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LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD BASED ON THE 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.



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James F. Cobb

Utah

Representative, HD-048 (R)

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Lifetime
Freedom
Score

2024 UT Legislative Scorecard

Based on the Principles of the U.S. Constitution

★ Constitutional	✗ Unconstitutional	? Did not Vote	Vote
			YES
1. SB57 Constitutional Sovereignty Act (Passed 57 to 14 on 1/20/2024).			★
Creates a formal process for the state Legislature to block federal laws or orders they believe violate Utah's state sovereignty.			
			YES
2. HB290 Ranked-choice Voting Ban (Passed 43 to 26 on 2/22/2024).			★
Aimed to repeal the Municipal Alternate Voting Methods Pilot Project, which supports the adoption of ranked-choice voting (RCV) for municipalities.			
			NO
3. HB348 Precious Metals (Passed 52 to 18 on 2/22/2024).			✗
Allows the Utah state treasurer to invest up to 10% of funds in specific budget reserve accounts in precious metals, exempting these investments from certain state money management rules.			
			YES
4. HB516 Foreign-owned Land (Passed 72 to 0 on 2/23/2024).			★
Bans certain foreign entities from owning land in Utah, targeting those owned or controlled by the governments of China, Iran, North Korea, or Russia.			
			NO
5. HB303 Woke School Curriculum Ban (Failed 32 to 39 on 2/26/2024).			✗
Updates Utah's school curriculum requirements by prohibiting public-school employees, including teachers, from endorsing or disparaging any religious, political, or social beliefs, including LGBTQ+ views.			
			YES
6. HB78 Motion-picture Incentives (Passed 47 to 22 on 2/28/2024).			✗
Removes the expiration date for certain film incentives focused on rural productions.			

Scorecard Votes: 50%

Why do these votes matter?

1. Constitutional Sovereignty Act

SB57 creates a formal process for the state Legislature to block federal laws or orders they believe violate Utah's state sovereignty. It sets rules for passing a resolution to stop local enforcement of such federal actions and requires consulting the attorney general and notifying tribal governments. Once passed, the resolution becomes law and prevents state or local officials from enforcing the targeted federal directive. The bill also clarifies that inaction by the legislature doesn't mean the federal directive is accepted as lawful.

The Utah State House of Representatives passed SB57 on January 20, 2024 by a vote of 57 to 14. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because Article VI, Clause 2, of the U.S. Constitution requires that federal laws be made "in Pursuance" of the Constitution in order to be the "supreme Law of the Land." As such, any federal act that violates the Constitution is unconstitutional and therefore null, void, and of no force. Given that Article VI, Clause 3, further requires that state officials "shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution," Utah legislators indeed have a solemn duty to uphold the sovereign right of the people to resist and obstruct usurpations of power by the federal government.

2. Ranked-choice Voting Ban

HB290 repeals the Municipal Alternate Voting Methods Pilot Project, which supports the adoption of ranked-choice voting for municipalities.

The Utah State House of Representatives passed HB290 on February 22, 2024 by a vote of 43 to 26. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because ranked-choice voting undermines the electorate's ability to choose the best candidate in elections, and is designed to elect moderate-to-leftist politicians, which generally means they do not adhere to the Constitution.

3. Precious Metals

HB348 allows the Utah state treasurer to invest up to 10% of funds in specific budget reserve accounts in precious metals, exempting these investments from certain state money management rules.

The Utah State House of Representatives passed HB348 on February 22, 2024 by a vote of 52 to 18. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because this bill takes a significant step toward restoring sound money principles and aligning with the U.S. Constitution's monetary standards. Article I, Section 10, states, "No State shall ... make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts." HB348 helps protect the state's financial freedom and return to stricter constitutional practices.

4. Foreign-owned Land

HB516 bans certain foreign entities from owning land in Utah, targeting those owned or controlled by the governments of China, Iran, North Korea, or Russia, or entities with a majority interest from these countries. Restricted entities must sell any land they own in Utah within a year. If an entity fails to comply, the state may auction the land.

The Utah State House of Representatives passed HB516 on February 23, 2024 by a vote of 72 to 0. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because this is a great step toward preserving state sovereignty. Ultimately, allowing foreigners from countries that reject American values, such as Communist China, to purchase mass amounts of land is a sure way to lose national and state sovereignty. Non-Americans buying property in Utah compromises national security.

5. Woke School Curriculum Ban

HB303 updates Utah's school curriculum requirements by prohibiting public-school employees, including teachers, from endorsing or disparaging any religious, political, or social beliefs, including LGBTQ+ views.

The Utah State House of Representatives failed to pass HB303 on February 26, 2024 by a vote of 32 to 39. We have assigned pluses to the ayes because this bill addresses the ongoing failures in public education by limiting ideological indoctrination. Academic performance has declined for decades, with fewer than a quarter of high school seniors proficient in core subjects like math and American history. Meanwhile, schools increasingly prioritize social engineering over academics. Parents should seek alternatives, such as homeschooling or patriotic private schools such as *FreedomProject Academy*, which do not rely on government funding.

6. Motion-picture Incentives

HB78 removes the expiration date for certain film incentives focused on rural productions. It authorizes the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity to issue tax credit certificates for rural productions.

The Utah State House of Representatives passed HB78 on February 28, 2024 by a vote of 47 to 22. We have assigned pluses to the nays because government should not intervene in the marketplace by selectively granting tax incentives to specific industries. The film industry generally supports woke, Marxist ideology. Taxpayers should not be financially responsible for supporting movie productions.