



Winter 2018

LEGISLATIVE

NEWSLETTER

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Operation Rio Grande Update

On August 14, 2017, an extensive collaborative effort to combat lawlessness in the Rio Grande area and lend a helping hand to those in need was launched. On February 5, a six-month update was given on the progress of the program. Operation Rio Grande (ORG), as it has been called, has been shown to have substantially improved the area, both for those seeking services and those who live and work there. Lives have been changed as more resources have been made available for those wanting help and as authorities have appropriately dealt with the drug dealers and cartels who would take advantage of them.

“There’s help out there, and Operation Rio Grande really put me in the avenues to get that help,” said one beneficiary of ORG, Rich Duprez.

Since the launch of the operation:

- Nearly 200 new addiction treatment beds, and counting, have been created
- About 70 people have entered treatment through Salt Lake County's new specialty drug court program.
- More than 3,400 safe space cards issued.
- One hundred thirty-three behavioral health assessments have been completed.
- Sixteen people have been placed into sober living and seven new beds have been created, with more on the way.
- Of individuals referred to short-term housing, 44 have been housed, 121 have been diverted from emergency shelter and 189 are receiving housing case management.
- Fourteen individuals have been employed through the Dignity of Work program, 100 have completed employment plans, 33 are work ready and 48 job listings have been posted by participating employers.
- Over 800 individuals assessed during ORG have now been enrolled in Medicaid, which includes coverage for behavioral/mental health treatment. This coverage was authorized by Representative Dunnigan’s HB437.

Though we have made significant strides, it does not end here. The state is committed to securing funding, improving public safety, offering support to those struggling with mental illness and drug addiction to help them get back on the path of self-reliance, and preparing and connecting individuals with housing and job opportunities.

The progress of the three phases can be tracked online at operationriogrande.utah.gov.

Winter Olympics/ Hamilton

Winter Olympics

In 2002, Utah successfully hosted the Winter Olympics and has since maintained the facilities built for those games. This past week, the House and Senate passed SCR 9, *Concurrent Resolution on Utah's Olympic Exploratory Committee and its Efforts to Explore Hosting of a Future Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games*, and the governor signed it February 6. In a press conference the next day, the committee expressed that Utah is “ready, willing, and able” to host the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games once again, in either 2026 or 2030.

Hamilton

The Utah Legislature and the Utah Department of Heritage and Arts have teamed up to give high school students an opportunity to see the Broadway hit *Hamilton: An American Musical* through the New Nation Letter Writing Competition. The purpose is to get young people engaged in the legislative process and in their local communities.

To participate in the competition, a high school student must write a letter to one of their elected officials about an issue of concern in the community and include a proposed solution.

Each student who submits a qualifying entry will be entered into a random drawing to see the musical here in Utah. The competition closes at 9 a.m. Tuesday, February 20. Learn more about it and apply [here](#).

Recap

Arts Day on the Hill

High schools from all over the state came to the Capitol for Arts Day on the Hill. Students and administrators met with representatives to discuss the importance of teaching humanities and the arts. Music from choirs, bands and orchestras filled the Capitol Rotunda as audiences took in the beautiful performances.

Transit Day

On February 2, some buses passed all the usual stops and wound up on Utah's Capitol Hill. Utah Transit Authority (UTA) brought three environmentally friendly public buses to show members of the public and lawmakers some of the features on the new buses. One had an accordion-like mid-section, allowing for greater mobility while transporting more people. This is just one of UTA's many environmental projects currently underway.

Stay Connected

The Utah House of Representatives offers access to live and previous coverage of House Floor proceedings and committee hearings from the [legislative website](#). You can view the current session, search the archive of past sessions, track bills, read proposed legislation and more at le.utah.gov.

Follow the Utah Reps on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) to stay connected to what is happening, get a behind the scenes look and receive daily updates. You can also contact your representative at house.utah.gov.

Recap

Representative Dunnigan joined by his 10 year old nephew, Bryce, on the House Floor.



Representative Dunnigan meeting with members of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, each told their own experiences with the genetic disease and shared their thoughts on how Utah can improve funding for health care programs.



At a conference for NFIB, America's leading small business association, discussing issues that can impact small businesses.



Bills Passed:

- HB0001S01: Public Education Base Budget Amendments
- HB0007S01: Social Services Base Budgets
- HB0060: Water Commissioner Amendments
- HB0063: Cosmetology and Associated Professions Amendments
- HB0084: Felony Fleeing Amendments
- HB0085S01: Public Transit Vehicles and Safety Belt Amendments
- HB0086S01: Manslaughter Amendments
- HB0093: Agriculture Commodity Zone Amendments
- HB0099: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Act Amendments
- HB0145: Pedestrian Safety Amendments
-

Sponsored by Representative Dunnigan:

- HB0045S02: This bill changes the process by which consumer reporting agencies can place security freezes on credit accounts.

February

14

**Valentine's
Day**

February

19

**President's
Day**

EVENTS

**Townhall
Meeting
at the
Taylorsville
City Hall**

February

20

6:00 PM

**Come Join
Rep. Dunnigan
on the
House Floor
for Debates**

**To Schedule a Time Email
us at**

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