

Senate Government Operations and Political Subdivisions Committee

2/26/2025

Bill: SB 323 – Asset and Investment Review Task Force

Sponsor: Senator Keven J. Stratton

Floor Sponsor: TBD

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill creates the Asset and Investment Review Task Force.

Discussion: This Bill establishes the Asset and Investment Review Task Force (“Task Force”), outlining its membership and responsibilities. It addresses procedures for handling vacancies, salaries, expenses, and staffing. The Bill allows the task force to contract with a qualified individual to study cash, cash equivalents, and investments held by government entities, as well as to analyze investment options for public funds. It also sets a sunset date for the Task Force. Senator Stratton proposed Senate Amendment 2, which was adopted by the Committee. The Bill amendment makes it clear that this legislation relates to public funds that are held by a government entity. It is intended to establish parameters for the Review Task Force in response to the significant increase in funds held by the state. This rise in reserves has prompted questions regarding the appropriate level of funds the state should maintain and when those funds should be utilized.

The State Treasurer emphasized that public entity balances have grown substantially in recent years. The Bill aims to examine investment strategies and reserve levels, providing a report to the Legislature to guide future policymaking on utilizing these funds effectively. The sponsor highlighted the importance of understanding how much the state needs to maintain in reserves.

Senator Vickers inquired whether the Treasurer could internally fund the Task Force, to which the Treasurer responded that the treasury would need to rely on external resources for funding. Senator Sandall asked who would provide support staff for the Task Force, and the Treasurer confirmed that his office would fulfill that role.

The Utah Bankers Association expressed concerns about reserves being stored outside Utah communities and supported the study, hoping it would highlight the benefits of using these reserves to stimulate Utah’s economy. The Utah Credit Union echoed these concerns and requested that the sponsor include them in the Task Force.

Yeas: 6

Nays: 0

N/V: 1

Outcome: SB 323, as amended, passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: 5th Substitute HB 40 – School Safety Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Ryan D. Wilcox

Floor Sponsor: Senator Ann Millner
UASD Position: Support

This Bill modifies school safety provisions.

Discussion: Representative Wilcox presented the Bill and introduced the 5th substitute of HB 40, which the Committee adopted. The substitute changes the school safety assessment requirement from an annual review to every three years. It also removes the Higher Education Requirements Needs Assessment, with the State Security Chief working directly with the Board to address their needs. Additionally, increased building standards requirements have been eliminated. A chief information security officer has been added to the School Security Task Force.

The substitute specifies that both public and private schools must conduct an initial radio coverage test using a qualified professional and appropriate testing equipment, with results submitted to the fire code official. Routine follow-up testing may be conducted by the fire code official using basic equipment, and if issues arise, additional professional testing may be required. Clarifications have also been made regarding panic alert devices to ensure proper functionality before implementation. The Bill modifies communication device requirements for new construction to apply after post-completion determination. It revises screening and training requirements for school safety personnel and adjusts their roles.

A school safety foundation is established to allow for private donations, compliance support measures are created, and administrative structures within the school safety program are restructured. Regarding funding, all ongoing funding has been removed, and the one-time grant funding has been reduced from \$100 million to \$50 million. The Bill also mandates that universal keys be stored in boxes outside each school, accessible to law enforcement and public safety personnel in emergencies, including school intruders, earthquakes, and fires.

Senator McKell expressed support for the Bill but noted concerns from school districts in his area about the cost of implementation. Senator Vickers inquired about school entrance security and enforcement. The sponsor explained that the Senate requested the removal of that provision, so it is not addressed in the Bill. However, he affirmed that existing laws already include measures for securing school entrances. Last year's legislation mandated ground-level security, and the original Bill had proposed extending those measures to second floors.

Senator Sandall questioned the necessity of school resource officers at elementary school entrances if the entrance is already secured, suggesting that resources might be better allocated to secondary schools where threats could originate from students. The sponsor clarified that the Bill does not dictate officer placement but allows schools greater flexibility in assigning them based on need. He emphasized that secure entrances do not eliminate the need for school resource officers. Senator Sandall confirmed that last year's legislation required a school resource officer in every school, to which the sponsor agreed, noting that schools could alternatively hire private security or use the guardian program.

The Utah PTA and the Utah Department of Public Safety spoke in support of the Bill. The Committee expressed a desire for the sponsor to continue working with the Senate to address any

remaining concerns but ultimately passed the Bill out of Committee for consideration by the full Senate.

Yeas: 4

Nays: 2

N/V: 1

Outcome: 5th Substitute HB 40 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

UNASSD