

Utah State Government Growth: 1991 to 2002

Research Report #661, October 2003

Lesson Summary

This lesson details Utah state government growth since 1991. The report contains an analysis of where the state is spending its money and how federal funds and dedicated credits (user fees) are used to help finance state government. The report also provides an analysis of employment and wages for federal, state and local government relative to the private sector.

Related Websites

- Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget
<http://governor.utah.gov/gopb/budget.html>
- US Census Bureau
www.census.gov

Utah Core Curriculum

- Utah Studies 6100
- 6100-0404 Investigate the current status of Utah's Economy
- U.S. History II 6250
- 6250-1001 Analyze the economy of contemporary United States
- U.S. Govt. and Citizenship 6210
- 6210-0302 Assess how federal monies influence local policy and decision-making

This lesson plan is provided by Utah Foundation to assist in using the accompanying Research Report in high school or middle school classes. Please feel free to copy the Research Report for your students.

Vocabulary

Aggregate: A sum or collection of many different parts.

Anomaly: Something that is different from what is expected.

Apex: The highest point or pinnacle.

Burgeoning: Growing rapidly.

Compilation: Gathered from a variety of sources.

Conventional: Following accepted norms or customs.

Incurred: To have gained or acquired.

Infusion: Something added or introduced.

Intuitive: Obtained through common sense rather than from reasoning or observation.

Predicated: based an attitude or belief on.

Quick Questions

1. Among all the states, where did Utah rank on state government expenditure growth from 1992-2001?

Answer: First

2. List operations, non-operations and total state expenditure amounts per \$1,000 of personal income for 1993. In which year were total expenditures per \$1,000 of personal income the highest?

Answer: In 1993, Operations = \$110.41, Non-Operations = \$12.60 and Total = \$123.00. Total expenditures were highest in 1997.

3. Fill in the blanks: "Overall for the 1990s, it can be said if _____, _____, and _____ were removed from the budgetary process, state government funding demands on Utah's economy declined."

Answer: Health, Corrections, and Transportation Capital

4. Which state government budgetary category is the largest?

Answer: Public Education

5. Which state government budgetary category had the fastest growth in federal funds?

Answer: Law and Order.

6. In 1993, state government workers accounted for how many workers per thousand in Utah?

Answer: 60

7. Between 1990 and 1995, by how much did the average private sector employee's wages grow?

Answer: \$26

8. In 1994, how many times larger was the average federal employee's salary than an employee in the private sector in Utah?

Answer: 1.6 times.

Critical Thinking Activities

1. One of the key issues of this report is that funds from the federal government are almost as large as funds raised by sales taxes in the state's General Fund. As a class or in groups debate the following question: "Is money received from the federal government free money?" Think about these points while doing so: Much of the federal money received is for Medicaid and CHIP. In order to receive federal funds for these programs, the state government has to "match" those funds with money that might otherwise be spent elsewhere. Some policymakers feel that the federal government requiring this match is in fact, the federal government dictating state government policy. Do you feel this is true, why or why not? In what other areas does the state receive federal funds? Should these continue?
2. Every student should review the expenditures for each of the budgetary categories and then pick one he/she felt was (a) overfunded and (b) underfunded during the 1990s. Each student should then prepare either oral or written arguments to support their position.
3. The research shows that federal employees earn much more than local and state government or private sector employees. What do you think would happen if federal pay were reduced to match the local economy and the savings passed on to state governments? Would that have a positive or negative effect on our economy?

Quiz Page

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