



LEGISLATIVE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2019



REPRESENTATIVE JIM DUNNIGAN
DISTRICT 39



SEPTEMBER 2019

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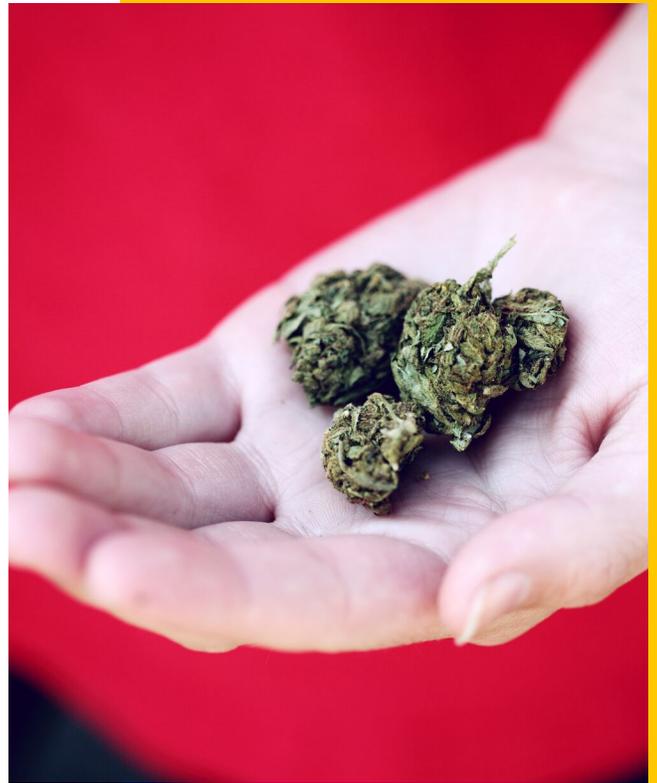
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SEPTEMBER INTERIM RECAP

Medical Marijuana

An amendment passed in both the House and Senate that repealed the requirements regarding a state central fill pharmacy and allows the private sector to have 14 dispensaries throughout the state. Additionally, there is a provision in the amended bill that allows for more dispensaries throughout the state if there is a need.

In an op-ed in the Deseret News, President Adams and Speaker Wilson said, "Our aim is to ensure Utah's medical cannabis program is just that - medical. As with other policy areas, other states are looking to Utah as a model for striking an effective balance. We look forward to continuing to work with partners and our colleagues in the Legislature to enhance and strengthen Utah's identity as an incredible place to live, work, and raise families."



Quagga Mussels

In Utah, water is our most critical natural resource, which, like many states in the western United States, has become threatened by invasive species such as the Quagga mussels. After the infestation in Lake Powell in 2013, the State of Utah Legislature set aside funds for DNR to create a pro-active solution to keep Quagga out of the remaining water bodies in Utah.

The estimated cost to mitigate invasive mussel infestation in our water infrastructure will be in the many millions of dollars and maybe into the billions of dollars. Many solutions to prevent further contamination in the future were proposed, but it is important to be vigilant with preventive measures already in place. For more information, click [here](#).

2020 Primary Election Date Change

During a special session, draft legislation, "Election Code Date Changes," was approved for consideration during the First Special Session.

This bill changes the primary election to June 30, for the year 2020 only, and changes related dates accordingly.



