

Date: 2-18-21

## **House Government Operations Committee**

### **Bill: HB 308 Covid-19 Vaccine Amendments**

Sponsor: Rep. Spendlove

Floor Sponsor:

### **UASD Position: Tracking**

This Bill: prohibits a governmental entity from requiring that an individual receive a vaccine for COVID-19.

Discussion: Rep. Spendlove explained that the bill prevents state and local governments from mandating the COVID-19 vaccine. Lines 47-57 list ways the vaccine might be mandated that would not be allowed. Rep. Dailey-Provost asked if there are any other vaccines the state government mandates. Rep. Spendlove said he believes the answer is no. The Libertas Institute supports the bill. The Utah Education Association opposes the bill. They agree that vaccinations should not be mandated by government as a condition of employment, however they disagree with the language about indirect requirements. Rep. Spendlove noted that that language is on line 48. He noted that the bill does not address the actions of private individuals or institutions. Amendment 2 was proposed. Rep. Brooks said the amendment clarifies that this is only for government entities. Rep. Spendlove said this is a friendly amendment that allows some employees in the Department of Public Health to have a small exemption. Amendment 2 was adopted. Rep. Maloy moved to amend the bill by inserting the word “public” before the word “health” on line 60. The amendment passed.

Yeas: 10

Nays: 0

N/V: 1

**Outcome: HB 308 passed out of committee with a favorable recommendation.**

### **Bill: HB 246 Ballot Measure Transparency Amendments**

Sponsor: Rep. Christiansen

Floor Sponsor:

**UASD Position: Tracking**

This Bill: provides for a ballot information statement, relating to a statewide initiative or referendum or a proposed constitutional amendment, that consists of an impartial, accurate description of the measure and the effect of the measure.

Discussion: Rep. Christiansen introduced the bill. Its purpose is to help voters understand the impact of ballot measures. He noted that he's speaking to the 1st substitute. It creates the Utah Ballot Measure Board, which will create ballot information statements. It will consist of three individuals. The statements will be limited to 150 words. Ballots sent out would then include a web address for the statements. They will be listed on [vote.utah.gov](http://vote.utah.gov). The fiscal note has been reduced from \$6,000 to \$3,600 for the state government. Local government costs have been eliminated. Josh Daniels spoke on behalf of the Utah County Clerk/Auditor in support of the 1st substitute. Rep. Waldrip asked if the County Clerks Association has weighed in on the bill. Ricky Hatch, chair of the Clerks Legislative Committee, said the benefits of the bill don't outweigh the negatives. They oppose the bill. Rep. Dailey-Provost said she is concerned about partisanship and accuracy in the statements. She asked if the vote of the 3-member board requires a majority or a unanimous vote. Rep. Christiansen said it requires a majority. Rep. Dailey-Provost asked if he would be open to amending the bill to prevent current legislators from serving on the board. Rep. Christiansen said he doesn't see the need for that since the bill includes avenues for recourse. Rep. Dailey-Provost said she worries that that recourse will be used every time the board acts. Rep. Maloy asked about space on ballots. Mr. Daniels said they reviewed their longest ballot from last year, and it had room for the requirements of this bill. Mr. Hatch said it's difficult to predict whether Salt Lake County would have space on its ballots. He noted that all the counties would have space on a 19-inch ballot, but Salt Lake County would have to spend \$75,000 because they use different equipment than the other counties. Another legislator noted that the ballot already includes a web address for [vote.utah.gov](http://vote.utah.gov). He asked if this is really necessary, and whether a sunset date might be valuable. Rep. Christiansen said he feels it would be useful. He said he hasn't thought about a sunset date, but the bill can always be repealed. The Alliance for a Better Utah opposes the bill. They are concerned about the impartiality of the proposed board, and feel that the legislature should not attempt to influence ballot propositions. The 1st substitute was not adopted. Rep. Waldrip moved to adjourn without taking action on the bill.

Yeas:

Nays:

N/V:

**Outcome: HB 246 was held in committee.**