

2023 General Session Report

Senator Jen Plumb



Dear Friends,

We wrapped up the 2023 General Legislative Session, and legislators have returned to their regular schedules, to their families, and for many like myself, they returned to their full-time jobs. While the Legislature is part-time, I am eager to hear the voices of my constituents *all year long*. I look forward to your emails, letters, and calls. The best way to reach me and to share your policy concerns is through my legislative email: jplumb@le.utah.gov

It was an eventful first general session for me as a Senator. I enjoyed serving on the Senate Minority leadership team as the *Minority Assistant Whip*, which also allowed me to dive deeper into the State's budget because leadership members serve on the *Executive Appropriations Committee* (EAC). This committee builds and approves the final State budget after receiving recommendations from the 8 different appropriations *subcommittees*. Each of the subcommittees reviews a very specific portion of the state budget. I served on the Infrastructure and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee, as well as the Executive Offices and Criminal Justice Appropriations Subcommittee.

In addition to the budget, the Legislature considered a variety of policy issues and legislation—we passed 575 bills this session! It's important to remember that each bill is *not* always a major policy adjustment. There are many bills that make simple tweaks and technical changes to our existing statute. You can read more about the legislation and funding items I sponsored this session on the following pages of this report. I'll also describe some bills we defeated this session.

As always, I welcome your feedback, input, and stories. I am grateful for your support in Senate District 9, and I want to ensure your voice is heard throughout the entire legislative process at the Capitol.

Kindly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jen Plumb".

Senator Jen Plumb
Minority Assistant Whip
Utah Senate District 9

Subscribe to my
newsletter by visiting:
jenplumb.com



My 2023 Senate Sponsored Legislation



S.B. 86, Drug Testing and Paraphernalia Amendments: This bill will allow Utahns to access essential tools to fight the drug overdose crisis facing our state and nation. It modifies our drug paraphernalia statute to *exclude* testing products, such as fentanyl test strips, from the drug paraphernalia definition.



S.B. 92, Special License Plate Designation: This bill creates the Great Salt Lake Preservation support special group license plate. Additionally, revenue generated by the support special group license plate will be deposited into an account to enhance preservation of the Great Salt Lake watershed and ecosystem.



S.B. 109, Child Health Medical Amendments: This bill would have created a medical director position with a specific focus on children, youth, and families within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). While this bill didn't pass, I am going to continue efforts in the interim.



S.B. 122, Drug Paraphernalia Amendments: This bill would have established a path for individuals, who are safely possessing syringes, to access an affirmative defense. This would support public safety and public health in our communities. While this bill didn't pass, I am going to continue efforts in the interim.



S.B. 155, Litigation Proceed Fund Amendments: This bill addresses the use of funds received from opioid litigation proceeds by designating the Office of Substance Use and Mental Health as the reporting entity for settlements and agreements. This bill ensures we have performance indicators, guardrails, and processes in place to better support Utahns and manage these funds.



S.B. 218, Private Probation and Court Ordered Services Amendments: This bill prohibits predatory private probation practice and supports appropriate therapeutic treatment services in the criminal justice setting.



My 2023 Floor Sponsored Legislation



Rep. Eliason's H.B. 78, *Behavioral Health Treatment Access Amendments*: This bill requires health benefit plans to offer behavioral health treatment options to our healers in the health care workforce.



Rep. Lesser's H.B. 137, *State Crustacean Designation*: This bill designates the brine shrimp as the state crustacean. I was proud to floor sponsor this bill and am impressed by the amazing advocacy of sixth-graders from Salt Lake City's Emerson Elementary School on this policy!



Rep. Welton's H.B. 288, *Opioid Dispensing Requirements*: This bill encourages the prescription of naloxone, the opioid overdose reversal drug. It also requires pharmacists and physicians to offer naloxone in certain patient circumstances.



Rep. Ward's H.B. 460, *Settlement Fund Amendments*: This bill addresses the state's proceeds from certain settlement agreements related to electronic cigarette products. The funds go into a restricted account that may only be used for programs and activities related to the prevention and cessation of electronic cigarette, nicotine products, marijuana, and other drug use.



Rep. Hollins' H.B. 487, *Sickle Cell Disease*: This bill requires the Division of Population Health—in collaboration with others within the Department of Health and Human Services—to review and develop recommendations for improving the surveillance, screening, diagnosis, and treatment of sickle cell disease.

Fortunate Near-Misses



H.B. 329, *Event Permit Notification Amendments*: This bill would have required a public entity to provide public notice for a permitted event with an "adult theme." This bill was also known as the "drag show ban."



S.B. 254, *Drug-induced Homicide Amendments*: This bill would have created a new offense—a drug-induced homicide. It could have had unintended consequences of folks not seeking assistance or calling 911.



