# 2019 Utah Legislative Session Update

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## 2019 Utah Legislative Session Update

The 2019 Legislative session is in the books. The beginning of the Session was dominated by a disappointing rollback of voter-approved Prop 3, which will cover fewer families and create additional barriers to care. The latter half of the Session was dominated by an ambitious tax bill that, while containing some good intentions and beneficial elements (including our IGP EITC proposal), was ultimately set aside so that it could get the fuller consideration and refinement that it deserves during the interim. Nevertheless, our staff worked on many more issues and bills and there still many wins for kids and families this Session. I have to say that our staff is the best there is. They worked tirelessly, sometimes behind the scenes, to make sure that the voice of Utah's children and families were heard loudly at all levels of this important


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policy arena. Below is a recap of the legislative session 2019.

## Health

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| **Maternal Mental Health Appropriation - Priority Appropriations!**<br><br>• We worked with a variety of partners including the YWCA, American Academy of Pediatrics-Utah Chapter and Postpartum Support Utah to support funding for statewide maternal mental health services and treatment. This is the first-ever state appropriation for maternal mental health care and an important first step to strengthen our system of support for mothers and babies!<br>• Rep. Dailey-Provost (D-Salt Lake City) appropriations sponsor | Passed - Priority Appropriations! |
| **Keeping Kids Covered – Priority Issue!**<br><br>• Legislation which could help families receive additional information or support during their Medicaid re-enrollment or review periods. Re-enrollment or review periods can be a time when many eligible kids lose health insurance, through no fault of their own.<br>• This is an important first step to help keep all kids covered, all year-round.<br>• Rep. Daw (R-Orem) intent language sponsor | Passed - Priority Issue! |
| **SB96 – Medicaid Expansion** | Opposed, but this bill passed |



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| **Adjustments**<br><br>• Rolls back voter-approved Proposition 3, full Medicaid expansion<br>• Reduces full Medicaid expansion to a partial, more limited expansion; fewer people will have access to affordable Medicaid coverage<br>• Imposes harmful work reporting requirements, enrollment caps and funding caps on Medicaid<br>• Requires Utah to seek federal approval in order to implement<br>• IF waivers are rejected by the federal government, then the 'fallback' plan is closer to full Medicaid expansion, as voters intended<br>• Continued public action is needed, in order to oppose the waivers and tell lawmakers that Utah voted for full Medicaid expansion, not partial. | |
| **HB366- Health Care Amendments**<br><br>• Makes important updates to Utah's CHIP program to ensure kids have access to mental health parity.<br>• Rep. Dunnigan (R-Taylorsville) sponsor | Passed |
| **HB373 – Student Support Amendments**<br><br>• Provides grants for more mental | Passed |



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| health workers in schools, including school nurses and social workers.<br>• Will expand student supports in schools, to help more kids access needed health services before a health condition or situation escalates.<br>• A very important step forward for Utah kids' health and well-being<br>• Rep. Eliason (R-Sandy) sponsor | |
| **SB83 - Partnerships for Healthy Communities**<br><br>• First of its kind bill, which elevated the significance of social determinants of health on early childhood outcomes. Created the Partnerships for Healthy Communities Grant Program, drawing on community strengths to help improve early childhood health outcomes in high need communities.<br>• Brought attention to important community factors affecting kids' healthy development!<br>• Sen. Millner (R-Ogden) sponsor | Did not pass |
| **HB372 - Dental Hygienist Amendments**<br><br>• Bill would have increased vulnerable populations' access to preventive dental care, including school-based sealant programs. Would have allowed for dental hygienists to bill Medicaid, under certain, specific conditions. | Did not pass |



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| • Rep. Watkins (R-Price) sponsor | |

## Keeping Immigrant Families Together

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| **HB244 – Misdemeanor sentencing timeline change**<br>• Keeps the maximum sentence for low-level (misdemeanor) offenses under 365 days (the point at which automatic deportation is triggered for legal permanent residents, refugees, and other non-citizens).<br>• Provided behind-the-scenes support.<br>• Rep. Hutchings (R- Kearns) sponsor | Passed |
| **HR003 House Resolution Supporting Humane Response to Refugee Crisis**<br>• Sending a letter to Utah federal delegation and other federal leaders from the House urging a humane response to the crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border.<br>• Rep. Dailey-Provost (D- Salt Lake City) sponsor | Passed |

## Juvenile Justice

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| **SB32 – Juvenile indigent defense reform – Priority Bill!**<br>• Ensures that all kids have access | Passed- Priority Bill! |



