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**Bill: 1st substitute HB 349 - Statewide Water Storage**
Sponsor: Representative Brooks
Floor Sponsor: Senator Vickers
**UASD Position: Track**

This Bill addresses water storage within the state.

Discussion: The sponsor explained that the Bill establishes criteria that must be met for a reservoir or water storage project to qualify for state participation or funding. Under the Bill, an applicant must hold a valid water right and demonstrate that the proposed reservoir provides a regional benefit or otherwise represents the best use of water resources for the state. The applicant must also identify a local sponsor, demonstrate readiness and capacity to construct the reservoir, and show that the project is financially feasible and affordable.

Senator Owens asked what types of benefits the Bill is intended to address, noting that demand management could be one such benefit. Senator Hinkins asked whether the Bill includes provisions allowing the state to share in the ownership or oversight of a reservoir. The sponsor responded that the Bill does not establish a specific framework for shared ownership or management but noted that state entities, such as state parks, often have an interest in the management or oversight of reservoirs. One member of the public spoke in support of the Bill.

Yeas: 4
Nays: 0
N/V: 3

**Outcome: 1st substitute HB 349 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.**

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**Bill: 3rd substitute HB 76 - Data Center Water Transparency Amendments**
Sponsor: Representative Koford
Floor Sponsor: Senator Sandall
**UASD Position: Support**

This Bill addresses reporting related to water use and data centers.

Discussion: The sponsor presented the 3rd substitute, explaining that it changes the effective date to July 1 for a new data center coming online and makes minor clean-up revisions. The Committee adopted the 3rd substitute. The sponsor stated that the Bill establishes a transparency and reporting framework related to water use by large data centers. The Bill applies to new data centers that begin operations on or after July 1, 2026, and that exceed 10,000 square feet and withdraw at least 75 acre-feet of water annually. Under the Bill, before construction begins, the operator of a new large data center must provide written notice to the applicable water provider

and report certain information to the Utah Division of Water Rights, including the estimated amount of water the facility expects to withdraw annually and information related to discharges and potential water reuse. After operations begin, the operator must submit annual reports describing efforts to reduce water consumption, actual water withdrawals, and efforts to protect the environment from polluted water. The Bill also requires the Division of Water Rights to publish certain water withdrawal data on a public website while protecting proprietary information and provides enforcement authority for the State Engineer if required reports are not submitted. The sponsor emphasized that the purpose of the Bill is to provide local water providers and the state with better information about water use associated with new data centers and that the Bill does not prohibit or cap water usage.

The Weber Basin Water Conservancy District, Utah Association of Conservation Districts, Mormon Women for Ethical Government, and a member of the public spoke in support of the Bill. The Utah Rivers Council expressed support for the 1st substitute but raised concerns with the 3rd substitute regarding the 75 acre-feet reporting threshold and recommended a lower threshold be used.

Senator Blouin spoke in favor of the Bill and asked whether specific data would be reported to a designated official while aggregated data would be made available to the public. The sponsor confirmed that the Bill is intended to provide transparency regarding water use while avoiding disclosure of overly detailed individual facility information.

Yeas: 4
Nays: 0
N/V: 3

**Outcome: 3rd substitute HB 76 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.**