

Utah Senate Passes Healthy Utah Bill [S..B. 164 SO1] with 17-11-1 vote.

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S.B. 164 SO1 uses private insurance to close Utah's coverage gap.

**Media
Advisory**

The Utah Senate voted 17-11-1 to pass [S.B.164 SO1](#) which would establish a pilot program for Gov. Gary Herbert's Healthy Utah Plan to cover thousands of uninsured Utahns with subsidized private health insurance. The Senate now sends the bill to the Utah House of Representatives to consider before the end of the legislative session.

During today's floor debate, the bill's sponsor, Sen. Brian Shiozawa (R-Cottonwood Heights) said, "This is the best solution for a problem that we did not create," echoing the sentiments of many of his Senate Republican colleagues.

"House leaders have repeatedly said that 'doing nothing is not an option,'" said RyLee Curtis, Senior Policy Analyst at the Utah Health Policy Project (UHPP). "The House has now been delivered a bill that has the strong support of business leaders, health care organizations, and a majority of Utah voters. This unprecedented level of community support, gubernatorial support, and lack of any other viable options makes it unreasonable for the House to oppose consideration," she said. "Healthy Utah is a culmination of two years of hard work and hard fought negotiations. It represents a thoughtful, middle-

The **Utah Health Policy Project (UHPP)** is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advancing sustainable healthcare solutions for underserved Utahns through better access, education, and public policy.

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of- the-road, Utah solution,” concludes Curtis.



Prior to the Senate vote, S.B 164 was amended to limit the Healthy Utah plan to a two-year pilot program (July 2015-July 2017) that includes an iron-clad termination provision. This change also allows the legislature to fund the projected \$25 million state cost through combination of cost savings, efficiencies, and one-time appropriations.

The Healthy Utah Plan would help tens of thousands of lower-income Utahns purchase private health insurance coverage through traditional insurance plans. It would especially help 53,000 Utahns caught in the coverage gap. These are adults who earn too much or don't qualify for Medicaid, yet earn too little to purchase subsidized health coverage on Utah's new insurance marketplace.

Learn more about Utah's Coverage Gap here ([link](#)).

Under the Healthy Utah Plan, a total 72,500 Utahns would gain access to affordable health care coverage in 2016. Over 85% of beneficiaries' households have one or more adult working, over 66% of the individual beneficiaries are currently working one or more jobs, and over 44,000 parents with dependent children would receive health insurance. Because the Healthy Utah Plan triggers enhanced federal funding, it will return \$966 million in Utah taxpayer dollars to the state over the plan's two-year timeline.

In addition to widespread support in statewide polling ([link](#)), the Healthy Utah Plan is supported by over 70 Utah organizations and associations, including the Salt Lake Chamber, the Utah Hospital Association, the Utah Manufacturers Association, and Intermountain Healthcare.

About S.B. 164 SO1 (Healthy Utah):

<http://le.utah.gov/DynaBill/dbill.jsp?bill=SB0164&trackadd=true>

Cover the Gap (website supporting the Healthy Utah Plan): www.coverthegap.org

For additional details about how the Healthy Utah Plan

would impact your city or county, contact UHPP's RyLee Curtis

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About the Utah Health Policy Project (UHPP)

Utah Health Policy Project (UHPP) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advancing sustainable health care solutions for underserved Utahns through better access, education, and public policy.

Since 2006 UHPP has worked hard to develop solutions to create a health system that provides better access to higher quality health care at a lower cost. We pride ourselves on being an open resource for the public, community leaders, the media, businesses, health care providers and policymakers.

Our nonbiased approach strives to find solutions that best fit Utah. We bring individuals and organizations to the same table, recognizing that effective and long-term solutions are fostered by authentic collaboration among disparate stakeholders. Our role is to ensure the consumer voice is present.

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