



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CLEAN AIR ACTION TEAM RECOMMENDS IMMEDIATE ACTION TO CLEAR THE AIR

The independent Clean Air Action Team, facilitated by Envision Utah, has now issued five immediate recommendations. Although the team was asked to work throughout 2014 to finalize a set of broadly supported recommendations to improve Utah's air quality, team members wished to make more immediate recommendations on high-priority items. Two of those items—(1) bringing cleaner cars and fuel to Utah as soon as possible, and (2) eliminating wood burning during winter inversions—were released in January and shared with the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the President of the Senate. They were included in Governor Herbert's State of the State address. Yesterday, the Clean Air Action Team added three additional immediate recommendations:

1. Expand public transportation and invest in facilities to make biking and walking more convenient.
2. Increase the Utah Division of Air Quality's budget and authority.
3. Continue and expand the "Let's Clear the Air" public education campaign.

"The Clean Air Action Team feels an urgency to act now," said Lonnie Bullard of Jacobsen Construction, one of the two chairs of the team. "There has been unanimous support among the group for the five recommendations we have made. We feel five actions should move forward as rapidly as possible because they can have an impact now." The team will continue to work through 2014 to establish a complete set of recommendations in advance of the 2015 legislative session.

On a typical winter weekday, vehicle emissions account for almost 60% of emissions along the Wasatch Front—and an even higher percentage in places like Utah County and Cache Valley. "Cleaner cars and cleaner fuel are critical because they don't require significant lifestyle changes, but getting people out of their cars on inversion days is even better," said Robert Grow, President and CEO of Envision Utah. "If we're going to ask people to leave their cars at home, we have to make the alternatives more convenient for more people."

Currently, public transportation replaces 120,000 car trips each day and carries 25% of commuters to downtown Salt Lake City. According to the Utah Transit Authority, this eliminates 2,000 tons of emissions each year, and an additional ¼ cent sales tax for public transportation could expand service in a way that would immediately increase ridership by over 50%, and by almost 90% within five years, resulting in an annual emissions reduction of 3,600 tons. “As we build more housing, shopping, and jobs close to transit stations over time, even more people will ride,” Grow said. “This improves our air quality, but it also provides more travel choices, improves road congestion, and reduces household transportation costs.”

Increased budget and authority would allow the Division of Air Quality to more effectively take action to clean the air. The Division could use the funding to increase research and analysis, enforcement, and public education. Added authority would enable effective regulation and enforcement. “This is about giving DAQ the tools they need to do their job,” said Dr. Michelle Hofmann, a physician at Riverton Hospital and an assistant professor at the University of Utah who also serves as a chair of the Clean Air Action Team.

The “Let’s Clear the Air” public education campaign launched this winter with a \$500,000 grant from the Governor’s Office of Economic Development. The campaign, which is being sponsored by Envision Utah and the Utah Clean Air Partnership (UCAIR), includes a website, [cleartheairutah.org](http://cleartheairutah.org), as well as television, radio, billboard, and digital advertising. “Helping people understand what they can do to reduce their emissions is essential,” Dr. Hofmann said. “Getting the information out there to everyone will take more than just a few months. This needs to be an ongoing effort.”

The Clean Air Action Team was convened at Governor Gary Herbert’s request in October. The team includes representatives from health care, business, nonprofit organizations, government, academia, transportation, and more; it is likely the broadest group ever assembled in Utah to evaluate strategies and develop a holistic approach to solving our air quality issues. These recommendations can then be implemented by government, businesses, and individuals. All ideas are on the table for evaluation.

The Clean Air Action Team is one element of the *Your Utah, Your Future* process that is being facilitated by Envision Utah at the request of Governor Herbert. *Your Utah, Your Future* is a collaborative effort to establish a vision together for our Utah and our future as we add another 2.5 million people by 2050. Another group that is part of the overall effort is the “Transportation and Communities Guidance Committee,” which includes a similarly broad spectrum of representatives from both governmental and private sectors. Recently, that committee unanimously and wholeheartedly endorsed the transportation-related recommendations of the Clean Air Action Team: cleaner fuels and cleaner cars, as well as increased travel choices including public transportation, walking, and biking.

#### **About Envision Utah**

Envision Utah is a nonprofit public/private partnership that facilitates informed public involvement to explore solutions to the challenges presented by growth. Their transparent grassroots approach inspires trust, gives residents a voice, and draws on public values. Learn more at [www.envisionutah.org](http://www.envisionutah.org).

### **Clean Air Action Team Members**

- Dr. Michelle Hofmann, Physician, Breathe Utah, University of Utah (co-chair)
- Lonnie Bullard, Jacobsen Construction (co-chair)
- Stuart Adams, State Senator
- Patrice Arent, State Representative
- Ralph Becker, Mayor Salt Lake City
- David Brems, GSBS Architects
- Rebecca Chavez-Houck, State Representative
- Jeff Edwards, Executive Director, Economic Development Corporation of Utah
- Robin Erickson, Utah Clean Cities
- Ryan Evans, Salt Lake Chamber
- Matthew Eyring, Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer, Vivint Inc.
- Dr. Robert Gillies, State Climatologist
- Andrew Gruber, Executive Director, Wasatch Front Regional Council
- Susan Hardy, Mountainland Association of Governments
- Roger Jackson, FFKR Architects
- Ron Jibson, President and CEO, Questar
- Linda Johnson, Citizen
- Terry Marasco, Executive Director, Utah Moms for Clean Air
- Alan Matheson, State Planning Coordinator and Governor's Environmental Advisor
- Ben McAdams, Mayor, Salt Lake County
- Nancy McCormick, State President, AARP
- Dr. Robert Paine, Pulmonologist, Program on Air Quality, Health, and Society, University of Utah
- Angelo Papastamos, UDOT Travelwise
- Dr. Edward Redd, State Representative and physician
- Dr. Bob Rolfs, Deputy Director, Utah Department of Health
- Steve Sands, Kennecott, Air Quality Board
- Joseph Shaffer, Director of Health, Tri-County Health, Uintah Basin
- Matt Sibul, Utah Transit Authority
- Amanda Smith, Executive Director, Utah Dept. of Environmental Quality
- Lowry Snow, State Representative
- Dr. Charles Sorenson, CEO, Intermountain Health Care
- Peter Stempel, Stempel Form Architects
- Cody Stewart, Governor's Energy Advisor
- Kathy Van Dame, Air Quality Board
- Vicki Varela, Director, Utah Office of Tourism
- Ted Wilson, Executive Director, UCAIR
- Sarah Wright, Executive Director, Utah Clean Energy