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GENERAL SESSION

February 6, 2008

Program Topic: **SB35 – Differentiated Pay For Teachers**
 SB41 – Extended School Year Incentive
 SB39 – Mathematics, Science and Technology
 Education Task Force

Presented by: Education

Co-chairs: Joyce Hansen and Judy Keller

Director: Jean Madsen

Speakers: Lynette Wilkes – Work-based Learning Coordinator, Syracuse High School

Sen. Howard A. Stephenson, (R) Dist. 11 Salt Lake County (Draper)
Sponsor of SB35, SB41, SB39

Kim Campbell – President, Utah Education Association

Carol Lear – Director of Law and Legislation, Utah State Office of Education

Susan Firmage – President, Davis Education Association

Lynette Wilkes presented the Teachers of Tomorrow (TOT) program, a pilot program in Davis School District. The program helps students become interested in the teaching profession. Davis District recognizes there is a shortage of teachers and has partnered with Weber State University to bring this program to their junior and senior high school students. Students in this program explore the world of teaching, participate in field observations and examine what it really means to be a teacher. They can earn three concurrent enrollment hours for taking the course.

Senator Howard A. Stephenson began by complimenting the council for its interest

and involvement. **SB35** is part of a four bill package which also includes **SB39**, **SB41** and **HB81**.

SB35 will pay math and science teachers \$5,000 more than the salary schedule. The hope is that math and science graduates will choose to teach instead of opting for employment in the private sector. The legislature may also revisit the amount next year, raising the increase by another \$5,000 or more to attract new teachers in these areas. This bill appropriates \$7,000,000 from the Uniform School fund for fiscal year 2008-09.

SB39 creates a “Mathematics, Science, and

Technology Education Task Force.” It designates who is on the task force, what they will study and to whom they will report. It will focus on finding the best ways to attract math and science teachers.

SB41 creates the “Extended School Year Incentive,” a pilot program in three districts, focusing on a year-round use of school buildings. It would provide grants to school districts to fund costs associated with converting to an extended school year schedule. Students would still only attend 180 days. It would increase teacher pay by 40% without using additional taxpayer money.

HB81 creates a “Task Force to Study Performance Incentives for Teachers.” It establishes the membership of the task force, outlines its duties, and requires the task force to give a final report to the Education Interim Committee. It initiates measures for instituting performance pay for teachers in the classroom.

Kim Campbell began by thanking Senator Stephenson for his attention to the teacher shortage. The Utah Education Association (UEA) is not against using market incentives, but believes they should develop a plan that will address all the problems facing the education system.

SB35 singles out higher level math and science teachers. This is not the greatest area of need. There is also a need for Special Ed and kindergarten teachers. The bill fails to address some of the needs of our rural areas which require their teachers to teach multiple subjects. UEA believes the bill would create a counterproductive level of competition. Teaching is a collaborate effort.

Studies show that by the fourth grade students have often decided if they are going to pursue a math and science degree. UEA

believes there should be a hands-on math and science curriculum in the elementary grades.

UEA does not believe that the financial incentive will be enough to attract math and science teachers. There should be a holistic approach to teacher issues. Ms. Campbell mentioned **HB270**, sponsored by Ron Bigelow, which creates an optional grant program to provide an extended year for math and science teachers through the creation of Utah Science Technology and Research Initiative (USTAR) Centers. This would be a preferred starting place. There is also a concern that other programs will be cut because the funding for **SB35** comes from the uniform school fund.

Carol Lear introduced Sydnee Dickson, Director of Education Quality and Licensing for the State Office of Education (USOE). The State Board of Education (SBOE) has taken a position in favor of **SB35**. The SBOE believes although there are many areas of critical need in education, this is at least a good beginning. If the concept of teacher pay incentive is successful with math and science, we may be able to work with the legislature to include teachers in other areas of high demand. She recognized the concern of teachers, stating SBOE, UEA and the legislature need to work together to give all teachers better pay. In Utah, our children are our greatest resource.

Susan Firmage read several quotes from teachers stating why they felt their positions as teachers were as important as math and science teachers. She has concerns that offering certain teachers additional compensation may deter collaborative efforts among teachers. This could divide faculties and cause some teachers to feel not as valued as others.

