

# UEA Issue Brief

## SB80: School Funding Amendments

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*SB80: School Funding Amendments*, sponsored by Senator Lincoln Fillmore, would take an amount equal to one-third of the increase on the Weighted Pupil Unit (WPU) each year to increase the number of guaranteed local levy increments to qualifying districts.

UEA's Position:

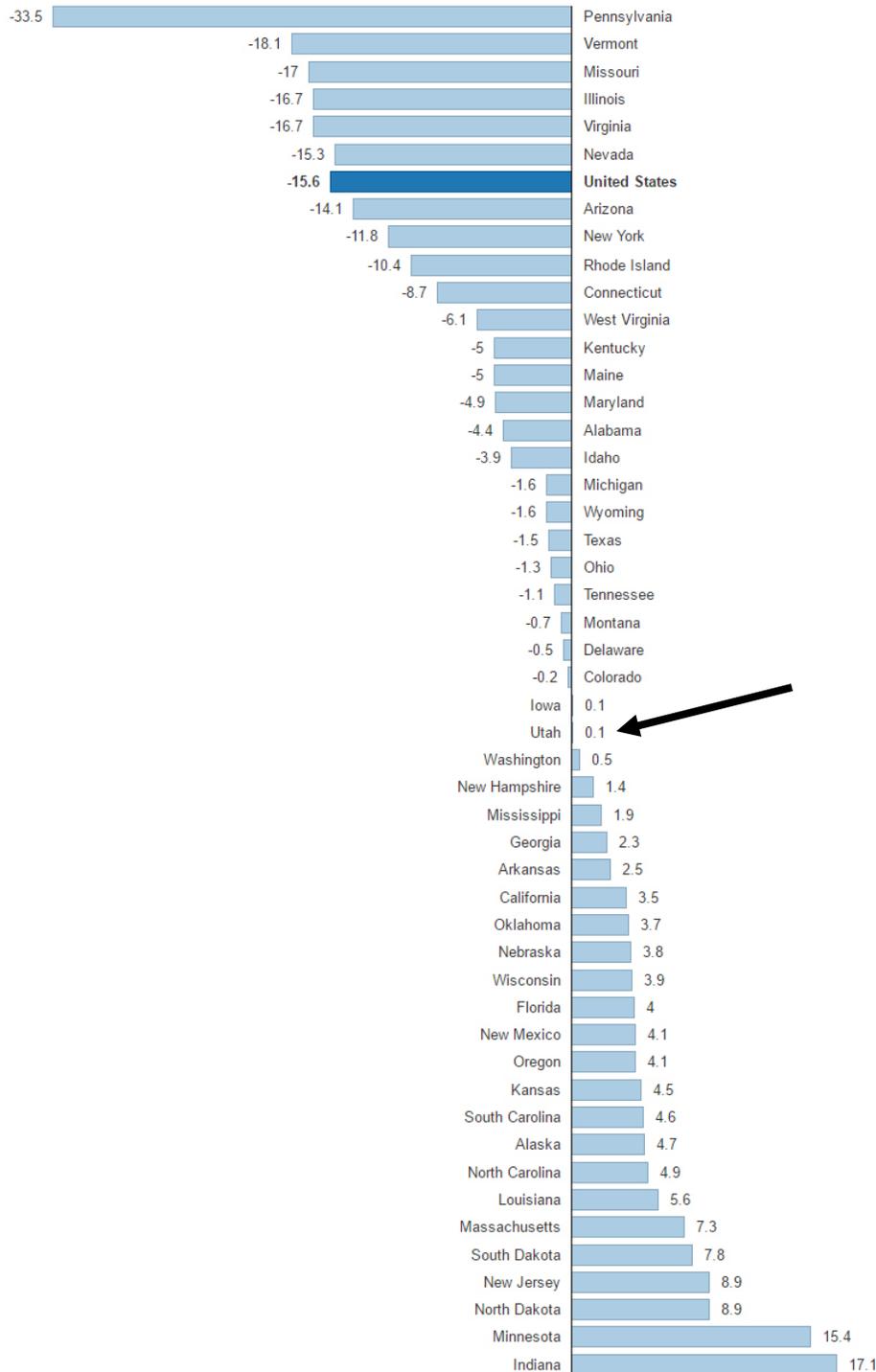
**The UEA opposes Senate Bill 80** for the following reasons:

- The bill earmarks a portion of education funding growth each year toward equalization, ignoring the more important goals of providing **equitable** and **adequate** funding for all Utah students.
- The bill places a multi-million-dollar earmark restriction on the Education Fund, money which otherwise would be available to increase the WPU. **Utah's WPU is already recognized as one of the nation's most equitable per-student funding mechanisms** (*see reverse*).
- While there are differences between individual districts in Utah, **no district is overfunded or even adequately funded** by national standards. Every district depends on a robust increase on the WPU each year to meet diverse student needs.
- The UEA supports the concept of equalizing property tax, but only when funded through new sources instead of redistributing existing funds. **Re-slicing the same "pie"** will never result in adequate education funding for Utah students.
- The increased property tax increments for some districts will not be sufficient to make up the possible lost WPU funds, resulting in less funding overall.
- Districts not eligible for equalization increments will see lower WPU funding unless offset by local property tax increases.

*February 8, 2017*

## How spending differs between poor and affluent school districts

Utah already has one of the nation's most equitable funding mechanisms (the WPU). On the chart below, negative percentages mean that students in the state's poorest school districts get fewer dollars per pupil than students in the state's most affluent districts. Positive percentages mean that students in the poorest districts get more dollars per pupil. (State and local spending only.)



Source: [National Center for Education Statistics](http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/ipedsdatatools/)

The Washington Post

Graphic: [Washington Post, March 12, 2015](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

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