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## Legislative Update

Wednesday, February 10, 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...

And yet another Legislative Update... We are looking to keep you up-to-date with our legislative agenda during the Session ([click to view](#)):

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA		Position Key:	
January 20, 2010		O = Oppose	S = Support
		W = Watching	
Title	Sponsor	Description	Pos Status
<b>Asset Building</b>			
Funding for Individual Development Accounts	appropriation	\$50,000 - base budget	S Still awaiting budget decisions
Funding for ETC/Volunteer Income Tax Assistance	appropriation	\$100,000 - base budget	S Still awaiting budget decisions
<b>Children</b>			
Childcare Assistance	appropriation	Maintain FY10 budget level plus additional dollars to get the federal match	S Still awaiting budget decisions

This list of our legislative priorities provides information about bills and appropriations related to poverty issues like food, housing, work supports (formerly known as

#### 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](#).

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Governor's office - (800)

welfare), and asset building. We will be providing this list throughout the session in our Legislative Updates and on our [website](#). You can see our old agendas [here](#).

## Action Alerts!

### ***Unemployment Insurance Bills***

***Benefits for Part-Time Workers*** Utah currently does not offer Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits to part-time workers. Many families in Utah need dual incomes to pay their bills. Providing UI benefits to part-time workers will help stabilize these families during bad economic times and help keep them in their homes and paying bills while they look for work. The Senate Business and Labor Committee will hear testimony on this issue Thursday, Feb. 5th at 8:00 a.m. The fact sheet is [here](#).

***Alternative Base Period*** This provision would allow individuals who are unemployed through no fault of their own to have their eligibility determined based on an alternative base period if they don't qualify under the standard base period (the first 4 of the last 5 completed calendar quarters). This would help approximately 1,200 claimants a year to qualify for Unemployment Insurance because it looks at more recent income and would be very helpful to low-income Utahns.

### **Bills and Appropriations - Activity**

***EITC/VITA*** The Economic Development and Revenue Appropriations Subcommittee today prioritized Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) / Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program outreach in the number one position, and then went on to fund it. This is great news for us. They are funding our request of \$55,000 in one-time moneys to maintain FY10 funding levels. Good job to everyone who has worked on this issue, including the

705-2464

House - (800) 908-4261

Senate - (800) 613-0677

### **Who is your legislator?**

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### **Other stuff**

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



efforts of United Way of Salt Lake. However, we'll have to see if Executive Appropriations agrees with the Subcommittee when they meet next Tuesday. This funding is used to coordinate VITA volunteers around the state in bringing millions of dollars into our local economy from the federal EITC program.

**General Assistance** The Commerce and Workforce Services Appropriations Subcommittee has made their final recommendations on the FY 2011 budget. General Assistance will be held harmless under their proposal, though the base budget will be under \$4 million, much less than the FY 2010 budget of \$5.1 million, which was not enough to keep the program enrolling new applicants six months into the year. The Subcommittee also made the recommendation that the \$2 million that the state is reimbursed by the federal Social Security Administration for the GA monthly benefit be earmarked specifically for GA (in the past, it has gone into the General Fund). The recommendations will now be considered by Executive Appropriations. The fact sheet is [here](#).

**HB243** We are hoping to hear from Representative Harper in the House Business and Labor Standing Committee next week regarding his bill which protects renters in foreclosed properties. There has been additional negotiation and consensus building which somewhat weakens the bill, but will help it pass. This is a great bill. A substitute bill with new language will be available next week. Take a look at the fact sheet ([front](#) and [back](#)).

**SB45** The controversial Fit Premises Amendments bill from Senator Niederhauser has passed out of committee and will soon be heard on the Senate floor. The controversy arises out of the fact that the State Code will override local ordinances, and some renter protections will be lost in the meantime. On the other hand, the bill strengthens other protections. Hopefully amendments

will make this bill somewhat as good as its potential.

**HB188** We are encouraged to see that Representative Harper's bill to eliminate the social security offset for individuals who receive workers' compensation passed out of committee and will be heard on the House floor.

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