

JOINT RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING SUPPORT FOR THE HOUSES ACT

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Ken Ivory

Senate Sponsor: Ronald M. Winterton

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This resolution proclaims the Legislature of the state of Utah supports the enactment of the HOUSES Act by the United States Congress.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- highlights the benefits to Utah's communities and families if, pursuant to the HOUSES Act, the state were able to acquire federally-controlled lands for the development of attainable housing; and

- urges the members of the United States Congress to enact the HOUSES Act so that Utah may solve the state's housing shortage and provide a much needed funding source for Utah's growing communities.

Other Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

WHEREAS, nearly two-thirds of Utah's land is controlled by the federal government;

WHEREAS, in 1976, the United States Congress established the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program (PILT) to compensate states for the loss of tax and other revenues that states would generate if Congress had honored an obligation to transfer title of the public lands back to the states;

WHEREAS, the state of Utah received as little as \$0.38 per acre in PILT funds in fiscal year 2022, far below the amount those lands would return through value-based taxation if those lands and their facilities were subject to county taxation;

WHEREAS, as a result of having such a minimal amount of lands subject to taxation or other revenues because of federal retention of these lands, Utah's counties are dependent upon

29 the promise of PILT for as much as 40% of the county's total budget to fund education, police,
30 fire, sanitation, social services, and other essential public services;

31 WHEREAS, as a result of the federal government's unilateral policy change in 1976 to
32 permanently retain nearly two-thirds of Utah's lands under federal control, some counties in
33 Utah have as little as 5% in taxable lands to fund essential public services;

34 WHEREAS, because the state of Utah cannot develop nor tax federally-controlled public
35 lands, Utah's local governments are unable to secure a sufficient and consistent source of
36 funding to provide essential public services and address critical issues, including funding
37 education and fostering an environment for affordable housing;

38 WHEREAS, due to skyrocketing inflation and an increase in demand, housing is becoming
39 unattainably expensive for Utah's residents;

40 WHEREAS, in a 2022 study, the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute at the University of Utah
41 found that 76% of Utah's households could not afford a median-priced home in the state;

42 WHEREAS, with Utah rated as the fastest-growing state in the nation over the past ten
43 years, Utah's housing crisis will only worsen unless more attainable housing is made available
44 to Utah's families;

45 WHEREAS, United States Senator Mike Lee from Utah introduced to Congress the
46 Helping Open Underutilized Space to Ensure Shelter Act of 2023 (HOUSES Act);

47 WHEREAS, the HOUSES Act will allow Utah to acquire parcels of federally-controlled
48 land to use for the development of attainable housing;

49 WHEREAS, with greater access to tax revenues, the HOUSES Act will provide Utah's
50 communities with a stable source of funding for vital essential services; and

51 WHEREAS, with the development of more housing that is affordable and accessible, the
52 HOUSES Act will help alleviate the severe housing shortage impacting Utah's families:

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah supports
54 the efforts of United States Senator Mike Lee and looks forward to working with the members
55 of the Utah congressional delegation on the specific parameters of the HOUSES Act.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature recognizes the tremendous benefits that
57 the HOUSES Act would provide to Utah's communities and families.

58 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to the President of the
59 United States of America, the Vice President of the United States of America, the Speaker of
60 the United States House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the United States
61 Senate, and the members of the Utah congressional delegation.