H.B. 451, *State Entity Restrictions*: This bill would have prohibited the use of diversity, equity, and inclusion statements or materials by a state entity to determine employment, admission, or other benefits.



S.B. 283, *Study of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education*: In its original form, this bill would have prohibited the funding or maintenance of diversity, equity, and inclusion offices or officers in the system of higher education. The bill was substituted to create a study on DEI.



H.B. 505, *Feral Cat Amendments*: This bill would have authorized a municipal or county animal control officer to refuse to release a stray animal, and it would have limited one's ability to feed a stray cat to daylight hours only.

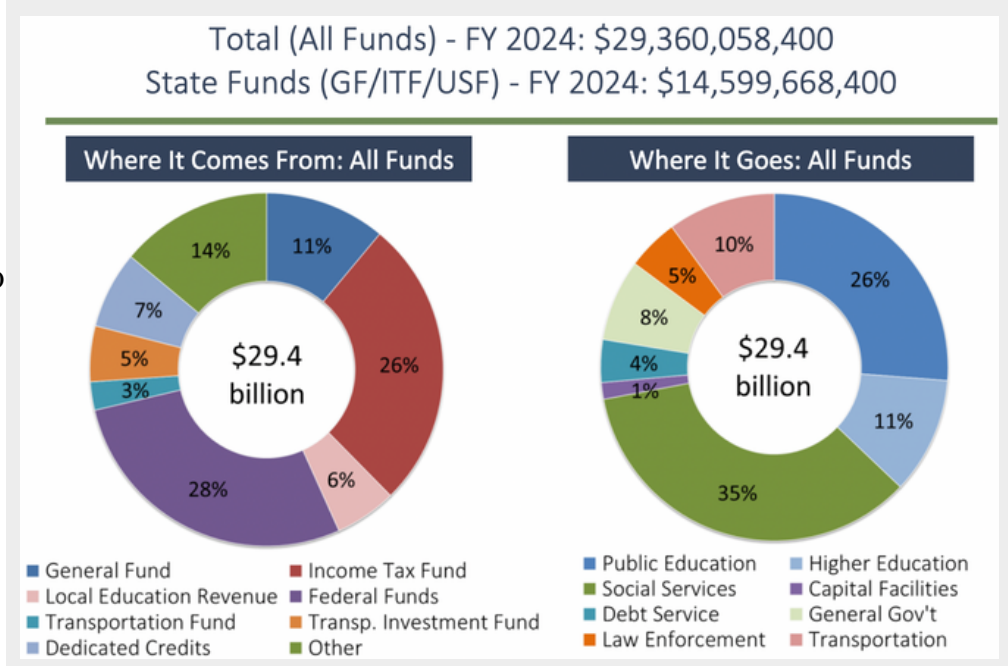


H.B. 283, *Unemployment Insurance Amendments*: This bill would have prevented many individuals from receiving unemployment benefits by modifying the Employment Security Act.

The State Budget

Highlighted Funding Items:

- Caregiver Compensation:** \$2.3 million ongoing from the General Fund to support caregivers of individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities
- Deeply Affordable Housing:** \$50.0 million in one-time funds and \$20.0 million ongoing from the General Fund, and \$30.0 million one-time from American Rescue Plan Act federal funds
- Air and Water Innovation Grant:** \$8.0 million one-time from the General Fund to help incentivize business entities to implement projects to improve air quality in the State, or the conservation or more efficient utilization of water resources in the State.
- Public Education:** \$233.1 million to increase the Weighted Pupil Unit (WPU) value by 6% from \$4,038 to \$4,280 and \$196.9 million for educator salary bonuses.
- Postpartum Medicaid Coverage:** Legislation was funded to support new clients with Medicaid family planning services and a Medicaid waiver to provide 10 additional months of postpartum coverage.



My Sponsored Funding Requests:

Medically Assisted Treatment Administration Fee Increase: This funding would increase the daily fee for dispensing methadone. In doing so, this will provide the necessary funds to maintain the appropriate staffing at the offices that provide these services.



Utah Judicial Conduct Commission (JCC): This funding will increase the JCC's base funding to ensure they can continue to provide the core governmental service of judicial ethics oversight.

Accessibility Improvements to LGBTQ+ Health Clinic: This funding will ensure compliance and enhance accessibility by purchasing and installing an elevator in Utah's first-ever LGBTQ+ community health center.



Utah Pediatric Trauma Network Support (UPTN): This funding would have provided increased support to the UPTN, which is a non-competitive, transparent, all inclusive, statewide program aimed at improving the capabilities of hospitals to care for injured kids across Utah. I will continue to advocate for more resources in this critical realm.