State Legislative Session: Activism Plan
Get yourself prepared to make an impact on state policy with the state legislature. Here’s what you need to know in order to advocate for the issues you care about most. No previous experience necessary!

What is the State Legislative Session?
Our state legislature is made up of 79 representatives in the House and 25 senators in the Senate, for a total of 105 state legislators. Each year or 45 days between late January and early March our legislators come together on Capitol Hill to present, debate and vote on over 1200 bills and ultimately decide on which will become our laws. In this short period, they must also decide on appropriations and balance the budget. This period of time is called the State Legislative Session, or the General Session. Ordinary community members are welcome to be a part of the political process, either by contacting their legislators from home, by attending public meetings, by lobbying in person, by sharing your opinions on policy with others and generally by witnessing our legislative branch in action.

Find out who represents you
Each Utahn is represented by one representative and one senator. These elected officials are part time politicians who are ordinary people like you and me with full time jobs on the side as real estate developers, lawyers, doctors, ranchers, social workers and the like. We are fortunate in Utah that our legislators are generally very approachable, and that 10-30 contacting them can influence their opinions, particularly when done in the “Action Utah Way”. Look up your two legislators and write them down here. Then add their contact information into your phone for easy access during the State Legislative Session. Find out who represents you and how to contact them by entering your address at vote.utah.gov and selecting “Elected Officials”.

My state senator: ___________________________ Cell: ___________________________
Email: ___________________________ District: ___________________________

My state representative: ___________________________ Cell: ___________________________
Email: ___________________________ District: ___________________________

How to connect with your legislators during the General Session
Follow these basic tips when contacting your legislators during the State Legislative Session:

1. Be calm, polite and respectful – follow the “Action Utah Way”
2. Use email or text rather than phone-calls during the session
3. Be brief (2-3 sentences), ALWAYS mention if you are a constituent, and use full bill names (ex. “Vote NO on HB 93: Judicial Nomination Amendments”)
4. Contact your own legislators only – UNLESS you are contacting a member of a committee that represents the larger legislative body
5. Follow cues from Action Utah - We will tell you exactly who to contact and when so your action is most meaningful and effective. Sometimes the best thing to do is nothing at all. All our actions are coordinated with bill sponsors and lobbyists so they don’t inadvertently harm the legislation we are trying to support.

Email: mobilize@actionutah.org | Facebook: @ActionUtah | Twitter @action_utah | Instagram: @actionutah
Legislative Website: Track bills and much more!
The state legislature has a terrific website where community members can find their state legislators, track and read legislation, watch floor debates live streamed, listen to audio recordings of public meetings, view the calendar and much more. Bookmark the website and familiarize yourself with it: le.utah.gov

Legislative Calendar: Find out what’s happening on Capitol Hill
During the session, the schedule for legislators includes standing committee meetings in the morning to vote on bills and decide if they will pass to the full Senate or House for a floor voting sessions in the afternoon. All committee meetings are open to the public and include time for brief public testimonies. Floor sessions are closed to public participation, but may be attended in person from silent viewing galleries. The legislative website includes an excellent calendar that lists all the committee hearings and floor sessions during the State Legislative Session.
- Check the calendar daily and see what bills are on the agenda for that day to be voted on in committee. Agendas are posted 24 hours in advance.
- Check the reading calendars under the House and Senate to watch your bill climb up the schedule. When it reaches the top position, your bill will get a reading and a full vote.

Participate on Capitol Hill
Come to Capitol Hill during the session to witness our legislative branch in action! Attend a public committee hearing and watch the Senate or House debate and vote on bills during the afternoon floor sessions. Want to impact a bill? Testify for the bill during its committee hearing. Be prepared to speak respectfully, clearly and calmly for 1-2 minutes max and to answer any potential questions from committee members. Practice ahead of time and do not repeat what other people have already said. You may also talk directly to legislators during the floor session by placing a request for them to come out and speak with you. Simply fill out the green or blue forms at the desks next to the floor chambers. Bring a sheet of talking points or data to leave with the legislator. Prioritize one issue to talk about.

Impacting Capitol Hill from home
You don’t have to live in Salt Lake City or come to the Capitol during the day to participate on Capitol Hill! Watch floor sessions live on your computer via the Senate and House reading calendars. Listen to the audio recordings of all public committee hearings, which post shortly after the end of the meeting. Email and text your legislators or the committee members as needed no matter what.

The “Action Utah Way”
At Action Utah, we believe that building bridges is the most successful path to advocating for and creating good policy that reflects the beliefs and needs of more people in Utah. By coming together and engaging in respectful, civil discourse, we can find common ground between people from varied political ideologies and use mutual best interests to shape good policy. Bridge building starts with cultivating good relationships between community members and elected officials, lobbyists and advocacy organizations. Bridge builders rely on fact-based data, commitment to working towards a positive outcome and elimination of partisan rhetoric. Whenever our members and volunteers advocate under the Action Utah name, we ask that they always follow the Action Utah Way.

Go to ActionUtah.org for more community lobbying resources and information about the state legislature, how a bill becomes a law, etc. During the session, check our Take Action! page daily or follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram for Daily and Urgent actions on the bills we are tracking.