

# Growing in Utah: The Quality Growth Act of 1999

By Jill M. Burton

*By the late 1990's demographic changes and patterns of land development in Utah, had aroused wide public concern over how to keep growth compatible with quality of life. This essay identifies major public-policy issues at stake, involving conflicting worries, hopes, wants, and expectations. It describes the legislative struggle which produced the Quality Growth Act of 1999, including stances taken by different interest groups, and roles played by individual legislators – in the House – and by political party alignments. The Act's main features are outlined, including goals it incorporates, issues it addresses, the Quality Growth Commission it creates, and overall significance. The essay also notes some of the major challenges ahead.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Wasatch Front is a place surrounded by majestic mountains that sometimes disappear into the clouds on a rainy day. It is a place with raging rivers that sometimes thunder and roar with an overabundance of water during the spring run-off. And, it is a place where the brilliant pink and orange colors of the sunset seem to eternally set on the rocky landscape. But now, it is becoming increasingly a place whose majestic mountains, farmlands, woodlands and wetlands disappear into streets, business buildings, schools, and homes. It is more and more a place with highways that thunder and roar with an overabundance of traffic, a place where inefficient and costly patterns of development have been a standard for far too long. This place is Utah, and it is home for many of us.

The issue of growth is not new. Many cities and states have struggled with it for years. Los Angeles, and other parts of California; Portland, Oregon; and Maryland are a few well-known examples. Each area has faced the problem of growth, and has developed or attempted solutions. Some initiatives have been considered successful and others considered failures. Growth is occurring all around us, even in Utah, especially along the Wasatch Front.

On a regularly recurring basis, growth issues headline Utah newspapers: "Homes in Utah among least affordable in U.S." (Davidson 1998); "Leadership, not lip service needed

to save open space"(Karras 1999); "Envision Utah is outlining ways to prepare for growth" (Dillon 1998); and the list goes on. Newspapers are not the only media using the growth issue in their reports. Local television and radio stations have begun building some of their news programming around growth. For example, KSL Television reports on the Wasatch-Front commute with its "Exclusive Traffic Link Cameras," and KSL News Radio programming includes, "Traffic and Weather every ten minutes on the nines."

Growth is not a straightforward issue nor is the word itself easily defined or understood. The purpose of this essay is to explore, and contribute to the development of the public's understanding of, the growth issue in Utah. Clearly, the question surrounding this issue is not whether we can stop growth, or even slow it down, but whether can we manage it effectively. This is not an easy task; therefore it is no surprise that growth is one of the most difficult and pressing issues facing Utah's political leaders.

House Bill 119: the Quality Growth Act of 1999, sponsored by Representative Kevin S. Garn (R-Layton), was brought before the 1999 Utah State Legislature and eventually enacted. The focus of this essay is on this specific growth legislation. It (1) begins with a brief discussion and overview of growth; (2) introduces the Quality Growth Act of 1999; and (3) discusses the strengths of and challenges to the Act, and the outlook for the future of managing growth with this piece of legislation.

The author served as a Legislative Aid to Representative Kevin S. Garn during the 1999 Session of the Utah State Legislature, and was actively and directly involved in the legislative process concentrating on the Quality Growth Act of 1999. This included attending meetings with the various interest groups involved, committee hearings on the bill, and press conferences, and being in the House and Senate when

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the bill was introduced, debated, and voted on therein. Thus, the author was an active participant in the process of helping this piece of legislation become a law. Additional research by the author involved studying various public documents and secondary literature on the topic.

### OVERVIEW OF THE GROWTH ISSUE

A long-term trend in Utah has developed. According to the Utah Foundation (1998), and the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, between 1940 and 1990, Utah's population grew at almost twice the national average. During the 1990's, the state has grown at an even faster rate. Eighty-four percent of Utah's population growth since the 1940's has been a result of natural increase, rather than net migration into the state. Utah also has the highest birth rate in the nation, nearly forty-four percent higher than the national average, and Utah's population will continue to grow at rates above the national average.

Between 1940 and 1998, nearly eighty-two percent of the state's population growth occurred in four of our twenty-nine counties: Davis, Salt Lake, Utah, and Weber. This concentrated growth makes Utah one of the most urban states in the nation (Utah Foundation 1998). The developing trend is obvious, it is growth, and with growth come problems.

