

UTRSOL WEEKLY

Utah for Rational Sex Offense Laws

Week of August 10 – August 14, 2026

This week brought our support group AfterMath Alliance's very first in-person meeting, we received final reviewer comments on Part II of "The Registry's Reach" and finalized it for the LECJ Interim Committee transmittal and distribution to a wider network. We also published three new investigative pieces on our journalism track and began tracking a new vacancy on the Board of Pardons and Parole. Here's the rundown, track by track.

AFTERMATH ALLIANCE: FIRST MEETING LAUNCHES

On Friday, August 14, AfterMath Alliance held its very first in-person meeting. In the days leading up to it, interest came in through multiple independent channels at once, including a direct call from a prospective attendee who is finishing treatment through Utah's approved sex offense program and has already expressed interest in volunteering with the group down the road. That kind of organic, word-of-mouth interest is exactly what we hoped to see as we build AfterMath Alliance into a lasting resource. Our virtual/phone sessions are set to launch August 19, giving members a second way to participate no matter where they are or what their schedule allows. If you are interested and do not have internet access, we have a call in number, please reach out to 801-871-5215 to receive.

LECJ INTERIM STUDY ITEM 3: FINALIZED REPORT

This week, our Clinical Research Working Group's review of Part II of "The Registry's Reach: Purpose, Composition, and the Case for Systematic Review" reached its final stage, with our last outstanding reviewer comments coming in for incorporation. Our team worked through the weekend to fold that feedback into the document, and the final version was completed and prepared for transmittal Monday morning, August 17. This kind of dedicated effort right up to the finish line reflects how seriously our reviewers and staff take getting this document right before it reaches policymakers.

While the report's release was tied to the LECJ Interim Committee's agenda timing for Study Item 3, this month's August 19 hearing does not include that item. Given that reviewer comments had been received, we made the decision to release the report now rather than hold it, so the Committee and our full distribution list have adequate time to review it before it comes up for discussion in the next three months. We're releasing this first version as Edition 1, with future editions planned to incorporate additional expert review as our CRWG continues to grow. Getting ahead of the agenda this way reflects our preference for transparency over timing our work around any single hearing date. We're enormously grateful to every reviewer who lent their expertise to prepare this document for the committee's discussion of the study item.

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM: NEWS FROM THE WIRE

Our investigative publishing arm, News From The Wire, published three new pieces this week, each examining a different institutional pattern within Utah's justice and policy systems. The first piece, published August 11, examines a practice in one Utah county in which some prosecutors routinely notified an outside law firm representing a religious institution whenever a bishop submitted a character letter on behalf of a defendant at sentencing. The piece frames this as a due-process and institutional-entanglement question: when a state actor maintains a standing referral relationship with one specific institution's counsel, it raises the question of whose voices reach the sentencing record freely and whose may be quietly filtered.

The second piece, published August 12, looks at a broader pattern across several recent Utah legislative sessions in which lawmakers have sponsored registry-related reform or restriction bills at politically consequential moments in their own careers, examining whether the timing of registry-policy engagement tends to track political calculation as much as it tracks evidence. The piece stays focused on documented legislative sequences and public statements rather than speculation about any individual's private motivations.

The third piece, published August 13, traces the statutory history and provenance of Utah's existing registry laws as they relate to further restrictions on registrants based on single-incident cases. UTRSOL engaged the Utah State Board of Education's (USBE) rulemaking process by providing public comment during their August 6–7 monthly meeting. Together, these three pieces reflect NFTW's consistent approach: independent, systems-level analysis grounded in public documentation and verifiable sourcing, kept editorially separate from UTRSOL's own advocacy positions.

BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLE: TRACKING A NEW VACANCY

UTRSOL learned of a new vacancy on the Board of Pardons and Parole during the August 13 CCJJ meeting, created by member Melissa Stirba's departure to the Third District Court. The Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ) is currently reviewing the list of applicants. A slate of five finalists is expected by the end of August, followed by a public comment period before the Governor makes a final selection for the five-year term.

That public comment period is the brief window during which the public can make their voices heard before the next board member is placed. Our broader argument is that a board historically skewed toward a prosecutorial background benefits from members who bring behavioral health, social work, advocacy, and defense-law perspectives to the table, producing more balanced decision-making across the board as a whole. This is the same reasoning that guided our involvement in the 2025 vacancy, and we believe it holds just as true today. Once CCJJ releases its finalist list, we'll review the candidates and, if one stands out as a strong voice for evidence-based decision-making, ask our supporters to weigh in

individually during the public comment period. The Board of Pardons and Parole makes some of the most consequential decisions in the entire system, and we believe who sits on it matters as much as any statute we could pass.

LOOKING AHEAD

Tuesday August 18 — Criminal Justice Appropriation Subcommittee

- 8:30 AM | 120 Senate Building | 350 N State St, Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Wednesday August 19 — Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Hearing

- 8:30 AM | Room 30 House Building | 350 N State St, Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Wednesday August 19 — Cache County Reentry Fair

- 11 AM to 1 PM | Bear River Health Department | 655 E 1300 N, Logan, UT 84341

Wednesday August 19 — AfterMath Alliance support group virtual sessions launch

- 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM | Email communications@utrsol.org or call/text 801-871-5215

August

- August 25 — Utah Valley Job Fair (Provo)
- August 28 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [In-Person]
- August 30–September 1 — Rental Housing Association (RHA) Housing Conference
- End of August — Board of Pardons and Parole finalist list expected

September

- September 2 — Weber County Community Reentry Coalition Meeting
- September 2 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [Virtual]
- September 11 — Salt Lake Housing Stability Division HEART Homeless Resource Fair
- September 11 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [In-Person]
- September 14 — Board of Pardons and Parole (BOPP) Advocacy Outreach
- September 16 — Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Hearing
- September 16 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [Virtual]
- September 25 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [In-Person]
- September 29–October 1 — UDC Ranger Simulation
- September 30 — AfterMath Alliance Meeting [Virtual]

UTRSOL is an evidence-based policy research and advocacy organization. This newsletter is distributed to external partners, coalition members, and stakeholders to share updates on our research, legislative activities, and organizational initiatives.