

## **Study: Utah poised to rebound from recession quickly**

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SALT LAKE CITY -- A new study shows Utah may be poised to recover from the recession more quickly than most states. The reason, according to the conservative authors, is Utah's business-friendly environment.

This is a conservative study with a lot of praise for Utah's conservative Legislature and its policies, but the forecast is a pragmatic look at what businesses want and what Utah has.

Poised to attract more high-tech companies, more in research and medicine, in recreation, tourism and energy; Utah may have what it takes to climb out of the recession first.

"We do have a very attractive environment for business, and it's been stable," said Sen. Wayne Niederhauser, R-Sandy.

Niederhauser is one of the legislators cited in the study "Rich States, Poor States." Written on behalf of the conservative American Legislative Exchange Council, or ALEC, it claims Utah is one of the states that has advantages over other states.

One of the advantages comes in the area of tax policy, specifically income tax reform. Utah also has less government regulation and involvement is a plus for businesses.

Gov. Jon Huntsman is also working to promote Utah as a future renewable energy hub. Together, it could add up to an even more prosperous future for Utah.

"There probably is not another state in America right now with better practices, in terms of attracting, building and promulgating renewable energy," Huntsman said.

At the same time, Utah has a chance to lead the way in using prosperity to create a better life for people. It can do so in many ways. One example is in being smart about health care reform.

"We're saying it's great the state is embarking on health system reform. Let's make sure that, at the end of the day, those reforms result in predictable costs for businesses and affordable costs for employees so they can succeed on the job," said Judi Hilman, with the Utah Health Policy Project.

By comparison, states like California and New York have been raising taxes steadily. That has led to a very difficult downward spiral for those states.