It is expensive to provide the necessary infrastructure and services for a fast-growing population. More schools must be built, public services such as police and fire departments must be expanded, and the money used to support higher education, health and welfare services must be increased. There is also an increase in the demand for drinking water and transportation, and for effectively dealing with byproducts such as wastewater and air pollution in a rapidly growing area.

In Utah in 1989, only 5,632 housing construction permits were issued. For 1996, 23,737 such permits were issued. Many of the homes being built were on the outer boundary of current development in the greater Wasatch area. This growth has caused significant increases in expenditures for local governments. The greater Wasatch area is facing a moderate-and low-income housing problem. One reason for the shortage of such housing is the nature of city ordinances and zoning laws. Responding to public pressure, local governments seem to have created zoning ordinances that prevent any further expansion of moderate-and-low-income housing within city boundaries. Land is not available to construct such units because the state and local governments have insulated themselves from certain housing types, by erecting barriers that prevent cities from complying with market demands. Because of this there is a shortage of land, which prevents a mix of housing types and pushes low-income housing out of city boundaries.

The issue of open space is another problem for local governments. Preserving areas such as parks, natural lands, and watershed lands is difficult—many of these areas are not self

supporting and become a major cost to local governments. Inadequate housing, infrastructure, services, and open-space are only a few examples of the problems that unmanaged or improperly managed growth creates. But they are significant and demonstrate the severity of the growth issue in Utah.

The great majority of Utah's citizens are concerned with growth. Recent polls have shown this, and suggest that Utahans are not satisfied with the way in which growth has been handled thus far. Dan Jones and Associates and Insight Research conducted a poll about the growth issue, titled "Trust for Public Lands," on January 13-26, 1999. The poll suggests that Utahans believe Utah is growing too fast and they want to conserve land. Eighty-eight percent of those polled agreed that conserving open space plays a very important role in preserving Utah's quality of life. Seventy-eight percent agreed that we must act now to preserve open space for future generations. Sixty-one percent said they would be willing to pay eighteen dollars per year per person in taxes to protect Utah's open spaces.

The information about Utah's growth strongly suggests that state and local governments need to take action on the issue. According to current development patterns, only very limited amounts of developable land are left in the greater Wasatch area, problems with air quality will continue to be a constraint, and unless we raise taxes, there will continue to be competition for funding between infrastructure costs and other state programs such as public education, higher education, and law enforcement (Davies 1999). Many areas of life are affected by unmanaged growth and Utah needs to find a way to help reduce costs to the state and its citizens. It is time for Utah to examine all growth-related concerns, and to take action to deal with growth. The time is right for growth legislation.

### STRENGTHS OF AND CHALLENGES TO THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

"The session's big issue was growth, and lawmakers rose to the occasion," read the headline in the *Deseret News*' "Legislature's Top 10" issues of the 1999 Session (Dillon 1999b). The Quality Growth Act of 1999, in its 26th and final draft, passed the legislature and was marked as the number one issue for the 1999 session. House Bill 119 was a bipartisan effort, bringing together Utah's Democratic legislators, Republican legislators, and the Governor's Office in finding a way to deal with Utah's growth issue. Governor Michael Leavitt (R-Utah) has discussed his concern with Utah's growth on many occasions. His support for responsible quality growth management became apparent when he helped launch Envision Utah, a growth-planning partnership, and endorsed the distribution of Envision Utah's 2020 questionnaire to Utah residents, enlisting them to help decide the future of the greater Wasatch area. In several speeches and an

article he wrote for the *Deseret News* Progress Edition, Governor Leavitt gave his support to the Quality Growth Act saying,

As governor during very prosperous times, I have wrestled with the issue of growth and all of the challenges that come with it. The essence of our public debate includes questions such as: How can we provide affordable housing to growing young families? How should the land be used? And who possesses jurisdiction and accountability for planning in Utah? This year, I have partnered with legislative leaders to support legislation that will become one of my administration's greatest legacies. The Quality Growth Act of 1999...[is] the first in Utah history designed specifically for the preservation of open lands and agricultural lands, as well as addressing issues such as offering incentives to reduce urban sprawl, creating affordable housing and efficiently providing the necessary infrastructure to accommodate growth (1999).

The many factors that divided individuals and organizations, also, in fact, divided legislators on the appropriate action to take regarding growth legislation. As with any major issue brought before the state legislature, there were varying degrees of support and opposition. The Quality Growth Act was unique, in that it was not a partisan issue. It therefore did not match political parties against each other; instead it matched different interest groups and different legislators' viewpoints against one another and with one another.

