



## Karen M. Peterson

Utah  
Representative, HD-013 (R)

[freedomindex.us/11432/](https://freedomindex.us/11432/)

**59**  
Lifetime  
Freedom  
Score

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## 2026 UT Legislative Scorecard

Based on the Principles of the U.S. Constitution

The Legislative Scorecard is a nationwide, nonpartisan educational program of The John Birch Society intended to inform voters about legislators' voting records. It does not promote any candidate or political party. Bills are chosen for their constitutional implications and taxpayer costs.

★ Constitutional	✗ Unconstitutional	? Did not Vote		\$/Year	Vote
			<b>1. SB298 Ban on ESG-aligned "Programmable Money"</b> (passed 48 to 11 on 3/6/2026). Makes it unlawful to require the use of "programmable money," unless a "free, non-digital alternative" is offered, and prevents an issuer from denying transactions based on "environmental, social, or governance standards."		YES ★
			<b>2. SB58 Compulsory Government Education</b> (passed 48 to 22 on 3/4/2026). Directs local education agencies to conduct "enhanced attendance tracking" of school-aged children and "identify students at risk of chronic absenteeism" who miss 10% or more days of instruction, whether or not "the absence was excused."	-\$0.03	YES ✗
			<b>3. SB60 Reducing Income Taxes</b> (passed 61 to 11 on 3/4/2026). Cuts the state's individual and corporate income-tax rate from 4.5% to 4.45%.	+\$63.41	YES ★
			<b>4. SB248 Expanding State-funded Childcare</b> (failed 25 to 47 on 3/4/2026). Would create a new program for employer-sponsored, state-assisted childcare facilities.	-\$3.21	YES ✗
			<b>5. HB174 Protecting Children from Sex Mutilation</b> (passed 53 to 15 on 3/2/2026). Amends state law to strengthen Utah's prohibition against providing "cross-sex hormones and puberty blockers" to minors.		YES ★
			<b>6. SB109 Alienation of Affection</b> (passed 47 to 2 on 2/26/2026). Abolishes the "right of action for alienation of affections."		YES ✗

**Scorecard Votes: 50%**



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# \$290,647

U.S. National Debt Per Household as of May 28, 2026

# Why do these votes matter?

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## 1. Ban on ESG-aligned "Programmable Money"

SB298 makes it unlawful to require the use of "programmable money," unless a "free, non-digital alternative" is offered, and prevents an issuer from denying transactions based on "environmental, social, or governance standards."

This legislation thwarts dangerous plans to impose unconstitutional "programmable money" in Utah. Although Article 1, Section 10 of the U.S. Constitution says that "No State shall...make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts," various forms of "programmable money" (e.g., Central Bank Digital Currencies, payment stablecoins, or tokenized bank deposits) now pose a significant threat to Americans' civil liberties. As "programmable money" has an inherent potential to restrict private and voluntary financial transactions, it is a perilous tool for "debanking," digital ID, other tyrannical means of controlling human behavior. In fact, "programmable money" can be integrated into, and abused on behalf of, the all-encompassing "woke" environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) movement, which seeks to implement a "social credit score" system." To keep Utah from becoming a full-fledged, intolerable surveillance state, where personal freedom is decimated, is it crucial that lawmakers restore sound money by adhering to the Constitution's monetary provisions.

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## 2. Compulsory Government Education

SB58 directs local education agencies to conduct "enhanced attendance tracking" of school-aged children and "identify students at risk of chronic absenteeism" who miss 10% or more days of instruction, whether or not "the absence was excused."

Education is not the role of government—it is the responsibility of a child's parents or family. Parents have a fundamental right to educate their children freely, and schools can and should be privatized, without relying on public funds. If not dismantled, the government's monopoly on pre-K-12 education will continue to displace traditional private schools and homeschooling in favor of universal state-sponsored schooling. The best "school choice," by far, is for parents to choose not to place their child's education in the hands of the state. Educational and economic freedom cannot be achieved by forcing other citizens to give up their hard-earned tax dollars for all that now entails a compulsory, failing, and government-run school system.

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## 3. Reducing Income Taxes

SB60 cuts the state's individual and corporate income-tax rate from 4.5% to 4.45%.

The income tax is an immoral, anti-constitutional act of government-imposed theft that takes from people the wages they have rightfully earned. It turns citizens into slaves. A person's property, including their income, belongs solely to them—not the state. The Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment expressly affirm that "No State" shall "deprive any person" of "liberty, or property." Utah must reject oppressive, big government by safeguarding the "pursuit of Happiness," particularly the right to enjoy the fruit of one's own labor.

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## 4. Expanding State-funded Childcare

SB248 would create a new program for employer-sponsored, state-assisted childcare facilities.

Childcare is not the legitimate object of government. It is a function that belongs to the family, not the state. Utah has no business subsidizing childcare for anyone, especially private employers. Taxation in the name of "childcare" is neither just nor charitable. Moreover, this bill uses unjust forms of taxation (e.g., personal and corporate income taxes) to also reduce the cost of childcare tuition for non-employee "community members," many of whom have little or no tax liability, at the expense of others—resulting in more debt, dependency, and poverty. The Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment were written to "promote the general Welfare" of all Americans, not "cradle-to-grave" or "nanny-state" policies that coerce reckless and discriminatory government spending.

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## 5. Protecting Children from Sex Mutilation

HB174 amends state law to strengthen Utah's prohibition against providing "cross-sex hormones and puberty blockers" to minors.

This bill eliminates the exception in Utah's 2023 moratorium that allowed certain minors to continue "hormonal transgender treatment." No person has a right to harm a child, using the pretext of LGBTQ+ ideology. Chemical and surgical sex mutilation is a grotesque practice that not only violates the "unalienable" right to life and limb, but absurdly attempts to erase natural biological functions with fictional "gender identity" constructs. According to the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights and 14th Amendment, every State has an obligation to defend the basic humanity of its citizens—each of whom is born distinctly male or female, and, as the Declaration of Independence affirms, created equally in the image of God.

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## 6. Alienation of Affection

SB109 abolishes the "right of action for alienation of affections."

This bill removes civil liability for malicious interference in the marital relationship. Similar to "no-fault divorce" and the legalization of adultery, it permits a person to commit serious acts of injury against a spouse with impunity—thereby aiding and abetting the breaking of the marital covenant while denying victims due process of law. Innocent parties are left with no right to their day in court. It also wrongly assumes that marriage, or morality itself, is to be determined exclusively, even frivolously, by the government. The Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment do not render conjugal rights as meaningless. Marriage, being coeval with mankind, is ordained by God, not the state. The most sacred of all human institutions, marriage is a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman, whose one-flesh union serves as the foundation of the family. God-honoring, loving marriages are essential to securing "the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity," but the fallout from the widespread war on marriage and the family has been devastating. Utah has a duty to protect marriages and punish those responsible for wrecking them.