

5.2

STATE OF UTAH
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



SPENCER J. COX
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

September 26, 2017

Chairman Steve DeBry and
Salt Lake County Council Members
2001 South State Street, N2-200
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4575

Dear Salt Lake County Council Members,

I write in support of the proposed Salt Lake County Intergenerational Poverty Task Force. As chair of the state's Intergenerational Welfare Reform Commission and the State Homeless Coordinating Committee, I have spent a considerable amount of time working on intergenerational poverty. It is an issue of significant importance and now is the time to address it. We have made great progress toward aligning state resources to support local governments so that thousands of Utahns will be able to break the cycle of poverty and be able to move forward.

Intergenerational poverty is fundamentally different from any other form of poverty. It is more chronic. It is more lasting. And it is more debilitating to the families and children who are stuck in its cycle. Most importantly, it cannot and should not be addressed by the same old approach to poverty.

As both the population base and economic base for our state, Salt Lake County is uniquely positioned to drive this conversation and help empower thousands of residents to break the cycle of poverty and no longer need government assistance. We need the counties to drive this issue. They are better positioned to know their residents' needs, and are best suited to leverage existing local resources to truly have an impact.

I support and encourage Councilwoman Aimee Winder Newton and the Salt Lake County Intergenerational Poverty Task Force to help lead the charge to rescue thousands of Utahns in Salt Lake County from the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

Sincerely,

Spencer J. Cox
Lieutenant Governor



Intergenerational Poverty in Salt Lake County and Proposed Task Force

What is intergenerational poverty?

Intergenerational poverty (IGP) is a unique, chronic form of poverty defined by use of public assistance continuing from one generation to the next. It typically afflicts young single mothers who have limited education, and have young children. Single parenthood, lack of education, and lack of steady employment are the biggest risk factors.

How big is the problem?

37,385 people experience IGP in Salt Lake County (16,674 adults and 20,711 children).

Why this matters

Salt Lake County spends roughly **17 million general fund dollars** annually to help impoverished residents; we don't distinguish between intergenerational poverty and temporary, or "situational" poverty. The State of Utah has prioritized this issue through legislation and the state Welfare Reform Commission, chaired by Lt. Governor Spencer Cox. It is seeking greater collaboration from counties to share data and align metrics to yield better outcomes for children in this cycle of poverty. Thirteen other counties have already created their own commissions or committees.

Partners on the Salt Lake County Task Force

We propose the creation of the Salt Lake County Intergenerational Poverty Task Force and will invite the following partners:

- County agency directors from Health, Regional Development (HCD), Human Services, Behavioral Health
- Regional rep from Division of Child and Family Services
- Local school superintendents
- Juvenile Judge
- Expert in Child Psychology
- Regional rep from Department of Workforce Services
- Religious organization rep that engages in welfare services
- Municipal Economic Development Expert
- State legislator
- County Council member

This task force will share data and information, review anti-poverty efforts, and bring recommendations to the County Council of how to better align our efforts and use current resources to help break the cycle of poverty for thousands of SLCO residents.