

JONATHAN JOHNSON GOVERNOR 2016



May 17, 2016

Sasha Clark
Director of Communications
801-719-1575
Sasha@HireJJ.com

An Avoidable Special Session

Salt Lake City, UT- Tomorrow the Utah Legislature will meet in a special session called by Gov. Herbert for two agenda items: restoring almost \$5 million in proposed funding for successful early education programs such as UPSTART and passing a concurrent resolution opposing the unilateral designation of a national monument, known as Bear Ears, in the state of Utah.

Jonathan Johnson, Republican candidate for Utah governor, supports both agenda items but notes the need for the special session is due to Gary Herbert's inaction and mistakes.

UPSTART is a successful early-learning program and the \$2 million funding proposed by the legislature made the program available to 20 percent of all 4-year olds. The \$3 million proposed for K-3 is an early intervention program that was dedicated to a successful program that teaches reading skills to students. As studies have shown, reading at grade level before the third grade is vital to a student's success in school and in life.

Governor Herbert gave reasons for vetoing these early education programs, saying the programs were already funded and that lawmakers should review how they're working before spending more.

"The Governor didn't realize the legislature had done its homework. He, on the other hand, had not. Both of these programs are extremely successful, give tax payers a big bang for their buck, and are vital to early education.", Johnson stated.

Herbert's reasoning for the anti-national monument resolution: "It is absolutely irresponsible for the Obama Administration to consider a new national monument.... without input from Utahns from across the state who will be significantly impacted by this decision."

In response Johnson stated, "Yes, we should fight against this type of federal overreach. The president shouldn't be able to unilaterally tie up public land that should rightfully transfer to the state. This resolution is needed now because of Herbert's seven years of inaction to transfer ownership of public lands to the state. The resolution, while nice in sentiment, has very little force. It is an example of the 'please, please, please' method of negotiation. As a businessman who negotiates win-win deals all the time, I know Gary Herbert's conduct has put Utah in a weak negotiating position."

Johnson continued, "The legislature has given the Governor every tool necessary to take on the federal government and win. Unfortunately, he has done little with the tools provided. Now, the only obstacle in Obama's way to designating a national monument in Utah is a toothless resolution meant mostly for Gov. Herbert's campaign promotion."

Jonathan concluded, "The legislature has done their homework on education funding and given the Governor every tool necessary to gain state ownership of public lands. Unfortunately, this special session could have been easily avoided."

###