

Priced Out

The future of Salt Lake City's skyline could likely elbow out the less wealthy. Utah sure is spending a lot in the courts. Plus, Utah's immigrant-friendly nature continues.

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Apparently, most of the population boom that Utah will see is pretty damned well off. At least that's what all the new buildings portend. The *Deseret News* detailed plans for five downtown developments in Salt Lake but only one at 255 S. State includes affordable units. What's the likelihood that will move forward? Well, the last planned development there failed and city leaders have yet to sign off on this one. So instead, we'll focus on huge office buildings and high-end residential units just waiting to price people and businesses out. Because development is all about money, Sen. Jake Anderson, R-Lehi, tried unsuccessfully to get the Legislature to appropriate \$24 million for affordable housing. Maybe they'll give in later. But let's face it. Development is for the rich. While the skyline reaches higher, the homeless population still waits for housing solutions.



Lawsuits Aplenty

Ever wonder where your hard-earned tax dollars are going? One word: lawsuits. Yes, people expect the government to stand up and defend laws on the books. But it's not doing that. The latest abortion ban is a good example. This should have been settled long ago with the U.S. Supreme Court, but now the Legislature has decided to strike while the court is hot and conservative. At a cost of perhaps \$2 million, Utah will have to defend itself against a lawsuit from the ACLU and Planned Parenthood, detailed in both daily newspapers. The cry of "oh, the babies," has



gotten old and weary in the era of #metoo, where women continue to be treated as second-class humans. Don't forget the lawsuits claiming Utah should own federal lands or over the recent ballot initiatives. Or Salt Lake City's lawsuit against the inland port. Obviously, more time should be spent talking solutions than writing one-sided laws destined for court resolution.

Sanctuary Utah

You can do a lot of trash-talking about Utah, but not about immigration. Perhaps it's because the LDS community feels deeply that immigration is a part of their history. The state has long been welcoming to immigrant communities—and continues to do so. After the most recent legislative session, Gov. Gary Herbert signed into law a bill that prevents undocumented people from automatic deportation for minor crimes. It was a simple fix of the law, according to the ACLU. Federal law requires any penalties of 365 days or more to be considered felonies in the case of immigration. Make it 364, and voilà—you're OK. The feds are all about automatic deportation and give no discretion to judges, so this was a major victory—especially for a red state like Utah.

