

Senate Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Committee
02/12/2026

Bill: 1st substitute HB 60 - Water Rights Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Shallenberger

Floor Sponsor: Senator Stratton

UASD Position: Support

This Bill addresses water rights and the state engineer's actions related to water rights.

Discussion: The sponsor presented the Bill, stating that it originates from the Division of Natural Resources. The Bill redefines and clarifies the role of the State Engineer in reviewing water applications. The sponsor explained that the State Engineer's review process would focus on beneficial use, quantity, quality, and availability of water. The State Engineer explained that Bill does not remove or alter an individual's right to protest a water application. It adds beneficial use provisions related to sovereign lands and defines "propagation" and "maintenance of the aquatic environment". Temporary change permits are currently required to be posted on the State Engineers website. That transparency will continue to be required.

The Great Salt Lake Commissioner spoke in support of the Bill, stating that water policy is complex and that this legislation provides necessary protections for the Great Salt Lake ("Lake") while streamlining the process. The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food spoke in support of the Bill. The Utah Farm Bureau expressed support, stating that the Bill helps farmers while also benefiting the Lake. The Utah League of Cities and Towns took a neutral position but indicated the wisdom in the direction of this legislation.

Several members of the public spoke in opposition, including several physicians and medical researchers. Opponents expressed concerns about the ecosystem and long-term environmental impacts, arguing that the Bill narrows the authority of the State Engineer in a way that could reduce water flows to the Lake. Concerns were also raised regarding potential impacts on public health, including the lakebed's toxic dust impacts on children. The Utah Rivers Council spoke against the Bill, stating that it removes existing safeguards that protect the welfare of Utah residents. Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment also opposed the Bill, asserting that it could further jeopardize the Great Salt Lake and negatively affect surrounding communities.

Yeas: 5

Nays: 1

N/V: 1

Outcome: 1st substitute HB 60 passed out of Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: 1st substitute HB 37 - Used Oil Management Act Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Chew

Floor Sponsor: Senator Stratton

UASD Position: Support

This Bill makes changes to the Used Oil Management Act.

Discussion: The sponsor presented Senate Amendment 1, which was adopted by the Committee. The amendment requires Division of Waste Management and Radiation Control (“Division”) to notify the State Tax Commission of a fee change at least 90 days before the fee change goes into effect. The Bill increases the recycling fee on the sale of lubricating oil beginning on July 1, 2026. It grants rulemaking authority to the Division to set the recycling fee on the sale of lubricating oil beginning on July 1, 2027. Additionally, it clarifies that the Division may use grant funding to hire permitted transporters as part of a curbside used oil collection program. The Bill provides recycling payments to collection centers at a rate of 25 cents per gallon and increases the recycling fee on the sale of lubricating oil beginning July 1, 2026. It also authorizes grant funding to assist collection centers with transportation costs and curbside collection events.

There were no questions from Committee members, and no member of the public commented on the Bill.

Yeas: 6

Nays: 0

N/V: 1

Outcome: 1st substitute HB 37, as amended, passed out of Committee with a favorable recommendation.