



## Less than 3 weeks to go, and all the big items are not yet decided.



The legislature has been hard at work for the last 4 weeks, but almost all of the more important items are yet to be decided. Here is a short list of what I see as the biggest items up for consideration this session.

\* An attempt was made in the House to undo SB54 from two years ago (sometimes called the Count My Vote Compromise). There were strong feelings expressed, but in the end it was voted down so the current law still stands, although it is still being evaluated by the courts. Final court rulings are expected and needed because the early stages of the election are already well underway.

\* The 2 bills relating to Medical Marijuana are right on the verge of finishing in the Senate. The bill that only allows for Cannabidiol, but not full plant Marijuana (SB 89), looks like it will easily pass the Senate. The other bill (SB 73) that would allow full plant Medical Marijuana use got debated for a full 2 hours in the Senate on Friday, but then put off until Monday. It may pass the Senate, but I don't think it has near enough support to pass the House. Even though I don't think it will make it through the whole process, I am hoping that it passes in the Senate, so that we will at least have some formal debate process in the House because I think it is an important issue. For myself, there are still some additional restrictions that I would want to see in place before I would vote for it, but with tight restrictions, I could support some medical usage.

\* There is a bill being proposed that would set aside a large amount of money for state water projects. There are three items under consideration. One is the Lake Powell pipeline, one is to divert and use water from the Bear River, and one is to have money set aside for long term repair of our existing water infrastructure. As of now, I am not in favor of the bill because of the inclusion of the Lake Powell Pipeline project, but I am very supportive of the idea that we need to set some money aside so that we will be able to repair our other water infrastructure as it ages. States and local entities used to be able to get federal loans for these kinds of projects, but that is no longer the case, so we need to have our own plan in place. We'll see how this bill is amended as it moves through the process.

\* We are still waiting for Representative Dunnigan (the Majority Leader) to publish the exact text of his Partial Medicaid Expansion bill. This seems like the only Medicaid expansion bill that will have a chance to make it through this session. It would only cover about 15,000 of the 60,000 people below the poverty level who don't currently have coverage, but I see that as better than nothing (which is what we have done the last 3 years), so I am hoping that it will get good support.

\* There is a bill that will change how often we update our building codes. There are national guidelines published every 3 years, which we are free to accept or not, but currently we at least consider them every 3 years. The new bill will cut that back to only consider them every 9 years. This relates to air quality because emissions from homes are one of the things that contribute to our difficulties with bad air. There may yet be some large amendments made to the bill but as it stands now, I will not be supporting it.

\* A decision will still have to be made as to whether the state intends to pursue a lawsuit against the federal government to try and regain control of all of the lands within our state that are currently under federal control. My preference would be that the process is resolved in Congress through the public lands initiative proposed by Congressman Rob Bishop.

\* And finally, probably the biggest thing that we get done every year is to set all the spending levels in the budget. The next-to-final draft should be out by around the end of this week, and then the final vote will be in the last couple of days of the session.

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## Caucus night is coming up March 22nd

Caucus night is coming up in just about 1 month.

It will be on March 22nd, and for the first time ever this year, you will actually have the chance to vote for your preference for the Presidential Race at caucus night instead of waiting until the primary election in June. As things are shaping up, the presidential primary races may still be hotly contested at that time so, unlike some election cycles where the primary races are pretty much over by the time they come to our state, our votes may really make a difference.

As usual, we will also be electing state and county delegates at caucus night which help choose our nominees for all our local Utah political offices. The process for electing delegates will be similar to how it has always been, that is, you will need to be physically present at the neighborhood caucus to run to be a delegate (which I hope you will do as it is a great experience) or to vote on which of your neighbors will be the delegate.

But the voting for the presidential nominees will be both in person and online. If you are coming to the caucus, you can just come same as always, and be checked in that night. But if you are unable to come that night, and are still



wanting to vote in the Presidential race online, you will need to go online to register ahead of time. Here are the links to [register for online voting in the Republican primary](#), or if you prefer, to [register for online voting in the Democratic primary](#).

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*Town Hall meeting  
Thursday Feb 25  
&  
Saturday Noon Chats*



Representative Becky Edwards and Senator Todd Weiler and I will host a town hall meeting this **Thursday, February 25th at the Bountiful Library from 7:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M.**

As I mentioned above, most all the big issues are being voted on in the last two weeks of the session, so if you want to keep up on what is going on, or want to let us know what you hope happens, this is your chance.

Also, a reminder that you are welcome to come visit at my home on the remaining 2 Saturdays of the session at noon. So that is this Saturday, Feb 27th, and the following Saturday, March 5th. We usually have between 4 and 8 people there, so it is plenty small enough to discuss whatever you would like. My house is 954 East Millbrook Way, Bountiful.

I hope to see you there.

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