The key players in the creation and bringing forth of the proposed Quality Growth Act to the legislature included individual legislators, representatives from the Governor's office, and representatives of growth organizations and interest groups. Nearly three years went into planning this legislation. Growth meetings were held on a regular basis, especially during 1998, and on through the 1999 Session of the Utah Legislature. This allowed all interested parties to actively participate in the bill's development process. Representative Garn (R-Layton), the bill's sponsor, Representative Susan J. Koehn (R-Woods Cross), Representative Ralph Becker (D-Salt Lake), and Representative Patrice M. Arent (D-Salt Lake) were the key legislators involved in the creation of the bill. Along with these individuals, representatives from the Utah League of Cities and Towns, the Utah Home Builders Association, the Nature Conservancy, the Utah Association of Realtors, Envision Utah, the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, the Utah Association of Counties, and many others were involved in the process, sharing their opinions and ideas, and making suggestions. During the entire process, the Growth Act faced significant opposition.

The Utah Association of Realtors (UAR) posed an especially difficult challenge to the Growth Act, since future decisions made by the Quality Growth Commission are likely to have a great impact on its members' business. UAR members and leaders had many opportunities to work out their concerns during the growth meetings and seemed to be nearing contentment as the 1999 legislative session began. But, when

the time came close to the introducing of House Bill 119, the UAR stepped forward in strong opposition to the bill, calling for a long list of changes before it could support the measure. In a packet released to legislators, the media, and other growth interest groups, the UAR strongly opposed the bill, saying, "Utah REALTORS support quality growth and the preservation[,] creation and enhancement of open spaces that add value to Utah's communities [,] which is why we support [certain other proposals]...[,] but REALTORS OPPOSE H.B.119—Quality Growth Act of 1999 as it is currently drafted." Among other things, the UAR asserted (1) that the bill would create a commission that would work against the private sector and the free market in creating solutions to growth; (2) that it would not protect open space, since open land is given a limited definition within the bill; and (3) that funding to purchase developable land would be overlooked by the public and the legislature. The UAR, therefore, urged legislators to vote no until the bill was changed. Its representatives insisted that the bill include as members on the Quality Growth Commission, a majority from the private sector and only a few elected officials; that the bill broaden the definition of "open land" to allow the Commission to fund the creation and enhancement of open spaces; and that the bill limit in advance the amount of state money available to the Commission.

As stated earlier, the Quality Growth Commission is made up of thirteen members, two from the state level, six elected officials from the local government level, and five from the "profit and non-profit private sector, no more than three of whom may be from the same political party and one of whom shall be from the residential construction industry, nominated by the Utah Home Builders Association, and one of whom shall be from the real estate industry, nominated by the Utah Association of Realtors" (HB119). The UAR insisted, in its memorandum, that the composition of the Commission should be changed to two elected persons from state government (one state representative and one state senator), two elected persons from municipal government, two elected persons from county government, one person from the non-profit community, one person from agriculture (Utah Farm Bureau), one person from finance (Utah Bankers Association), one person from the insurance community, one person from real estate (UAR), one person from residential construction (Utah Home Builders Association), and one person from general contracting (Utah Association of General Contractors of America). Such an amended commission structure would completely eliminate from it the executive branch of Utah state government. The Utah League of Cities and Towns said that if the composition of the commission were changed in this way, which would diminish the role of local government, it would vigorously oppose the Act. The Davis County Council of Government also opposed changes to the Commission. Davis County Economic Development Director, Wilf Sommerkorn, said,

“How can a state policy commission on this issue be dominated by the development community?” (Dillon 1999a).

As defined in HB119, the Quality Growth Act,

- (9)(a) “Open land” means land that is:
- (i) preserved in or restored to a predominantly natural, open, and undeveloped condition; and
  - (ii) used for:
    - (A) wildlife habitat;
    - (B) cultural or recreational use;
    - (C) watershed protection; or
    - (D) another use consistent with the preservation of the land in or restoration of the land to a predominantly natural, open, and undeveloped condition.
- (b) (i) “Open land” does not include land whose predominant use is as a developed facility for active recreational activities, including baseball, tennis, soccer, golf, or other sporting or similar activity.
- (ii) The condition of land does not change from a natural, open, and undeveloped condition because of the development or presence on the land of facilities, including trails, waterways, and grassy areas, that:
- (A) enhance the natural, scenic, or aesthetic qualities of the land; or
  - (B) facilitate the public’s access to or use of the land for the enjoyment of its natural, scenic, or aesthetic qualities and for compatible recreational activities (lines 123-140).

