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Michael S. Kennedy

Utah

State Senator, SD-021 (R)

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Lifetime
Freedom
Score

2024 UT Legislative Scorecard

	✓ Pro-Freedom	✗ Anti-Freedom	— Did not Vote	Vote
1. Eliminates the notary requirement for homeschool affidavits in Utah, allowing parents to file without notarization. It also blocks extra requirements from local school boards, streamlining the process while ensuring parental responsibility.				✓
Pro-Freedom: Yes · Cast: Yes · SB0056 · 01/29/2024				
2. Establishes requirements for federal officers releasing aliens (individuals illegally present in the United States) within Utah.				✓
Pro-Freedom: Yes · Cast: Yes · HB0165 · 02/26/2024				
3. Allows teachers to carry or securely store firearms on school grounds, provided they complete annual defense training and have a valid concealed carry permit.				✓
Pro-Freedom: Yes · Cast: Yes · HB0119 · 02/28/2024				
4. Prohibits the use of a specific merchant category code for firearms retailers in Utah, preventing financial entities from assigning or requiring the code for firearm-related transactions.				✓
Pro-Freedom: Yes · Cast: Yes · HB0406 · 02/28/2024				
5. Reforms and expands the regulation of carbon capture and storage in Utah.				✗
Pro-Freedom: No · Cast: Yes · HB0452 · 02/29/2024				
6. Aimed to repeal the Municipal Alternate Voting Methods Pilot Project, which supports the adoption of ranked-choice voting (RCV) for municipalities.				✓
Pro-Freedom: Yes · Cast: Yes · HB0290 · 02/29/2024				

Scorecard Votes: 83%

Why do these votes matter?

1. Homeschool Protection

SB56 removes the requirement for a notary on homeschool affidavits in Utah. Parents or legal guardians can now file a signed affidavit to excuse their child from public school attendance for homeschooling without needing it to be notarized. The bill also ensures that local school boards cannot impose additional requirements on homeschoolers, such as keeping records or standardized testing. It simplifies the process while maintaining parental responsibility for the child's education.

The Utah State Senate passed SB56 on January 29, 2024 by a vote of 29 to 0. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because this is one of the strongest parental-rights and homeschool-protection bills in the country. Government funding for private schools or homeschool families comes with strings attached, but this bill ensures that the government cannot interfere in a child's education at home. It reinforces parents' rights to direct their children's education, a fundamental freedom protected under the Constitution.

2. Illegal Immigration

HB165 establishes requirements for federal officers releasing aliens within Utah. Before such a release, federal officers must provide written notice three business days in advance to the state's attorney general and the local county sheriff. The notice must include known outstanding criminal warrants against the individual being released.

The Utah State Senate passed HB165 on February 26, 2024 by a vote of 63 to 11. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because this bill upholds American sovereignty by reinforcing immigration laws and addressing the challenges posed by illegal immigration. This measure helps protect local communities by ensuring that law enforcement is informed, and it supports the enforcement of immigration laws that safeguard the nation's borders and uphold the law.

3. Student Safety

HB119 allows teachers to carry or securely store firearms on school grounds, provided they complete annual defense training and have a valid concealed carry permit. Teachers can use biometric safes in classrooms and must keep firearms concealed unless facing an active threat. Schools cannot bar teachers from participating.

The Utah State Senate passed HB119 on February 28, 2024 by a vote of 19 to 6. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because the right to defend ourselves and others is a God-given right protected by the U.S. Constitution, particularly the Second Amendment, which states, "the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

4. Firearm Merchant Codes

HB406 prohibits the use of a specific merchant category code for firearms retailers in Utah, preventing financial entities from assigning or requiring the code for firearm-related transactions.

The Utah State Senate passed HB406 on February 28, 2024 by a vote of 21 to 6. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because recent adoption of a new merchant category code for "gun and ammunition shops" by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)—a globalist collaborative linked to the United Nations—aids unconstitutional efforts by the federal government to conduct mass surveillance, which, in part, is intended to create a national gun-owner database and confiscate firearms from law-abiding citizens. States should nullify the actions of private or public entities that violate the Second and Fourth Amendment rights of the American people.

5. Carbon-capture Rules

HB452 reforms the regulation of carbon capture and storage in Utah. It replaces two existing funds with a new Carbon Dioxide Storage Fund, and grants the Board of Oil, Gas, and Mining the authority to set fees and manage the fund. The bill covers the state's oversight of carbon storage facilities, especially after a project is certified as complete. It sets requirements for permits, monitoring, and liability for storage operators.

The Utah State Senate passed HB452 on February 16, 2024 by a vote of 68 to 0. We have assigned pluses to the nays because this bill embraces carbon-capture practices aligned with the United Nations' Agenda 2030 goals, which undermines state sovereignty and prioritizes global environmental agendas over local interests. States should be cautious about adopting policies that may pave the way for increased federal or international influence on local land use and energy production.

6. Ranked-choice Voting Ban

HB290 aimed to repeal the Municipal Alternate Voting Methods Pilot Project, which supports the adoption of ranked-choice voting (RCV) for municipalities.

The Utah State Senate rejected HB290 on February 29, 2024 by a vote of 12 to 15. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because ranked-choice voting undermines the electorate's ability to choose the best candidate in elections, threatens election integrity, and is designed to elect moderate-to-leftist politicians, which generally means they do not adhere to the Constitution.