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| to an attorney when appearing in juvenile court, regardless of parents' ability to pay, and that they retain legal counsel as long as necessary for legal outcomes.<br>• Supported by our "And Justice for All Kids" report with SJ Quinney College of Law. Provided testimony and conducted extensive media.<br>• Sen. Weiler (R- Salt Lake City) sponsor | |
| **HB404 – Juvenile justice reform implementation**<br><br>• Requires that money saved by not locking kids up is reinvested in early interventions for kids (rather than taken for other state expenses).<br>• Makes changes to keep the implementation of HB239 smooth.<br>• Rep. Snow (R- St. George) sponsor | Passed |
| **HB120 – School Safety Assessments**<br><br>• We worked hard with our community partners to ensure that this bill did not purchase the promise of safety for some, at the expense of safety and success for others.<br>• We will be working with Utah State Board of Education to implement in a way that is safe and equitable for all students, especially those who belong to already | Passed |



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| marginalized groups based on race, disability and sexual orientation/gender identity.<br>• Funding for “school hardening” was stripped out. Funding for “safety team” personnel” also stripped, went toward HB373 instead (which we like much more).<br>• Substitute bill included all of our suggested changes.<br>• Rep. Ward (R- Bountiful) sponsor | |
| **HB340 – Definitions of Truancy / Absenteeism**<br><br>• Would standardize district-level definitions of “chronic truancy” and limit administrative punishments.<br>• Did not get very far, but we connected sponsor and educators for additional discussions; expect a thorough effort during the interim.<br>• Rep. Snow (R- St. George) sponsor | Did not pass |
| **HB371 – Shelter for young teens w/o parent consent**<br><br>• We testified in support of this bill, helped w/presentation, so teens age 15, 16 and 17 can consent to get shelter and services without delay when parent’s consent is not possible. | Passed |



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## Early Childcare & Learning

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| **HB47 – Early Childhood Commission – Priority Bill!**<br><br>• Will form an executive-level commission focused on coordinating, aligning and improving programs offered to Utah families with young children.<br>• Rep. Weight (D- Salt Lake City) sponsor | Passed – Priority Bill! |
| **SB166 – School Readiness Amendments – Priority Bill!**<br><br>• Brings three different state-funded pre-school initiatives under one oversight body to standardize and improve outcomes.<br>• Retains $12 million in state funding on pre-school efforts, with opportunities for expansion in the future.<br>• Sen. Millner (R- Ogden) sponsor | Passed – Priority Bill! |
| **HB333 – Workforce Development Initiative**<br><br>• We developed a bill with the Utah Child Care Coalition. It would direct GOED to look at working parent benefits when calculating incentives for companies relocating to and expanding in Utah.<br>• Stuck in rules most of the session, but finally got out to receive one VERY successful committee | Did not pass |



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| hearing (unanimous support from Economic Development & Workforce Services Committee).<br>• Rep. Harrison (D- Draper) sponsor | |
| **HB129 – Campaign Funds for use on child care expenses**<br><br>• We didn't do much beyond testify in support, but we were rooting for this bipartisan bill all the way; it initiated many excellent conversations about child care needs and public service.<br>• Rep. Hall (R- West Valley City) sponsor | Passed |
| **SB110 – Unpaid family/medical leave for people working at smaller companies**<br><br>• Would have required Utah businesses that are NOT subject to FMLA to offer three weeks of unpaid leave to their workers. We worked on this throughout summer and fall with multiple partners (AARP, ACLU, YWCA, DLC).<br>• Had one successful committee hearing early in the session, then circled on the Board for rest of the session.<br>• Sen. Hemmert (R- Orem) sponsor | Did not pass |
| **SB83 - Partnership for health communities Grant Program**<br><br>• Would have offered grants to collaborative community-level efforts to improve health outcomes | Did not pass |



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| for little kids (0 to 5).<br>• Got far in the process, but ultimately was voted down in the House.<br>• Sen. Millner (R- Ogden) sponsor | |
| **“Home Safe” program funding – help for families transitioning out of homelessness due to domestic violence.**<br><br>• We worked with Utah Domestic Violence Coalition, YWCA and Crossroads Urban Center to put funding for extended emergency childcare into this appropriations request. An important – and recently unprecedented – state investment in child care subsidies! | Passed |
| **HB209 - Extreme Risk Protective Order bill from Action Utah**<br><br>• Developed in aftermath of school shootings last year | Did not pass |
| **HB87 - Safe Storage of Firearms**<br><br>• Developed in aftermath of school shootings last year | Did not pass |

## Tax Policy

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| **HB103 - Utah Intergenerational Poverty Work and Self-sufficiency Tax Credit – Priority Issue!**<br><br>• Folded into HB441 | Did not pass |
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| **HB441 - Tax Equalization and Reduction Act**<br><br>• The Governor and legislature's effort to modernize Utah's tax structure<br>• Introduced on 2/27/19. This short-lived, controversial and complicated bill received one standing committee hearing. Was pulled from consideration on 3/7/19 | Did not pass |
| **HB495 – Tax Restructuring and Equalization Task Force**<br><br>• The bill is was created as a result of HB441. The task force will obtain input from the Governor's office and the public to modernize Utah's tax structure.<br>• Task force members are expected to be appointed and meetings projected to start in spring/summer 2019<br>• Rep. Schultz (R- Hooper) sponsor | Passed |



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