



## GENERAL SESSION

February 10, 2010

### ***Program Topic: SB 49 2010, Vending Machines in Public Schools***

**Presented by: Health and Human Services/  
Retirement and Independent Entities**

**Co-Chair: Dianne Yancey  
Director: Donna Murphy**

**Speakers: Sen. Patricia W. Jones (D), Dist. 40, Salt Lake County;  
Minority Leader; sponsor, SB49 Vending  
Machines in Public Schools**

**Dawn Frandsen – 2010 legislative intern for  
Margaret Dayton (R), Dist. 15, Utah County  
(Provo, Orem); Rules Chair**

**Sen. Patricia Jones** reported that five or six years ago she was asked to serve on a public health task force, charged with identifying public health issues in the state of Utah. The obesity of Utah's children was discovered to be one such issue.

At that time, obesity did not seem to be a priority. However, in the years since, statistics have shown that obesity in children and youth has become a national problem, involving medical and dental issues, as well.

Many organizations, including the Utah Medical Association, have become concerned about the effects of obesity on Utah's population. National organizations, including the American Beverage

Association and the National Snack Food Association, have established guidelines for consumption of products that may contribute to the problem of obesity.

Senator Jones spoke about a bill she is currently sponsoring, **SB49 Vending Machines in Public Schools**, which would address this problem by regulating the products sold in Utah public school vending machines.

At present, individual schools supplement their funds with monies derived from the vending machine sale of products, including beverages and snack foods. Third party vendors provide many of these products.

Funds obtained from vending machine sales are discretionary for individual school use. No accounting is made of them to school districts. This income can provide substantial support to under-funded schools.

Sen. Jones believes that schools, as public institutions of learning, should not allow the commercialization of these products. Education officials testify to the adverse effects of snack food consumption by children on a daily basis in the classroom.

The enticing presentation of vending machines encourages children to establish certain preferences for food products when young. The Senator asked, "What message are we sending, when in health classes we talk about the negative effects of some snack foods, but then we provide these foods for purchase in the hallway in a vending machine?"

**Dawn Frandsen**, representing Sen. Margaret Dayton, presented an opposing position to the bill, stating the belief that parental direction should control a child's purchase of snack foods, and that parents should teach children to make proper food choices.

She believes vending machines should not be regulated by legislation. This action would deny legitimate choice to children. In addition, schools need this supplementary revenue source. She said Sen. Dayton believes the bill to be another layer of unnecessary rules and regulations.

Questions were taken and answered by both the Senator and Ms. Frandsen, emphasizing the following points:

- (Sen. Jones) Discretionary funds are important, but contracts with snack and drink companies need to be carefully monitored.
- (WSLC member) Perhaps children are unhappy with school lunch choices, causing them to purchase vending machine products or leave school premises to purchase other foods.
- (Sen. Jones) It is appropriate to regulate choices in certain areas for children, whereas those same choices would be inappropriate to regulate for adults.
- (Sen. Jones) The Utah State School Board has instructed local school boards to develop vending machine policies; but this has not proved generally effective.
- (Ms. Frandsen) Some areas do report that input from student government and community councils has been helpful, and has assisted in the implementation of individual school policies regarding vending machine content. The schools have regulated themselves.
- (Sen. Jones) The government is ultimately paying for the obesity problem.
- (Ms. Frandsen) The government is you.
- (Ms. Frandsen) Does this issue need to be legislated or taught?

