

1 **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CONCURRENT**

2 **RESOLUTION**

3 2011 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Patricia W. Jones**

6 House Sponsor: Patrice M. Arent

7

8 **LONG TITLE**

9 **General Description:**

10 This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor designates February 20
11 through 27, 2011, as "Utah Saves Week," recognizes the unique public/private
12 partnership of the Utah Council on Financial and Economic Education and the
13 establishment of a new campaign and online portal to help Utahns access financial
14 information, and encourages Utahns of all ages to increase their financial literacy and
15 their personal and family savings.

16 **Highlighted Provisions:**

17 This resolution:

18 ▶ recognizes the importance of savings for financial security and that all Utahns need
19 to regularly save a portion of their income;

20 ▶ designates February 20 through 27, 2011, as Utah Saves Week, and urges Utahns to
21 observe this week with appropriate programs and activities with the goal of
22 increasing personal savings rates for individuals of all ages and income levels;

23 ▶ recommends that Utahns consider participating in activities in connection with Utah
24 Saves Week, such as enrolling as a Utah Saver online at www.utahsaves.org or by
25 calling 2-1-1 to set savings goals and stay connected with free educational
26 opportunities, or participating in free community financial management instruction
27 opportunities;

28 ▶ encourages parents and teachers to prepare children of all ages for responsible
29 money management through modeling, direct instruction, and maximizing teaching

30 moments;

31 ▶ recognizes the contributions of the Utah Council on Financial and Economic
32 Education in bringing the state's public, private, and nonprofit sectors together to
33 address financial responsibility issues;

34 ▶ encourages providers of financial education to join the Council and the Believe in
35 Financial Empowerment campaign; and

36 ▶ encourages all Utahns to take advantage of the financial responsibility resources
37 available through www.believeinyourfuture.org, www.imagineahappieryou.org,
38 www.financeintheclassroom.org, www.uesp.org, and www.utahsaves.org.

39 **Special Clauses:**

40 None



42 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

43 WHEREAS, the stress of a personal financial crisis can completely disrupt the lives of
44 individuals and families;

45 WHEREAS, increased costs for basic necessities such as food, fuel, health care, and
46 housing are stretching families to the limit;

47 WHEREAS, the current economic crisis is putting a financial bind on working people
48 at all income levels, resulting in unprecedented numbers of bankruptcies and home
49 foreclosures;

50 WHEREAS, according to the Employee Benefit Research Institute, the percentage of
51 American workers very confident about having enough money for a comfortable retirement fell
52 to 16% in 2010, and more workers expect to work longer to supplement their income upon
53 retirement;

54 WHEREAS, an increased percentage of workers report they have virtually no savings
55 and investments;

56 WHEREAS, the 2010 Retirement Confidence Survey reports that 27% of American
57 workers have less than \$1,000 in savings;

58 WHEREAS, a 2010 study completed by the University of Michigan Law School
59 indicates individuals 65 and older are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population
60 seeking bankruptcy protection and carry 50% more credit card debt than younger debtors;

61 WHEREAS, the choice to get a job to make ends meet may not exist for older
62 Americans, who may have health and medical debts adding to their financial distress;

63 WHEREAS, according to a MetLife Mature Market Institute study, every year older
64 Americans lose \$2.6 billion from financial exploitation, including financial abuse by family
65 members;

66 WHEREAS, a recent survey of American credit habits reveals that 63% of credit card
67 holders do not know their credit score, 47% never check their credit reports, 67% say they have
68 never checked their credit reports for free, and 16% check their credit reports less often than
69 once per year;

70 WHEREAS, an individual credit report may be obtained free of charge at
71 www.annualcreditreport.com;

72 WHEREAS, the components of a credit score and the information contained in credit
73 reports are often hard to decipher and understand;

74 WHEREAS, credit reports can affect a person's ability to obtain a loan, purchase a
75 home, rent an apartment, buy a car, receive favorable insurance rates, get into graduate school,
76 or even get a job;

77 WHEREAS, regular credit report checking is a crucial step in being protected from
78 identity fraud or inaccurate reporting;

