

Senate Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Committee
01/30/2026

Bill: SB 198 - Water Project Management Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Sandall

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Track

This Bill creates an office within the Division of Water Resources for managing state water projects.

Discussion: The sponsor explained that the Bill includes a provision that generated a fiscal note related to hiring a manager and indicated that this provision would be removed in a future substitute if the Bill advances. SB 198 creates an Office of Water Management within the Division of Water Resources and grants that Office authority to own, operate, and manage certain water projects. According to the sponsor, the Office would enable the state to address potential gaps if they arise, although no specific need has been identified at this time.

Committee members raised concerns that the proposal could encroach on local authority and questioned its potential fiscal impacts. The Executive Director of Utah's Rivers Council testified in opposition, arguing that the bill would increase taxpayer costs and expand government spending. The Committee did not pass the Bill out of the Committee.

Yea: 4

Nay: 2

N/V: 1

Outcome: SB 198 was held in Committee.

Bill: 1st substitute SB 201 - Shelter Animal Euthanasia Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Grover

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Track

This Bill deals with the treatment of dogs and cats in an animal shelter.

Discussion: This Bill prohibits an animal shelter from euthanizing an animal unless no reasonable alternatives are available. The sponsor clarified that the Bill does not apply to animals that require euthanasia to end suffering or to dangerous animals. The Bill requires shelters to notify interested rescue groups at least two days before an intended euthanasia, using any method the shelter chooses, to give rescue groups an opportunity to take custody of the animal.

Committee members asked about penalties for noncompliance. The sponsor stated that the Bill does not establish penalties, and that enforcement is not the intent. The intent is to codify this practice into law. The Committee adopted the 1st substitute, which clarifies that the euthanasia

restrictions do not apply in cases involving dangerous animals. Two members of the public spoke in support of the Bill.

Yea: 4

Nay: 1

N/V: 2

Outcome: 1st substitute SB 201 passed out of Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: SB 179 - Wage Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Blouin

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Track

This Bill amends provisions relating to wages.

Discussion:

Yea:

Nay:

N/V:

Outcome: SB 179 was not heard in Committee today.

Bill: 1st substitute HB 69 - Drinking Water Restructuring Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Albrecht

Floor Sponsor: Senator Stratton

UASD Position: Support

This Bill addresses violations of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Discussion: The sponsor presented the 1st substitute, which was adopted by the Committee. The substitute defines the legal actions authorized under the Bill, clarifies the definition of a receiver, and requires the Director of the Division of Drinking Water to report to a legislative committee if the Director initiates a civil action that could result in a receivership or divestment for a public water system supplier. The sponsor explained that the Bill provides a tool to address drinking water violations that pose serious public health risks and, when a supplier is unwilling or unable to remedy the issue, establishes a process for judicial intervention. The sponsor emphasized that the Bill applies only in the most extreme cases and noted that it was reviewed by the Legislative Water Task Force, the Water Development Commission, and the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee. Committee members asked no questions, and no members of the public testified.

Yea: 6

Nay: 0

N/V: 1

Outcome: 1st substitute HB 69 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

UASC