

Bill: HB 240 – Carbon Dioxide System Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Nguyen

Floor Sponsor: Senator Owens

UASD Position: Support

This Bill concerns carbon dioxide systems.

Discussion: Representative Nguyen explained that the Bill is business-friendly and focused on public safety. HB 240 requires the Utah Fire Prevention Board to create a licensing and certification program for certain carbon dioxide systems and mandates that any person engaged in the business of servicing these systems obtain a license from the State Fire Marshal and, with limited exceptions, that individuals who perform the servicing also hold a certification from the State Fire Marshal. In addition, the Board must establish the necessary rules, application forms, and fees associated with the licensing and certification process, and the State Fire Marshal's Office would develop a licensure program under the Bill. A fire marshal presenting with the sponsor referenced an incident in Layton in which teenage employees of a business were exposed to dangerous carbon dioxide ("CO₂") levels after a CO₂ alarm failed to activate.

Representative Thurston questioned the current certification standards for similar systems. The fire marshal responded that fire extinguishers, fire alarms, fire suppression systems, fire riser systems, and other systems governed by the International Fire Code all require certification from a fire marshal. The Representative also asked about the difference between licensure and certification, and it was explained that companies would receive licenses while individual employees would receive certifications. Representative Kyle questioned the May 6th implementation date and suggested delaying it, while Representative Maloy asked about the existing testing process. The Davis County Fire Marshal explained that the Bill seeks to make municipal certification of third-party entities more uniform. Representative Peterson also suggested adjusting the implementation date.

A member of the public and a manufacturer of CO₂ monitoring systems spoke in support of the Bill. The Committee adopted House Amendment 1, which changes the date required to be licensed or certified to January 1, 2027.

Yeas: 9

Nays: 1

N/V: 6

Outcome: HB 240, as amended, passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: 1st substitute HB 245 – Construction Wage Standard Act

Sponsor: Representative Clancy

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Track and watch closely

This Bill addresses wage standards for construction projects.

Discussion: The sponsor presented the 1st substitute, which was adopted by the Committee. The substitute includes changes recommended by the Utah Plumbing and Heating Contractors Association (“UHPCA”) and the Associated Builders and Contractors (“ABC”), which the sponsor described as minor technical cleanups. The Bill sets standardized wage requirements for state construction, directing the Utah Labor Commission to establish a minimum “wage standard” that varies by county and by type of job, such as electrician, plumber, or carpenter. These rates would be calculated using local prevailing-wage data, what workers typically earn for similar work in the area, along with federal wage-setting guidance used on government projects. Contractors on qualifying public projects, generally those costing at least \$100,000, would be required to meet or exceed those rates, include wage information in bids, keep payroll records, and comply with enforcement provisions, including penalties for violations and civil actions allowing workers to recover unpaid wages, interest, and attorney fees. Apprentices and trainees are exempted in part but must receive at least 60 % of the wage standard. The Bill relies on the existing framework for area wage standards, with checks based on each type of work. The sponsor noted that approximately 95–97% of Utah contractors are non-union and emphasized that the wage is not tied to cost of living but is intended to set guardrails for investing taxpayer dollars in public projects.

Representative Matthews spoke in support of the Bill, citing concerns about the negative effects of out-of-state contractors. Representative Thurston questioned differences in city-to-city bids and average pay levels, as well as the impact on rural workers whose wages may be lower, while Representative Burton asked how higher wage costs would be absorbed. Representative Clancy responded that the Bill would not raise construction costs and explained that the prevailing wage is based on a statewide survey and prevents contractors from undercutting competitors by paying below that standard, particularly firms from out of state. Representative Ivory suggested a local bid preference system, and Representative Clancy distinguished the Bill from the federal Davis-Bacon Act by noting that this Bill specifically addresses area standard wage issues. Representative Thurston also questioned whether the wage floor would make businesses more or less competitive, and the sponsor replied that wages may not necessarily rise but that the number of projects could increase.

The Associated General Contractors of Utah asked for a no-vote on the Bill, while several members of the public spoke in support. Representative Nguyen asked about the availability of skilled labor in the trades, and a member of the public responded that it is limited. Representative Dunnigan expressed support for the Bill, stating it would prevent out-of-state contractors from undercutting wages on government contracts. Representative Peterson clarified that the Bill applies only to state projects, and Representative Burton noted that the state contracting office awards projects to the lowest bidder and said he supported the Bill. Representative Thurston raised concerns about alternative solutions to problems such as lack of workers’ compensation coverage and low work quality, arguing that the Bill would be ineffective in achieving its goals, and Representative Ivory agreed with Representative Thurston.

Yeas: 6

Nays: 5
N/V: 5

Outcome: 1st substitute HB 245 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: 2nd substitute HB 259 – Parental Access to Children’s Medical Records Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Petersen

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Track with Concern

This Bill amends provisions related to parent and guardian access to a minor's medical record. Discussion: The sponsor explained that the Bill requires online medical information platforms to allow parents to access and view the health information of their children. A representative from the Utah Eagle Forum spoke in support of the Bill. Representative Teuscher questioned whether the Bill included other changes, and the sponsor clarified that it requires medical record system providers to implement changes so that parents can view records without requiring the child’s consent. Representative Nguyen questioned the distinction between a “parent” and a “legal guardian”. The sponsor clarified that if a parent is not the legal guardian, they would not have access to the child’s medical records.

Yeas: 9
Nays: 1
N/V: 6

Outcome: 2nd substitute HB 259 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: 2nd substitute HB 41 – Construction and Fire Codes Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Petersen

Floor Sponsor: Senator Vickers

UASD Position: Support

This Bill modifies the State Construction Code.

Discussion: The Committee adopted the 2nd substitute, which makes several technical and policy adjustments to how Utah updates and applies construction and fire-safety codes. It clarifies the Bill’s purpose to emphasize both adopting updated national standards and modifying the 2024 International Wildland-Urban Interface (“WUI”) Code. The substitute also adds a new provision removing Section 602 from the Wildland-urban Interface Code as applied in the state and delays the Bill’s effective date from July 1, 2026 to January 1, 2027. In addition, the substitute includes a provision eliminating the requirement for certain structures to have a sprinkler system. The sponsor directed the Committee to lines 110–114, which address maps showing where WUI areas may be designated.

The Committee asked several clarifying questions about what a category 5 risk means and about the use of the term Utah standards versus international standards. Although the standards are the same, some lawmakers expressed discomfort with using the word “international”. The Utah League of Cities and Towns raised concerns about the creation of city WUI maps in lines 110–114, stating that cities want the ability to determine which areas within their boundaries fall into specific risk categories. The Utah State Fire Chiefs Association indicated that it would have preferred the sprinkler requirement to remain in the Bill but nevertheless spoke in support of the Bill. Riley Pilgrim, with the Unified Fire Authority, explained what causes an area to be classified in categories 5 through 8 and emphasized the importance of adopting best practices in fire prevention through the updated Construction and Fire Code.

Yeas: 9
Nays: 1
N/V: 6

Outcome: 2nd substitute HB 41 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.
