



The Armchair Advocate

Brought to you by the Coalition of Religious Communities
A Multi-Faith Response to Poverty
March 2007

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2007 Legislature Wrap-up

With the 2007 General Session of the Utah State Legislature now complete, it seems appropriate to look back and see what kind of impact CORC had. Every Tuesday and Thursday members of CORC gathered to work mainly on a.) further removal of the sales tax on food, and b.) stronger regulations for payday lending.

Both of these foci saw some positive movement this year, with one more percent of the state portion of the food tax on unprepared food being removed. There is also a statewide uniform rate for the food tax - 3% - which will take effect in January of 2008.

In terms of payday lending, one bill, SB16 sponsored by Senator Ed Mayne passed through both houses and received a signature from the governor. This bill gives the Commissioner more authority and allows payday lenders to be fined for violating the law. Another bill, which CORC had input in the content, was sent to an Interim study, which may give the bill a stronger chance of being passed next year. This bill, which was sponsored by Rep. Lou Shurtliff, limited the maximum loan amount, limited the amount of times a loan may be rolled-over, and requires reporting.

CORC also weighed in on other issues, including an Earned Income Tax Credit, Medicaid Vision and Dental appropriations, and a Property Tax Deferral for Seniors. To see the complete legislative wrap-up visit crossroads-u-c.org and click on the CORC page.

CORC Annual Meeting

Tuesday, April 24th

5 - 9 pm at
St. Mark's Cathedral

Come meet CORC members from across the state and help decide which issues CORC will work on in 2008.

Dinner will be provided.

CORC Road Trip

CORC meetings for the Southern half of the state will take place:

Tuesday, April 17th

Lunchtime - Richfield

Dinnertime - Parowan

Wednesday, April 18th

Lunchtime - Cedar City

Dinnertime - St. George

Thursday, April 19th

Dinnertime - Moab

Friday, April 20th

Lunchtime - Price

More details about time, location, and other specifics will be made available in the near future.

Extreme Makeover - UTA Edition

The Utah Transit Authority is proposing to increase bus costs in the following ways:

- a) increasing the cost of a regular monthly bus pass from \$50 to \$67 and increasing the cost of one way bus service from \$1.50 to \$2.
- b) increasing the cost of a bus for seniors and people with disabilities from \$25 to \$33.50 and increasing the price of bus fare for seniors and people with disabilities from 75 cents to \$1.
- c) increasing the cost for paratransit service, which is already too high, to levels they have not yet determined but could be as high as \$4 for each trip.

At the same time UTA is planning to decrease the number of bus stops and increase the number of transfers riders will have to make to get where they need to go. These changes will hurt traditional bus riders - those riders who do not have the option of driving to a Park-and-Ride lot to use TRAX or the Fast Bus. This non-driving population, consisting mainly of low-income and elderly persons, is the very population that a public-funded transportation system should serve.

Go Speak at one of the Public Forums on the Fare Increase!

Davis County: Farmington City Hall,
Multipurpose Room, 130 N. Main, Farmington,
Thursday, March 29th, 6:30 p.m.

Weber County: Weber County Library,
Auditorium, 2464 Jefferson, Ogden, Tuesday,
April 3rd, 6:30 p.m.

Salt Lake County: One day time session will be
held at the UTA Offices, Modular Conference
Room, 3600 South 700 West, Salt Lake City,
Wednesday, April 4th, 1 p.m.

Salt Lake County: Salt Lake City Library, 4th
Floor, 210 East 400 South, Salt Lake City,
Thursday, April 5th, 6:30 p.m.

Utah County: Provo City Library, Young Spe-
cial Events Room, 550 No. University, Provo,
Wednesday, April 11th, 6:30 p.m.

Tooele County: Tooele County Courthouse, Au-
ditorium, 47 So. Main Street, Tooele,
Tuesday, April 10th, 6:30 p.m.

To send comments to UTA or to check out the route changes and
fare changes go to
www.rideuta.com

Next CORC Monthly Meeting

May 17th

8:30 a.m. in Salt Lake City
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
261 South 900 East
Coffee and breakfast treats

May 17th

11:45 a.m. in Ogden
Ogden United Church of Christ
3350 Harrison Blvd.
Drinks and dessert provided