

Week One

The legislature began its first week on the right note with beautiful music from a school choir. The opening prayer by Elder Donald Hallstrom set the tone. He stated "We pray for civility among these legislators that they may cooperate and work together for what is good." So far so good. We were honored to have our Nation's and State's colors presented by our military. It's very emotional to repeat the pledge of allegiance in that setting. Speaker Lockhart gave a strong urging to colleagues to "do their best" and leave pet projects behind for the better good. There really hasn't been any high intensity debates, as none of the big issues have been addressed yet. HB33 was passed however which amended the fireworks law, limiting the times that fireworks could be discharged from 11am to 11pm. This is in response to constituents who felt that the noise was too much, too long and because of recommendations from fire officials. We still get our fun fireworks, just not at 1 in the morning (except on New Years Eve).

Amendments were made to the redistricting boundaries. The amendments to House and Senate districts were done to protect voter privacy for those in smaller precincts and respond to recommendations from county clerks where boundaries slightly crossed city or county boundaries. Congressional boundaries were not affected.

The Governor gave his State of the State address. He praised Utah's economy and called for the federal government to "get out of the way." He stated boldly that "this Governor is firmly resolved to fortify our state as a bulwark against federal overreach." Perhaps the one of the best summaries of his address is from his own words "Every sector in our [Utah's] economy is growing again, except one, and I'm proud to say the sector that is not growing is state government."

I'm working on energy and public lands legislation this year to assure Utah continues to have a prosperous future. One of my bills is on the Governor's list of "must pass bills". Keep checking back for weekly updates.