



STATE OF UTAH

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
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JON M. HUNTSMAN, JR.
GOVERNOR

GARY R. HERBERT
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

December 12, 2006

My Fellow Utahns:

During times of prosperity, we are given the opportunity to attend to our greatest needs. This year, with record lows in unemployment and near record highs in job growth, we are experiencing unprecedented revenues that allow us to present a well-balanced budget to address many of the critical needs facing our great State.

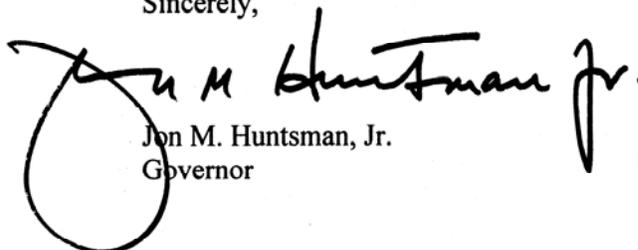
It is important to make education our top priority, embracing the undeniable link between education and economic vitality. In order to continue our economic success, we must build a workforce based on 21st century realities. This begins at the earliest stages of education. Therefore, it is my pleasure to recommend the largest single dollar budget increase for public education in our State's history as an investment in our most valuable asset: our children. Early childhood education, critical teaching shortages, and enrollment growth all must be met with vigor in order to keep Utah's economy durable and strong.

I remain committed to continue our efforts to build upon the tax reform foundation created in September's special session. Within my budget, I recommend another investment to reduce the top rate even further and to implement a step that benefits low-income taxpayers. These proactive efforts will continue to stimulate the economy, keeping Utah regionally competitive, in order to continue to address our burgeoning needs in education, transportation, and other critical areas.

While I know that all of the needs facing our State cannot be met with this budget, it represents a balanced approach to the most critical areas, both now and in the future. I recommend a heavy cash investment in transportation and land conservation initiatives to enhance our quality of life. In addition, we have addressed many of the important health and human services, public safety, and correctional obligations.

I am excited to share this information with you and am honored to be your Governor. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.
Governor