

UTC's 2013 HIGH-PRIORITY PUBLIC POLICY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

— Why It Matters To You —

It was another great year on the Hill—possibly our best session yet! As our #1 industry issue, UTC zeroed in on the Talent Shortage and other industry-critical issues that impact our member companies, with a success rate of 5 out of 6 on our High-Priority Legislation!

High-Priority Support Legislation

\$10 Million to Advance STEM Education

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Action Center (*HB 139 by Rep. Val Peterson, Sen. Steve Urquhart*) – **PASSED**

The STEM Action Center initiative, with its Board, will use the substantial funds appropriated to create a STEM Action Center to help teachers adopt STEM best practices. The STEM Action Center's primary goal is to support teacher professional development and excite students with STEM opportunities, by providing effective STEM education/digital learning tools to public K-12 classrooms.

Stronger math and science skills are a must for tomorrow's technology workforce. The STEM Action Center will help our students be much better prepared to fill the "hot STEM jobs" with thousands of openings now and in the future.

As our #1 legislative priority, UTC provided strong industry engagement through committee testimonies, Calls to Action and key lobbying support in order to ensure the passage of this critical bill. Other community partners joined with us.

This is one of the most significant pieces of legislation with substantial new funding to pass the 2013 session and will change the course of Utah's education going forward to prepare our ample workforce to compete globally for jobs today and tomorrow. It was an historic feat for industry, government and education to come together on this important economic development issue.

Aligning Education and Economic Goals

Education Task Force (*SB 169 by Sen. Stuart Reid*) – **PASSED**

This bill creates the Education Task Force, which will focus on aligning both public and higher education with the state's workforce needs and economic development goals. The 14 members of the Task Force (leadership including chairs of education legislative committees) will **create a comprehensive plan for K-20 public education**. They'll make recommendations on public education and higher education issues **and help legislators better understand where over 100 education bills fit annually.**

This significant alignment of appropriators will help support a successful educational system focused on student achievement and industry needs! UTC's high-priority support of this bill is in line with our passion for further fueling Utah's industry growth by addressing this serious talent shortage.

Improvements to the School Grading System

School Grading Amendments (*SB 271 by Sen. Stuart Adams*) – **PASSED**

This substantially improves the original bill passed by President Wayne Niederhauser in the 2011 Session, which was UTC's top initiative as a **result of Governor Jeb Bush's strong endorsement that this one initiative has made a significant improvement in Florida's workforce over the past decade.**

With a letter grade (A-F) given to all 1,100 Utah schools, the criteria and procedures for determining school grades include calculation of learning growth and measuring high school students' college and career readiness; these will be modified by this bill.

Governor's Approval of the State Superintendent

Joint Resolution on State Superintendent of Public Instruction (*SJR 5 by Sen. Stuart Reid*) – **PULLED**

This resolution proposed to amend the Utah Constitution to require the Governor's approval and the Senate's consent for an appointment of a new State Superintendent of Public Instruction. It would authorize the Governor to terminate the Superintendent after consulting with the State Board of Education. **The Governor would then have real input into the quality of Utah's K-12 education and be held accountable for it.** It would require a 2/3 vote by the public to make this needed change.

High-Priority Oppose Legislation

Protecting Industry Leadership in Education

School Board Elections Provisions (*HB 59 by Rep. Jim Nielson*) – **DEFEATED**

The goal of this house bill was to repeal the involvement of the Governor and the nominating and recruiting committee in the nomination of candidates for the State Board of Education and establish a primary election for those candidates. Under the existing system, the technology industry has been involved with the nominating process and has been successful in getting industry leaders involved and elected to the state board. **With the defeat of this bill, the industry will continue to have a voice in shaping our technology companies' future workforce with an emphasis on recruiting STEM and Rigor candidates.**

Stopping Industry-Harming Amendments – Internet Tax

Sales and Use Tax Amendments (*SB 226 by Sen. Wayne Harper*) – **DEFEATED**

UTC helped to defeat this bill that would have had huge repercussions for the technology industry. We are pushing for the Federal government to weigh in and impose the tax uniformly throughout the country.

Our industry opposed this bill because it is extremely costly to deal with 50 different states' sales tax laws and any eCommerce enterprise that has an affiliate (service provider) based in Utah would create a nexus, thus subjecting the company to be taxed. The bill had a Constitutional issue and was ambiguous. Under current law, a portion of sales taxes is set aside for transportation and other purposes.

*NOTE: Thanks to your involvement this session, we succeeded in advancing industry needs at the Capitol. But there's still more that we can do! **Come be part of the "industry voice" through UTC's Public Policy Forums where we meet regularly throughout the year.***