79 WHEREAS, over the past 30 years, Americans have increasingly relied on debt to
80 make everyday purchases;

81 WHEREAS, the amount Americans save for emergencies, education, and retirement is
82 not adequate to meet their needs;

83 WHEREAS, many Utahns would have almost no income without Social Security,
84 which makes up 90% of family income for nearly 20% of Utahns age 65 and older;

85 WHEREAS, one in every 99 Utah housing units received a foreclosure filing during the

86 2nd quarter of 2010, giving the state the fifth highest foreclosure rate in the nation;

87 WHEREAS, according to figures released by the United States Bankruptcy Court for
88 Utah, the state's 2010 bankruptcy filings increased by 24% over 2009;

89 WHEREAS, because today's financial world is increasingly complex, most Americans
90 are not familiar with technical monetary terms but are expected to make big financial decisions
91 as early as the teen years;

92 WHEREAS, according to one author, in all of history, no children have had more
93 money of their own, have had more pressure to spend it, and have needed more guidance on
94 how to do it than the youth of America in the early years of the 21st Century;

95 WHEREAS, financial security can help reduce stress, job turnover, and absenteeism,
96 while increasing employee satisfaction, productivity, and morale;

97 WHEREAS, financial knowledge and strengthening financial planning and
98 responsibility, are key steps to achieving financial independence;

99 WHEREAS, businesses that recognize it is more expensive to ignore their employees'
100 financial difficulties than to address them head-on have developed strategies to bring financial
101 education, credit counseling, and other financial services to the workplace;

102 WHEREAS, since the economic downturn, the personal savings rate has risen to 3%,
103 up from just a year ago when Americans were failing to save at all;

104 WHEREAS, promoting financial literacy by itself is not enough, because financial
105 success is not dependent on knowledge alone;

106 WHEREAS, the key to financial success is financial competency achieved by the right
107 behavior;

108 WHEREAS, financial insecurity is at the core of many of society's social ills and results
109 not only in poverty and homelessness, but also poor financial habits that lead to poor health,
110 domestic violence, troubled youth, and the breakdown of families and neighborhoods; and

111 WHEREAS, giving people the tools and resources to meet immediate needs and build
112 long-term wealth through saving and debt reduction is the key to conquering this growing
113 epidemic:

114 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
115 Governor concurring therein, recognize the importance of savings to financial security and that
116 all Utahns need to regularly save a portion of their income.

117 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor designate
118 February 20 through 27, 2011, as Utah Saves Week and urge Utahns to observe this week with
119 appropriate programs and activities with the goal of increasing personal savings rates for
120 individuals of all ages and income levels.

121 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor recommend that
122 Utahns consider participating in activities in connection with Utah Saves Week, such as
123 enrolling as a Utah Saver online at www.utahsaves.org, calling 2-1-1 to set savings goals and
124 stay connected with free educational opportunities, or taking advantage of attending a free
125 community financial management class.

126 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor encourage
127 parents and teachers to prepare children of all ages for responsible money management through
128 modeling, direct instruction, and maximizing teaching moments.

129 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor applaud the
130 collaboration of financial institutions, businesses, state agencies, religious and community
131 organizations, schools, and others to help Utahns gain easier access to existing financial
132 education resources.

133 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor encourage all
134 entities that provide financial education to do so in partnership with the Utah Council on
135 Financial and Economic Education and to become part of the Believe in Financial Management
136 campaign.

137 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor encourage all
138 Utahns to access the resources available through www.believeinyourfuture.org,
139 www.imagineahappieryou.org, www.financeintheclassroom.org, www.uesp.org, and
140 www.utahsaves.org.

141 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Utah Parent

142 Teacher Association, the Utah State Office of Education, the Utah State Board of Regents, the
143 members of the Utah Council on Financial and Economic Education, the Utah Broadcasters
144 Association, AARP, the Utah Banker's Association, the Utah League of Credit Unions, Utah's
145 Chambers of Commerce, and Utah Saves.