Volume 1 Issue 17

UTRSOL WEEKLY

Utah for Rational Sex Offense Laws
Week of October 26 – October 30, 2026

This week, we provided our formal comment on the 2027 sentencing guidelines to the Sentencing Commission, sent input to SOMAC for its strategic plan, followed the Victim Services Commission as Rep. Ken Ivory's legislative work group took shape, prepared for the Utah State Board of Education's November 5 meeting, and published four new pieces on News From The Wire. Here's the rundown, track by track.

SEX OFFENSE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SOMAC)

This week, UTRSOL provided Dr. Michele Leslie with input for SOMAC's strategic plan, ahead of the committee's next meeting on Wednesday, November 18, which will be held virtually from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. The input recommended tracking sex offense treatment capacity, stating the committee's research questions up front, and offering risk-assessment education to incoming legislators after the November 3 election. We also published a News From The Wire report on the October 21 SOMAC meeting, and we will keep following the committee's work.

VICTIM SERVICES COMMISSION

On Wednesday, October 28, UTRSOL followed the Victim Services Commission's meeting, which was largely procedural. Rep. Ken Ivory's legislative work group on victim services is taking shape. It is organized into four sub-groups, covering data and gaps, standards and best practices, collaboration and coordination, and funding, and it will produce what it can for the 2027 General Session while pursuing a longer review aimed at the 2028 session. A sign-up for the sub-groups is being circulated through Legislative Research, and the work group meets next on Monday, November 9. The Commission's next full meeting is Wednesday, December 9. We are reviewing how Publication 2026-64, Platform Penalties for Victim Services, can inform the funding work.

SENTENCING COMMISSION: PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE 2027 GUIDELINES

The Sentencing Commission's public comment period on the 2027 adult sentencing, release, and supervision guidelines closes Sunday, November 1. We provided Publication 2026-63, 2027 Sentencing Guidelines Package: Report to the Judiciary Interim Committee, to the Commission as UTRSOL's formal comment. We do not contest the penalties the Commission adopted on September 2. Our comment concerns implementation. The package makes prison presumptive in cases where release depends on completing sex offense treatment, and the Department of Corrections' cost estimate covers prison beds only. We ask that the Legislature fund the treatment capacity the guidelines require, and

that Corrections and the Commission provide a single projection laying the package over the current capacity forecast, including treatment capacity, before the Judiciary Interim Committee considers its recommendation on November 18.

EDUCATION POLICY: USBE LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

The Utah State Board of Education meets on Thursday, November 5, at 9:00 a.m. Section II of our four-part analytical memorandum series, on the evidentiary standard applied in the Board's Legislative Request Form, is scheduled to be transmitted Monday, November 2. The deadline for in-person comment has passed, however, written comments may still be sent to board@schools.utah.gov, which reaches all board members. Please include the city where you live. Anyone unsure about taking part is welcome to email communications@utrsol.org.

NEWS FROM THE WIRE

We published four new pieces on News From The Wire this week. On Monday, Where Second-Chance Hiring Stops at the Registry examined how employers who say they will hire anyone with a record often carve out an exception for people on the registry, and what a trusted path to formal hiring could look like. UTRSOL presented at the Hive meeting the piece draws on.

On Tuesday, A Duty. A Choice. A Bill. looked at two obligations invoked in recent budget debates, the duty to fund services for victims and the county's duty to house inmates. It argues that neither duty dictates how it is met: a duty to victims does not require new fees on people leaving prison, which draw on the same limited income as restitution, and a duty to house inmates does not by itself require a larger jail.

On Wednesday, Planning to Survive: SOMAC Maps Its Path Back to the Legislature reported on the October 21 SOMAC meeting UTRSOL attended, as the committee began a strategic plan meant to rebuild legislative confidence before the 2027 session. It covers the growth of the treatment wait list from about 800 to about 1,400 people in two years with no new treatment funding, and a risk-assessment data timeline that is at least a year away. It asks whether the plan will give lawmakers the committee's honest expertise or only the version they are prepared to hear.

And on Thursday, Three Bills Return: Will Prevention Get Its Floor Time? tracked three child-safety bills from the 2026 session that are returning in 2027. H.B. 346 has been fast-tracked after a unanimous interim committee vote, H.B. 459 has a new sponsor, and S.B. 124, which failed in the House 30-43, would act before a child is harmed and needs about eight more House votes. The piece also corrects three errors from our March coverage. UTRSOL publishes News From The Wire.

LOOKING AHEAD

Sunday, November 1 — Sentencing Commission Public Comment Closes
Tuesday, November 3 — Election Day
Wednesday, November 4 — Weber County Community Reentry Coalition Meeting
Thursday, November 5 — Utah State Board of Education Meeting

November

- November 9 — Victim Services Legislative Work Group Meeting
- November 10 — UDC Advocacy Stakeholders Meeting
- November 13 — Salt Lake Housing Stability HEART Resource Fair
- November 18 — Judiciary Interim Committee (Sentencing Guidelines Recommendation)
- November 18 — Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Interim Committee (Victim Services Study)
- November 18 — Sex Offense Management Advisory Committee Meeting (Virtual)

December

- December 1 — Legislature begins releasing numbered bills for the 2027 General Sesion
- December 3 — Utah State Board of Education Meeting
- December 8 — UDC Advocacy Stakeholders Meeting
- December 9 — Salt Lake Valley Coalition to End Homelessness General Meeting
- December 9 — Victim Services Commission Meeting
- December 10 — Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice Meeting

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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.