

Senate Transportation, Public Utilities, Energy, and Technology Committee

Date: 1/23/2025

Bill: SB 59 – Commercial Driver License Revisions

Sponsor: Senator Don L. Ipson

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill addresses procedures relating to commercial driver licenses.

Discussion: Senator Harper presented the Bill on behalf of Senator Ipson. He stated that there are federal laws that outline specific guidelines for drivers who hold a Certified Drivers License (“CDL”). This Bill amends the provisions related to disqualification of a CDL. The Bill also requires the Drivers License Division to utilize the Drug and Alcohol Licensing Clearing House as is required by federal law. The sponsor said that SB 59 is designed to conform with federal law regarding qualifications and standards of a CDL. Senator Winterton asked if the Bill was brought about by a specific recommendation or by federal guidelines. The impetus of the Bill is to be in line with federal requirements. The language is in accord with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (“FMCSA”). Utah is currently not in compliance with the federal regulations and this Bill will bring the state guidelines into compliance. If this Bill were to become law, the Drivers License Division will notify drivers of any actions they need to take to be in compliance with the law and the driver will have 60 days to come into compliance. Senator Riebe asked if this Bill would change the current definition of intoxication for those with a CDL license. The representative stated that no changes to the current definition of intoxication are made in this Bill. There was no public comment.

Yeas: 6

Nays: 0

N/V: 2

Outcome: SB 59 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: SB 21 – Long-Term Disability Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Wayne A. Harper

Floor Sponsor: Representative Cheryl K. Acton

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill modifies provisions related to public employee long-term disability benefits.

Discussion: Senator Harper stated that this Bill has gone through multiple Interim Committee hearings and received unanimous endorsement from all of them. It updates the eligibility requirements for long-term disability benefits, modifies the definition of “objective medical impairment”, and clarifies which employees are eligible for a disability benefit for a “total disability” due to a mental objective medical impairment. The Bill clarifies the process for the evaluation of claims made to qualify for total disability using the most up to date and objective tools available to the medical community. It also clarifies benefits for state employees and

provides reasonable accommodations to meet their needs. The Public Employees' Long-Term Disability program is directed to administer the existing basic long-term benefit for volunteer emergency services personnel. There was no public comment.

Yeas: 6
Nays: 0
N/V: 2

Outcome: SB 21 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: SB 96 – Advanced Air Mobility Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Wayne A. Harper

Floor Sponsor: Representative Kay J. Christofferson

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill addresses provisions related to advanced air mobility.

Discussion: Sponsor stated that, in the past, there have been talks about working on similar legislation to address this issue. The intent of SB 96 is to ensure that the Code enables everybody to take advantage of mobile air devices and services. It is designed to help enhance advanced air mobility for new and incoming industries. This Bill will open the door for more local airborne services, including package delivery and taxi services. The Bill also provides a list of best practices for those who are seeking to use drones and advanced air technology. The Bill defines what an advanced air mobility system is. Senator Kwan asked how unaccompanied minors that are taxied in unmanned vehicles will be addressed. She also requested that the Committee consider focusing on unaccompanied minors as the Bill moves through the legislative process. The sponsor said that working through how unaccompanied minors may be safely transported by an unmanned air taxi will be addressed during the interim. Senator Riebe requested that a policy be considered to require insurance to cover any advanced air mobility failures that may occur. Senator Millner said that Utah can learn from other states that are currently piloting similar programs. Senator Winterton asked if local officials will be required to come up with implementation plans. The sponsor stated that this Bill only covers the issue at a state level. The “toolkit” that provides best practices will serve as a set of guidelines and be a resource for local governments and incoming businesses within this industry. The Utah League of Cities and Towns (“League”) spoke in support of the Bill. The League has begun to take steps to preparation of its passage, including plans to provide trainings and workshops that will help implement this type of new technology.

Yeas: 6
Nays: 0
N/V: 2

Outcome: SB 96 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.