

Dear Legislator,

In the last special session, the emergency was extended till August 20th, when you will be having another special session. The reason given was, to quote Rep. Peterson, “receive the Federal Emergency Funds”. But as Sen. McKay pointed out, we are no longer under the narrowly defined Emergency situation, but rather in an “ongoing management circumstance”. If such an ongoing situation is converted into an emergency, then it is a complete distortion of the meaning of an emergency, and would simply amount to a power grab by the executive, even if that is not the intention. When legislative and executive powers merge, we have a kingship and not a constitutional republic.

In addition, how would the state government manage its own finances by putting small businesses out of work, or by crippling their working? I was under the impression that Utah stood strongly for the rights of the State, and would be unwilling to be under the dole of federal dollars for *any* amount of time. Would a continued state of emergency be sustainable? The PPP loan program looks good on the surface, but since in most instances the loan has to be repaid with interest, what the interest amounts to is an additional tax on the already-crushed business. Is this justice, in any way?

If a virus with less than 0.01% death rate (324 out of 3.2 million Utahns, many of whom were elderly with comorbidities) is reason enough for abandoning the checks and balances, and the separation of Church and State, then do we even value those basic principles anymore? Were they just a sham?

I think it is your responsibility, as a legislator, to curtail the power of the executive by voting NO to any proposed extension of the emergency. Also please note that contrary to section 63G-3 of the Utah Code definitions, the Governor *has been passing illegal orders* which apply to wide classes of people. It is your job to hold him responsible for such an overreach, and curtail the emergency just for that reason alone.

The power of the health department is another cause for concern – how is it possible that such threatening language like “exercise physical control over property and over individuals as the local health department finds necessary” and “close theaters, schools, and other public places and prohibit gatherings of people” can be allowed to exist, as they do in 26-1-30 and 26A-1-114? How is it possible that, in violation of Utah code 26-1-23, local bodies are passing orders *more stringent* than the state level?

Please vote down the emergency, and prevent our governmental system from being dismantled before our eyes. Let us not make the following true: “Nothing is more permanent than a temporary solution that works”.

Thank you,