

2-9-21

Senate Economic Development and Workforce Services Committee

Bill: SB 80, Utah Antidiscrimination Act Amendments

Sponsor: Sen. Kitchen

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill: amends the Utah Antidiscrimination Act to provide protection for immutable traits and hairstyles historically associated with race.

Discussion: The sponsor said legislation to provide protection for immutable traits and hairstyles historically associated with race has only passed in seven states. He believes this is an essential policy conversation. The sponsor's co-presenter said that no one should have to experience discrimination on the texture of their hair and that racist policy has no place in our economy. Sen. Owens asked if this bill is necessary since race is already a protected class. The sponsor said this bill is including race-based hair styles as protected, not simply race. The co-presenter said this bill makes it clear that discrimination based on a person's natural hair style is racial discrimination. Silicon Slopes, Curly Me and members of the public testified their support for this bill. Sen. Mayne voiced support for this bill. Sen. Owens voiced opposition because he believes strong anti-discrimination laws are already in place in Utah. There was a tie vote to send the bill out with a favorable recommendation.

Yeas: 2

Nays: 2

N/V: 3

Outcome: Held in committee

Bill: HB 43, Emergency Procurement Declaration Modifications

Sponsor: Rep. Pierucci

Floor Sponsor: Sen. McCay.

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill: modifies provisions related to the public procurement of goods or services during an emergency.

Discussion: An amendment was added to the bill. Rep. Pierucci worked on this bill with stakeholders over the interim. This bill puts a 30 day cap on the length of an emergency procurement contract by a governmental entity. Emergency procurement contracts made during a natural disasters would have a 60 day cap. After 30 days, the governmental entity would need to follow the competitive bid process laid out in State Statute. The bill requires that an emergency procurement contract be publicly available on the procurement unit's website within two weeks of the emergency procurement. The sponsor said this bill is designed to make the procurement process more competitive and more transparent. The amendment addresses legal services for universities and makes it clear that if DCFS moves a child in a very volatile situation, the child will not have to be moved again in 30 days. The Chair asked why a pandemic was not included in this bill. The sponsor said agencies would still be able to address the issue if another pandemic were to occur, but would be limited to the 30 day emergency procurement process.

Yeas: 4

Nays: 0

N/V: 3

Outcome: Passed out of committee as amended with a favorable recommendation

Bill: 1st substitute HB 17, Utility Permitting Amendments

Sponsor: Rep. Handy

Floor Sponsor: Sen. Hinkins

UASD Position: Tracking

This Bill: prohibits municipalities and counties from making certain restrictions on energy utility services.

Discussion: The sponsor said this substitute is language deals with preserving consumer choice. Representative Handy believes 1st sub. HB 17 is a prevention bill. There are 9 states that have bills similar this to HB 17 designed to preserve consumer choice. Sen. Kitchen said this is a solution looking for a problem. The Utah Clean Energy nonprofit is opposed to the bill because they believe it to be unnecessary. The Healthy Environment Alliance of Utah does not support this bill. Sen. Millner voiced support for this bill.

Yeas: 6

Nays: 1

N/V: 0

Outcome: Passed out of committee with a favorable recommendation