Reported by JoAnn Neilson

General Session II

Program Topic: SB14, Smoking Ban in Motor Vehicles

**Presented By: Health & Human Services/
Retirement & Independent Entities**

**Co-Chairs: Shauna Scott-Bellacomo and Dianne Yancey
Director: Donna Murphy, RN,MSN,CPN**

**Speakers: Sen. Scott McCoy (D) Dist. 2, Salt Lake County, Sponsor of SB14
Ashley Farmer – Director, Grass Roots Relationship, American Cancer
Society
Sen. Scott Jenkins (R), Dist. 20, Weber County**

Shauna Scott-Bellacomo gave an outline of the bill. It will prohibit a person from smoking in a vehicle when a child less than five years old who is in a restraint device (car seat) or required to be in a restraint device is present. The bill provides for a fine of \$45 which can be waived if the violator is enrolled in a smoking cessation program. A smoking violation can only be cited as a secondary offense.

Sen. McCoy began by informing us of an email he received from a Highway Patrol officer who stopped a driver for speeding. When the driver rolled down his window, cigarette smoke billowed out of the window. There was a small child in the rear seat and the officer was aghast that someone would smoke in that situation. This is the classic scenario addressed by the bill.

A car is probably the smallest confined space in which a person would choose to smoke. A child confined in such a space, whose lungs are still developing and who takes more breaths than an adult, is in a particularly hazardous situation. A Stanford University study reports that within seconds of a cigarette being lit in a car, the air is more than ten times worse than on an EPA red burn day.

Sen. McCoy sees the circumstances of this situation as a balance of competing interests, i.e. the health interest of the child versus the private property rights of the adult. Smoking is not a right guaranteed by the Constitution. It is a privilege that can be regulated when other interests are at stake. Smoking is regulated in other ways, also. A minor is not allowed to purchase cigarettes and people can't smoke in many places, as stipulated by law.

He discounts the "slippery slope" argument. Further regulation stops "when the legislature stops it." Each new proposal should be evaluated on its own merits and competing interests should be weighed against each other. This is done all the time when considering legislative proposals, whether regulatory or not.

Ashley Farmer provided some information on smoking from the Surgeon General of the United States' first ever report on the effects of secondhand smoke. The report concludes there is, in essence, no safe level of secondhand smoke.

There are more than 200 toxic and carcinogenic chemicals in secondhand smoke. Children required to be in

restraining seats in a car are especially vulnerable to these chemicals. Babies whose mothers smoke after birth are more likely to die of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Babies also have weaker lungs and are more at risk to suffer from other diseases if they are routinely exposed to secondhand smoke.

Children with asthma who are exposed to secondhand smoke suffer more frequent and severe asthma attacks, as well as the increased likelihood of respiratory diseases and severe ear infections. On average, children are more exposed to secondhand smoke than are non-smoking adults. Children aged 3-11 are significantly more likely than adults to live in a household with at least one smoker, and have at least twice as much exposure as non-smoking adults.

Ms. Farmer also agreed smoking is generally less a problem in Utah than elsewhere. However, Minority populations here are as disproportionately apt to be smokers as elsewhere. Consequently, their children are disproportionately exposed and more likely to incur greater health costs.

Rep. Scott Jenkins opposed **SB14** and gave his reasons for doing so. He recognized the strength of the facts given by Ashley Farmer and even supported the American Cancer Society in its proposed amendments

to the Clean Air Act. His opposition to this bill stems from his personal analysis of the philosophical question: “When do you want government in your life and when do you not?” He believes it is a question that touches on many activities in our lives.

Smoking, drinking (alcohol) and eating are legal activities. At what point do you want ‘Big Brother Government’ to restrict things such as these? Obesity is certainly a serious problem. But do we want the government to step in and restrict our eating habits? Sen. Jenkins said his response to new legislation hinges on two questions: **1)** Is a regulation going to cause government to grow? and **2)** Is it going to cost the taxpayer more?

For example, another bill before the legislature is **HB140**, (Child Restraint Device Amendment). It would change current law which requires children up to age five to be secured in a child restraint device, raising the age requirement to eight years (or 57 inches in height). A line has to be drawn somewhere, because government has a way of growing by increments. That is at the heart of the philosophical debate. So, while he may agree with the good intentions behind **HB14**, he believes the balance here should tip in favor of deterring government encroachment.

Reported by Stuart Gygi

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