

Bill: SB 182 – Homelessness Services Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Todd Weiler

Floor Sponsor: Undeclared

UASD Position: TBD

This Bill enacts certain provisions for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Discussion: Senator Weiler explained the process of code blue alerts, which require sheltering homeless individuals during extreme cold weather. He stated that this Bill addresses a similar situation by establishing code red alerts, which provide cooling shelters for unhoused individuals when temperatures reach 105 degrees. He noted that this should be easier for counties to implement since it would not require overnight stays, as extreme heat typically occurs during the day. Wayne Niederauer, presented with the sponsor, explained that the language is still being refined. Individuals are at risk greater risk for heat related illnesses in the "orange" category of the heat index. The sponsor is considering limiting the policy to the period from June 1 to September 30. Additionally, the aim to provide both congregate and non-congregate shelters for code red alerts. There may be a need to provide potential exemptions for non-congregate shelters during both code blue and code red situations. However, Mr. Niederauer stated that the Department of Human Services ("DHS") would ultimately be responsible for implementing these changes.

Senator Escamilla questioned the need for a fixed timeline when a temperature-based trigger already exists. The sponsor responded that temperatures outside the proposed time frame rarely reach 105 degrees and that setting a specific period would help shelters manage costs. The Utah League of Cities and Towns stated that they had not yet taken a formal position on the Bill and were working with the sponsor to resolve some technical concerns.

Yeas: 4

Nays: 0

N/V: 3

Outcome: SB 182 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.