

**For Immediate Release**

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**The Utah Legislature Announces Safety Protocols for the 2021 General Session**

**SALT LAKE CITY** – Out of an abundance of caution, public participation in legislative proceedings will be temporarily conducted virtually. The decision comes after the Utah Highway Patrol raised concerns with legislative leadership about protests planned at the Capitol, coinciding with the opening of the 45-day annual general session. The legislative session will begin as planned on January 19, 2021.

“As lawmakers, we take our responsibility to govern seriously,” said Senate President J. Stuart Adams. “We will convene as scheduled in a manner that is safe for everyone as we work on behalf of Utahns. Though this session will be unconventional, we recognize the value of public input and have worked to fine-tune a process that enables remote public comment. We encourage all Utahns to utilize this new process throughout the session.”

Over the last 10 months, legislative staff have worked tirelessly to initiate remote public participation, providing all Utahns the opportunity to participate in the legislative process. Audio and video improvements permit virtual access to all legislative proceedings. Utahns can now watch presentations and spontaneously request to provide input during a live committee meeting as if they were in a committee room.

“Our primary concerns are for the safety of those who would be in the Capitol under ordinary circumstances and for the Legislature to be able to conduct the business of the people without interruption,” said Speaker of the House Brad Wilson. “It is unfortunate we have to take this step, but we have the procedures and technologies in place to allow us to adjust and move forward. We will work closely with the Utah Highway Patrol as we evaluate conditions and determine when in-person options can resume.”

The public can access all committee meetings and legislative floor debates at [le.utah.gov](http://le.utah.gov).

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