Compulsory Education, Truancy, and Chronic Absenteeism

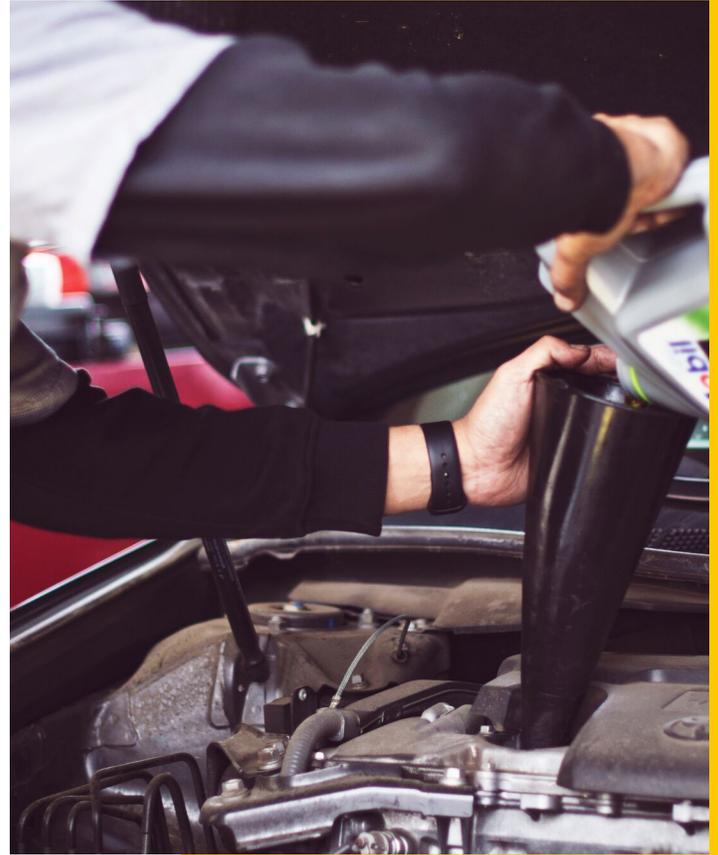
Draft legislation, "School Absenteeism and Truancy Amendments," was approved. This legislation:

- creates uniform definitions for chronic absenteeism and truancy
- limits the conditions under which a public school may impose administrative penalties on a school-age minor who is truant; and
- requires local education agencies to report specific information to the State Board of Education.

Vehicle Safety Inspections

The committee received a presentation from the Utah Highway Patrol on how eliminating the vehicle safety inspection requirement has impacted the Highway Patrol. They also received a presentation from the Libertas Institute about the effectiveness of safety inspections in reducing accidents.

As a result, the committee opened a bill file to address requirements for licensed used car dealers to have safety inspections performed on vehicles they plan to sell.



Insanity Defense

The committee heard comments from criminal defense attorneys, the Statewide Association of Prosecutors, the Utah Psychiatric Association, the Utah Medical Association, the Attorney General's Office, citizens, and a legislator regarding whether to modify the circumstances under which a defendant may plead not guilty to a criminal offense by reason of insanity.

Children's Hearing Aide Program

On their website, the Children's Hearing Aide Program states: The mission of Utah Children's Hearing Aid Program (CHAP) is to optimize early communication and learning potentials for deaf/hard of hearing (DHH) infants and children by providing access to hearing aids to financially eligible families.

The committee approved a committee bill draft legislation, "Children's Hearing Aid Program Amendments," which reauthorizes the Children's Hearing Aid Program for five years until 2025.

For more information, click [here](#).



Changes in the House of Representatives

On September 12th the House gained its newest member. Representative Steve Christiansen was sworn in by Speaker Wilson on September 16th to fill the vacancy left by Representative Ken Ivory in District 52.

Representative John Knotwell (District 52) announced his resignation from the House, effective September 30, 2019

Truth Initiative

This year I was invited to join the Truth Initiative board, an organization with the goal to "seek, speak and spread the truth about tobacco." Together we work to combat the damaging effects of tobacco, particularly for youth, through research and nationwide collaboration. Currently we are working on addressing the vaping epidemic affecting our youth, and the accompanying medical problems it causes.

This month we met at the campus of Ole Miss in Oxford, Mississippi. For more information about the Truth initiative, click [here](#).



Contact Information

As always, please feel free to contact me. I am able to meet at the capitol, or at my office in Taylorsville. The address is 3105 W 5400 S Suite 6, Taylorsville, UT 84129.

I can be reached by phone at 801-840-1800, or by email at jdunniganele.utah.gov.