 budget level plus additional dollars to get the federal match	S	Still awaiting budget decisions

Community Action Partnership of Utah has established its legislative priorities for the 2010 General Session. This list provides information about bills and appropriations related to poverty issues like food, housing, work supports (formerly known as welfare), and asset building. We will be providing this list throughout the session in our Legislative Updates and on our [website](#). You can keep up-to-date on the

Advocates Calendar

The Family Investment Coalition's Advocate's Caucus will be held every Wednesday at 12:15 in the Olmstead Room (in the Senate - East - Building) throughout the 2010 General Session. We will discuss our legislative agendas, talk about Session items of interest, and collaborate with other advocates.

Find agendas and listen on line

All legislative agendas are available on-line, as well as audio of the committee meetings, are available [here](#).

Call your elected officials

Governor's office - (800)

progress of our bills and appropriations of interest [here](#).

Cuts!

The Governor has asked all state agencies to make cuts to their budget equivalent to 3% cut of personnel cost-of-living spending (except for education). The legislature has asked state agencies to present 4% one-time budget cut scenarios for fiscal year 2010 (this year) and 5% on-going cuts for 2011. (Note that the 4% and 5% budget cuts do not build upon one another, they do not equal 9%; the 4% cuts are one-time for fiscal year 2010, and the 5% cuts will be ongoing cuts from the fiscal year 2011 base budgets).

What about "revenue enhancements"? The state should realize that budget cuts are not the only option. Utah has a revenue problem, not a spending problem. These lean times are resulting in major cuts to very important programs. This is at a time when many people who have paid taxes for years are now in need of these tax-funded programs and find them cut or eliminated. We recommend the legislature take a cautious approach to budget cuts and instead of cutting across the board, the legislature should find sources of revenue that do not negatively affect the general population. The approach to the budget needs to be broad and balanced, and shared by all.

The 2010 General Session starts next week.

Monday, January 25th will mark the first day of the 2010 Legislative General Session. The Community Action Partnership of Utah Legislative Update will be published weekly during the session.

Democracy Day 2010

Democracy Day is Monday, February 1, 2010. This is a great opportunity to meet your legislator, learn more

705-2464

House - (800) 908-4261

Senate - (800) 613-0677

Who is your legislator?

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

Other random stuff

Click [here](#) for regarding the National Housing Trust Fund.



about the legislative process, and network. Lt. Governor Bell and Nancy Amidei will both be speaking at the event. [Register now.](#)

Learn more about the event and [register here.](#)

Jobs for Main Street Act of 2010.

News from Washington D.C.: the House has passed HR2847 which is intended to create jobs with funds left over from TARP (the Troubled Assets Relief Program, used mainly to support financial institutions). This funding will also be used to support our housing authorities and fund the National Housing Trust Fund. If you have any questions please call Shawn or email him at shawn@caputah.org

Housing in General

The President signed a spending omnibus bill last month that will be sending housing related funds to Utah. The bill increases Housing and Urban Development's budget by almost 11%. This level of funding should be enough to ensure that all 2009 Section 8 housing choice voucher recipients will be able to keep their vouchers. It also provides needed increases to other HUD programs including public housing, project-based rental assistance, and homelessness assistance. This increase in HUD funding as well as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 show Washington's renewed commitment of affordable housing programs.

General Assistance

General Assistance (GA) was hit pretty hard last year, with a \$3.8 million dollar budget cut. This resulted in the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) having to redesign the the GA, including cutting time limits in half, extending the amount of time a person must be disabled to apply, offering the problem only to those

who cannot work at all, reducing GA staff and eliminating the Working Towards Employment (WTE) program. This has resulted in over 500 people being removed from GA. Despite these changes, applications for GA have continued to increase, and this has forced DWS to stop taking applications effective Jan. 1, 2010. DWS has offered a 4% budget cut scenario to the appropriations subcommittee that preserves GA in its current state through the end of the fiscal year, but the survival of GA for fiscal year 2011 looks bleak. Currently the Legislative Fiscal Analysts have recommended the program be funded with a \$2 million revolving budget, being replenished by reimbursements from the federal government for the benefit amount of GA when GA customers get on the Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Considering that DWS could not serve all of the taxpayers in need of GA assistance with a \$5 million budget, the \$2 million budget would make the continued administration of GA impossible.

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Community Action Partnership of Utah
230 South 500 West
Suite 260
Salt Lake City, UT 84101

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