

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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UNITED WAY OF SALT LAKE
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United Way Presents Policy Agenda for 2013 Legislative Session at Annual Legislative Breakfast

SALT LAKE CITY — United Way of Salt Lake presented its public policy agenda for the upcoming legislative session at the *2013 Legislative Preview Breakfast* on Thursday. The breakfast offered community and business leaders, nonprofit organizations, and others the opportunity to engage in a panel discussion with legislative leaders about social issues facing all Utahns.

This year's panelists included Speaker Rebecca D. Lockhart, House Minority Leader Jennifer M. Seelig, President Wayne Niederhauser and Senate Minority Leader Gene Davis. Legislators answered questions about key issues facing the upcoming legislature focused on United Way's goals for the community in the areas of education, income, health, and basic needs.

"We believe the future of our state is in human capital," said Deborah Bayle, President and CEO of United Way of Salt Lake. "As we look to the 2013 General Session, this means investing in our youth, who will be Utah's future leaders, preserving programs that are essential to the health and well-being of all Utahns, and creating opportunities that promote individual and community growth," continued Bayle.

Through a collaborative effort with business, community leaders, and the broader community, United Way has identified the following public policy recommendations for 2013:

EDUCATION:

United Way of Salt Lake is dedicated to ensuring all children have the opportunity to succeed from cradle to career. The development of **high quality preschool** provides the necessary foundation for at-risk children to build upon, reducing long-term costs of remediation, special education use, possible juvenile justice, and welfare dependence. This objective, supported by Sen. Osmond, will be heard on Capitol Hill this session. Children also need safe, structured learning environments so they can begin school ready to learn, and are able to achieve at grade level throughout. United Way supports a range

of childcare and afterschool options, including nonprofit and government programs that ensure affordable access and high quality programming for all children.

INCOME:

United Way hopes to spread financial literacy and education programs to help families and individuals avoid financial hardship and develop lifelong security. Through the “Earn it. Keep it. Save it.” coalition, United Way works to strengthen family financial stability through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program, in which qualified volunteers help families file their taxes for free and help claim the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). United Way also supports the adoption of a state EITC, a proven strategy that lifts families and individuals out of poverty.

HEALTH:

In order to ensure Utahns have access to affordable health coverage, United Way supports cost-containment strategies and benefit redesign efforts in the ongoing healthcare reform battle. United Way supports efforts to streamline and simplify Utah’s public health programs in an effort to reduce costs and increase continuity of care through public programs.

BASIC NEEDS:

One of United Way’s main goals this year is to develop a standard of excellence for the crucial 2-1-1 service. United Way seeks to build a public-private partnership funding structure for 2-1-1 that includes funds from the state and continued private funding through United Way. This partnership will ensure this free, statewide service can provide quality, up-to-date information to Utahns in need and those seeking opportunities to volunteer. United Way also continues to support state investments in basic needs programs related to food, shelter, health, and safety, to ensure that every Utahn’s most basic needs are fulfilled.

For more information about United Way and to see the full public policy agenda for 2013, please visit uw.org/advocate.

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United Way of Salt Lake is working to advance the education, income, and health of our neighborhoods and communities to ensure that every child succeeds, every step of the way, from cradle to career. We invite everyone to be a part of the change. You can give, you can advocate, and you can volunteer. That’s what it means to LIVE UNITED. Join the conversation by visiting our blog at uwslhub.org, or find out more at uw.org.