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***TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
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Governor Gary R. Herbert

Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to address you today. Never in recent history has workforce development, and the work of this committee, been more important.

My number one priority as Governor of Utah is to foster an environment where the private sector can create jobs. Utah's focus on building a strong economy has yielded accolade after accolade, including Forbes Magazine naming us the best state for business and careers for the third year in a row.

Utah achieves this success because we focus on growing the economy and investing in education. Those two priorities are inextricably linked. Utah's economy demands an educated, skilled workforce, and I'm sure the same is true for all states.

Software giant Adobe recently finished building a massive facility in Utah's high tech corridor, and it's just part one of a three-phase project. They were drawn to our state in part because of our highly educated workforce and proximity to more than 100,000 students at nearby institutions of higher learning.

As more companies like Adobe continue to move to and expand in Utah, we recognize the economic imperative to align what business needs from the workforce, with the skills and degrees our education system is producing.

So in my remarks today, I want to focus on three major initiatives we are pursuing in Utah.

The first initiative is what we call 66% by 2020.

Based on a comprehensive study by Georgetown University's Center on Education and Workforce, two-thirds of the jobs in Utah will require some form of post-secondary education by the year 2020. Right now only 43% of Utah's workforce meets this education standard.

The infusion of technology in both the workplace and career sectors will drive this nation's economic transformation. Across all industries and economic sectors, market demand for college-educated workers will outpace supply by 300,000 employees annually.

If nothing changes, by 2018 the nation's post-secondary system will have produced three million fewer college graduates than the labor market needs.

As the Georgetown study put it, "In short, the economic history of the United States is one of lock-step progression between technology and educational attainment."

Utah is looking ahead and taking the steps now to ensure our workforce has the right education level for the future demands of the private sector. We have proactively engaged all major stakeholders and leaders on every front, including education and business, to unite behind and commit to our goal of 66% by 2020.

The second initiative Utah is pursuing is STEM education.

More than simply having an education, Utahns must get the right kind of education in areas that are valued in the marketplace. Much like hockey great Wayne Gretzky said he would skate to where the puck will be, Utah is educating for where the jobs will be.

With the rise of a technologically-oriented economy, Utah has a renewed focus on STEM education: science, technology, engineering, and math, because that is where the jobs will be.

Sound analysis demonstrates that, in our future economy, the most intense concentrations of post-secondary workers will be in five main sectors, and represent more than 30% of total occupational employment and about 45% of all jobs for post-secondary workers. It's no coincidence that these five sectors, as they tap into our new knowledge economy, are also the fast growing areas of our labor market.

STEM-related jobs are a top tier priority in Utah's entire education system, K-16.

The third initiative I wish to highlight today is Utah's expansion of dual immersion education. Utah's dual immersion programs in Spanish, French, and Chinese teach our students cultural literacy and prepare them for a global economy. Dual immersion students also perform better on standardized testing. They show improved memory skills, better attention-control, and higher problem-solving ability.

Utah is a leader in foreign language classes. In fact, one third of all Mandarin Chinese classes taught in the entire United States are taught in Utah. You may be surprised to know that there are 658 languages spoken in Utah. A large component of that is our culture; we have many residents who serve a Mormon mission for the LDS Church and they often gain language skills abroad.

Our multi-lingual students become a key part of our workforce, and that attracts business to our state, including Goldman Sachs, whose Utah office is its second largest in the America's and fastest growing in the world.

It is clear that states are leading the way to economic recovery. For example, Utah's economy is growing at more than twice the national average. Our unemployment rate is 5.2%, far below the national average of 7.8%.

Despite our success, federal policies complicate Utah's ability to grow and align our workforce with market demands.

Governors no longer have access to the Workforce Investment Act's discretionary funds that we were able to tailor for unique solutions for our states. Now, all workforce investment money either covers administrative costs, or goes directly to the grant programs.

Because we no longer have flexibility with this money, the State of Utah had to apply for an individual grant through the Workforce Innovation Fund. As of last April, Utah spent more than four months, 550 staff hours, and \$48,000 dollars just to apply for the grant.

Now, I fully support oversight and accountability. But I do not support excessive bureaucratic red tape that limits my state's ability to invest funds in the most effective way. If states are to optimize alignment between our future educational outcomes and the labor demands of the market, it is essential that Congress now provide states maximum flexibility to implement programs and tailor solutions in the way we see fit.

No one understands state challenges and demographics better than the people who reside and govern there. No one is more committed to the most effective use of limited resources for the best possible outcome, for both our students and our employers. And no one is more committed to growing local economies, thus ensuring economic recovery, prosperity and job growth.

Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today.