

House Economic Development and Workforce Services Committee
March 4th, 2025

Bill: 1st substitute SB 289 – Community Development Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Wayne A. Harper

Floor Sponsor: Representative Trevor Lee

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill addresses community reinvestment agencies.

Discussion: The sponsor explained that the Bill clarifies the reporting process for community reinvestment and redevelopment agencies, eliminates duplicate reporting requirements, and establishes penalties for failing to submit the required annual report, along with steps to rectify noncompliance. The Bill also outlines the responsibilities of the county auditor, requiring them to provide information not only to taxing entities but also to the Governor’s Office of Economic Opportunity. Additionally, the county auditor must notify taxing entities when a project area expires.

Representative Owens asked whether county auditors had any opposition to the Bill. The sponsor confirmed that he had worked with them and that they had no concerns. There was no further discussion.

Yeas: 6

Nays: 0

N/V: 4

Outcome: 1st substitute SB 289 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: 3rd substitute SB 316 – Military Installation Development Authority and Other Development Zone Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Jerry W. Stevenson

Floor Sponsor: Representative Val L. Peterson

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill deals with the Military Installation Development Authority and the distribution of certain sales tax revenues related to certain authorities and zones.

Discussion: The sponsor presented the 3rd substitute of the Bill, explaining that it clarifies how a qualified development zone can collect sales tax. He specified that only the portion of construction materials belonging to the entity, not the state of Utah, can be collected. The Committee adopted the 3rd substitute.

The Bill allows the State Armory Board and the Military Installation Development Authority (“MIDA”) to operate within project areas while also enabling MIDA to establish contracts

directing revenue from these projects toward infrastructure improvements outside the project areas. MIDA will serve as the lead agency for conducting environmental reviews.

The Bill further authorizes eligible basic special districts to use tax revenue under specific conditions and permits public infrastructure districts (“PIDs”) created by MIDA to function as subsidiaries of the authority. MIDA will have the discretion to determine whether a PID should operate as a subsidiary or an independent entity. Nicole Cottle, Chief Legal & Administrative Officer at MIDA, joined the presentation to help address questions.

Representative Miller asked a series of clarifying questions. First, he inquired whether MIDA was providing funding to two private ski resorts. The sponsor confirmed that this was not the case. Representative Miller then asked if the Bill would allow MIDA to conduct its own environmental impact analysis. The sponsor clarified that this provision was removed in the 2nd substitute.

Representative Fiefia asked how the Bill ensures that local municipalities retain control over tax revenue usage for military projects and development zones. The sponsor provided background on MIDA’s founding, explaining that all growth and changes within MIDA have been developed in collaboration with local municipalities and state military agencies. Ms. Cottle added that MIDA will continue working cooperatively with municipalities. Representative Fiefia then asked whether municipalities would have veto power. The sponsor responded that he did not foresee a scenario where this would be necessary, as MIDA is welcomed into communities.

Representative Cutler asked whether the Fairpark area investment was included in the Bill. Ms. Cottle explained that the tax entity changes in the Bill extend beyond MIDA. The sponsor added that four entities share commonalities in this Bill and that the changes made were incorporated into the substitutes. Representative Cutler then asked whether any specific new projects were anticipated under the Bill. Ms. Cottle stated that a new project area for the National Guard is under consideration.

Representative Shelley asked whether the state or the municipality would have the final authority on implementation. The sponsor clarified that MIDA would have the final say but only with the permission of the local entity. No further discussion followed.

Yeas: 4

Nays: 3

N/V: 3

Outcome: 3rd substitute SB 316 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: 1st substitute SB 259 – State Holy Days

Sponsor: Senator Keven J. Stratton

Floor Sponsor: Representative Michael J. Petersen

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill amends provisions relating to certain days and commemorative periods recognized by the state.

Discussion: The sponsor explained that this Bill allows individuals to designate a state holy day as a personal day off from work. Additionally, the Bill establishes Easter Sunday—the first Sunday after the first full moon following the Spring Equinox—as a state holiday. Lines 59-60 provide for personal leave days, allowing employees to observe either a state holy day or another religious day of their choice. Line 193 introduces a new category of holidays called "state holy days," which are distinct from legal holidays and include commemorative days and state holidays.

Representative Miller asked about the reasoning for adding Easter as a state holiday. The sponsor explained that the decision was based on the fact that approximately 75% of the state's population identifies as Christian. Representative Shallenberger asked whether Easter would be recognized as both a state holiday and a legal holiday. The sponsor noted that Christmas is an example of a holiday that holds both designations and explained that the intent was to signify Easter's significance.

The Worldwide Organization for Women spoke in favor of the Bill, expressing hope that the designation of state holy days could eventually be extended to students as well. Representatives Owens and Shallenberger also spoke in favor of the Bill. Representative Miller expressed support for various aspects of the Bill but ultimately opposed it. He raised concerns that other religious traditions, such as Wiccan or Pagan holidays, were not included in the list of state holy days. He argued that the finite list of recognized religious observances could imply that the state was taking a position on religion. No further discussion followed.

Yeas: 7

Nays: 1

N/V: 2

Outcome: 1st substitute SB 259 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.