



## 2018 LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC POLICY GUIDE

The Utah Valley Chamber represents hundreds of businesses located in Utah County, the epicenter of Utah's economic development success. We are a member-driven organization whose mission is to build relationships, advocate principle-based public policy and promote business and community prosperity.





Dear Citizens of Utah County:

Utah Valley is frequently identified as being among the best places in the country to do business. These rankings do not come by accident. In fact, a primary reason for these accolades is the business-friendly ordinances and laws passed by our local officials and state legislature. In particular, we thank our state legislature for its continued commitment to allocate new funding to help our public and higher education systems manage their growth.

The Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce is committed to promoting legislation at all levels of government that strengthens and facilitates business growth and a prosperous community. We believe a strong economy results in a broader tax base, which helps fund our critical government needs such as education, transportation and public safety.

Multiple levels of the business community have been engaged in the development of our legislative priorities for 2018. They were developed initially by the Chamber's Public Policy Committee with the goal of narrowing the focus to three utmost important priorities for Utah County. The Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors ratified these three priorities and this policy guide. We encourage Chamber members and others in the business community to contact their legislators and local officials to push for support of these priorities, which are outlined herein. We also encourage legislators and local officials to exert their influence to promote the passage of ordinances and legislation in support of these priorities.

The Utah Valley Chamber is proud to be the voice of business in Utah Valley. We are actively engaged in policy issues to represent the thousands of businesses located in our growing and prosperous region. With the help of legislators, we hope to continue to be the best place in the country to live, learn, work and play.

Cameron Martin  
2018 Board Chair

Jeremy Hafen  
Public Policy Committee Chair

Rona Rahlf  
President and CEO

## Statement of Principles:

We believe in a low tax rate with a strong economic base, effective regulation, top-notch infrastructure, a talented, diverse workforce, well-managed and limited government (at all levels), and a high quality of life for our families to live, work and play.

## 2018 LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

### 1. Workforce Development

#### **Education alignment with industry needs**

Utah Valley's economy ranks among the best in the country and is the heartbeat of our state's economy. Attracting, training, and keeping qualified employees remain as one of the main challenges facing Utah County companies.

The economic prosperity of our region is dependent upon the access to and development of a workforce talent-pipeline that can create new and accelerate existing businesses. The alignment of education programs with the labor needs and expectation of industry that feed the talent-pipeline is critical. Yet, according to the Association of American Colleges and Universities, less than one third of employers feel that recent college graduates are ready for the work place.

*Better and deliberate alignment of talent development with workforce demands is critical to our future economic prosperity. Funding must increase to meet the needs of more faculty and facilities as well as attracting students to meet the ever-growing demands of industry.*

### 2. Transportation and Infrastructure

#### **Fund arterial and city roads**

Municipal flexibility-The cities of Utah County have varying needs based on the tax base of each community. One size legislation does not fit all.

*New legislation must be enacted to allow our cities to determine the use of the tax and or utility fee funds based on the unique makeup of each municipality.*

### 3. Tax Structure that Supports Education

#### **Support legislation and funding to address K-12 education teacher shortage issues.**

Recent local tax increases point heavily at the need for Local Education Agencies (LEA) to address teacher shortages by way of salary increases in Utah. Many of our college graduates leave Utah for higher compensation packages - which include both salary and benefits in other

states. Recent property tax increases by several School Districts, in an effort to combat teacher shortages, creates pressure on other School Districts to follow suit or lose teachers to neighboring districts.

Teachers are some of the most influential members of our community, and the best teachers indelibly shape the lives of our children for good. Unfortunately, teaching is increasingly becoming a less-attractive profession, according to the Utah Education Policy Center, that reports more than half of Utah teachers leaving the profession within the first five of their start. Additionally, UEPC reports that Utah teachers are leaving because they feel a lack of respect from within the educational system and the community broadly. If we want to attract and retain the best teachers in Utah, we must find ways to encourage more qualified persons into the profession, give them the respect and resources they deserve and need to be successful, and help them inspire our children's learning.

*The Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce encourages the school boards, with the support of the state legislature to define local solutions to keep certified teachers in Utah and at school districts long term, earmark funds specifically for teacher compensation packages to achieve retention of the best teachers, and enact policy for performance-based compensation, which will create pathways for esteemed careers as educators.*

## EGGS AND ISSUES

During the legislative session, the Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce hosts a Saturday morning breakfast, *Eggs and Issues*, with members of the Utah County legislative delegation.

### **Eggs & Issues – Utah Valley Chamber hosted by Intermountain Healthcare**

Saturday, 7:30 am

January 27, Clark Auditorium

February 10, Utah Valley Hospital Sorenson Tower, Ashton Auditorium

March 3, Utah Valley Hospital Sorenson Tower, Ashton Auditorium

The Utah Valley Chamber also supports the following legislative meetings sponsored by other chambers of commerce within Utah Valley:

### **Bagels & Bills – Spanish Fork/Salem Chamber-hosted by Revere Health**

Nebo School District Office

Saturday, 7:30 am

February 3 and 24

### **Pancakes & Politics – American Fork Chamber hosted by Intermountain Healthcare**

American Fork Hospital

Saturday, 9:30 am

February 3 and 24

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## **UTAH VALLEY CHAMBER PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

The Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce Public Policy Committee meets monthly to review key policy issues affecting business and to propose to the Board of Directors the Chamber’s legislative priorities and its stance on proposed legislation. Jeremy Hafen chairs the Public Policy Committee.

The committee is comprised of key business, education, and civic leaders from throughout Utah Valley. If you are interested in participating as a member of the committee, please contact Rona Rahlf at 801-851-2562 or email [rona@thechamber.org](mailto:rona@thechamber.org).

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