**Reported by Marilyn Simister**

# General Session II

## ***Program Topics: (1) Perspectives on Energy in Utah (2) Wolf Management***

**Presented by: Energy/Natural Resources/ Agriculture & Environment**

**Co-Chairs: Linda Watters and Hilarie Orman**

**Director: Kari Malkovich**

**Speakers: (1) Dianne Neilson – Energy Advisor to the Governor**

**Rep. Roger E. Barrus (R) Dist. 18, Davis County;  
House Chair, Natural Resources Committee;  
sponsor, HB228 Renewable Energy Source  
Amendments**

**Rep. Christine Watkins (D) Dist. 69, San Juan County,  
parts of Carbon, Emery, Grand Counties;  
sponsor, HB192 Renewable Energy - Methane Gas**

**(2) Sen. Allen Christensen (R) Dist. 19, Morgan, Summit,  
Weber Counties; sponsor, SB36 Wolf Management**

**Allison Jones – Wildlife Biologist, Wild Utah Project**

**Dianne Neilson** said that the United States has enough of its own resources to supply its energy needs in an environmentally responsible and diverse manner. Natural gas could easily be Utah's most significant contribution to this effort. Diversifying our energy supply will assist in the national effort to reduce greenhouse gasses.

Governor Huntsman recently stated, "We are all in this together," insofar as energy efficiency and energy development are concerned. He believes it is a mark of good citizenship to develop energy-conserving behaviors. For those interested, some

helpful suggestions may be found at the State of Utah – Governor's Energy Advisor website ([www.energy.utah.gov](http://www.energy.utah.gov)). The website was designed to help individuals find the information and resources they need for personal energy efficiency, as well as the state's policy for energy development, technology, and savings.

**Rep. Roger Barrus** said he also believes in developing all our energy resources in the most responsible manner possible. As a means to this end, he has introduced **HB228 Renewable Energy Source Amendments**.

“Renewable energy resources” now include (by state statute) wind, solar, combustion of certain wood, rangeland debris, landfill, and geothermal, among others. This bill would add, “energy derived from municipal solid waste” to the list of renewable energy sources.

Responding to questions, Rep. Barrus estimated it would be possible to put up a waste-to-energy conversion facility in two years. The technology required to convert municipal solid waste to fuel is not new. Several other countries, including Japan, are currently using it. Every ton of combustible waste can displace 1/3 ton of coal or one barrel of oil. Davis County already uses this process to create steam for Hill Air Force Base.

**Rep. Christine Watkins** presented information on her bill, **HB192 Renewable Energy – Methane Gas**. This bill would provide that electrical energy derived from methane gas from certain (abandoned) coal mine facilities would be classified among the types of waste gases considered as a renewable energy source. A particular benefit from this energy source is that it would require only 1/4 acre of land for the small power plants. Also, by capturing and converting the methane gas (20 times more dangerous than CO2) from these mines, we would be ridding the environment of a potential hazard, while tapping it as an energy source.

**Sen. Allen Christensen**, speaking on behalf of his bill **SB36 Wolf Management**, was emphatic in his view:

“We don’t want wolves in Utah. They are devastating to livestock and other wildlife.” This bill, which the Senator called, “A proactive one, to get a plan in place,” addresses the management of wolves in the state.

The bill provides for the Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) to request federal removal of wolves found within areas where the wolf is listed as endangered. It also requires the DWR to manage the wolf population to avoid the establishment of a pack within the areas of the state where the wolf is still not listed as endangered.

**Allison Jones**, who helped construct the Heart of the West (HOW) Conservation Plan, countered that the small mountainous area of northern Utah that would be most affected by the constraints of **SB36** is being unfairly used to undercut the HOW Wolf Management Plan. Wolves are still listed on the endangered species list there. She also asserted this “wolf-hostile” bill to be unnecessary, since the terrain in that area is unfavorable to sustaining large wolf packs.

Further, Ms. Jones cautioned against an emotional campaign against an unpopular form of wildlife. She argued that the perceived interests of people must be carefully weighed against often-fragile ecosystem needs. Injudicious or careless legislation dealing with wildlife can result in long-lasting adverse consequences to the environment.

**Reported by Pam Grange**

This Bulletin is a publication of the Women’s State Legislative Council of Utah, Inc.

President: Darlene Hutchison  
Advisor: Janice Gerritsen  
Editor: Pam Grange  
Assistant Editor: Eileen Hallet Stone

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140 South Main Street  
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