The UAR wanted the definition of “open land” to read,

- (a) preserved predominantly in open condition, and/or
- (b) land used for:
  - (i) wildlife habitat;
  - (ii) cultural or recreational use;
  - (iii) water source protection; or
  - (iv) another use consistent with the preservation of the land in a predominantly open condition.

The UAR’s definition of “open land” seems less clear and might cause problems for the Quality Growth Commission as it moves toward creation or enhancement of open space. For instance, the Act begins its definition using the words, under section (a)(I), “preserved in or restored to a predominantly natural, open, and undeveloped condition...,” whereas the UAR would use, under its section (a), only the words “preserved predominantly in open condition...” Again, in section (ii)(D) the Act uses the wording “preservation of the land in or restoration of the land to a predomi-

nantly natural, open, and undeveloped condition,” but the UAR chooses to only use “preservation of the land in a predominantly open condition.” Another significant difference in the definition is that the Act has section (b)(I), which further explains the definition of “open land,” while the UAR would cut out this section entirely. These contrasts in the definition of open land are rather obvious; however the implications the contrasting definitions might have for the Commission and its purpose may not be as clear.

Representative Garn spent many hours meeting and deliberating with the UAR representatives; however, he could not support its desires and the UAR remained opposed to the bill. “After all the coordination, after all the inclusion—with the Association of Counties, conservation groups, with the American Planning Association, the architects, local governments, even the Home Builders...on board—it is one interest group, the Realtors, who are destroying this process,” said Brad Barber of the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget (Dillon 1999a). The UAR then took its position to the Senate, whose President, Lane Beattie (R-West Bountiful), and Assistant Majority Whip, L. Alma Mansell (R-Sandy), are realtors by profession. One might easily have supposed that the Senate leadership would put a stop to the bill’s progress until the UARs’ desires were met. However, when Representatives Garn and Becker met with the Senate Leadership, the former assured the latter that the Growth Act would not assume local planning authority and would not threaten private property rights. Only a few small changes were made to the bill and it passed easily through the Senate. The UAR in its opposition to the legislation, lobbied extensively and received a lot of media attention. Its efforts seemed well rounded, not pointing directly toward favoring the realtor profession, though others often saw that as an underlying purpose for UAR’s unwillingness to support the Growth Act. In the end, the composition of the Quality Growth Commission and the definition of “open space” were not changed. Representative Garn said, regarding home ownership and growth management, in a speech on the House floor, “There is nothing more fundamental than housing and home ownership to our citizens. Home ownership is part of the American Dream...[T]he current system is not working. We have a system where property rights are often an afterthought...[W]e need to act now so that we can preserve our quality of life.”

Local governments are usually cautious about supporting initiatives that might suggest a statewide mandate for planning, since what might look like a good plan for one area may not be beneficial or relevant to another. The leaders of the Utah League of Cities and Towns, obviously, were leery in the beginning about supporting growth legislation. As the bill developed, it became clear that the purpose was not to make statewide mandates. The bill will aid local governments in their efforts to manage growth. Wilf Sommerkorn, a local government planning director in Davis County, said (1999) in support of the bill,

Local planners and officials are so busy dealing with day to day activity in their respective jurisdictions, they have little time to step back and see what effects their collective actions have. My hope is that the Quality Growth Commission will serve as a platform to evaluate us sufficiently to be able to address problems that are difficult for small local units of government to deal with on their own.

Local government officials, who have the primary responsibility of dealing with and managing growth, also have the largest number of seats on the Quality Growth Commission. They will actively engage in a comprehensive state-level policy examination of growth in cities and counties and make recommendations back to the State Legislature. The Utah League of Cities & Towns released in its Legislative Update on February 19, 1999, its position in strong support of the Quality Growth Act of 1999. Its leaders foresee the Act bringing much needed order and effectiveness to the planning process and growth management.

Some legislators were unwilling to allow growth management to take place because they believed it to be the first step toward state control of local planning processes. "They say that community planning is a dubious activity at best, and giving it legitimacy through state discussions should not be done because it interferes with private property rights" (Sommerkorn 1999). But local planning already exists, because the state allows local governments to do it.

The division among legislators became obvious on the House floor when the Rural Caucus, consisting of very conservative legislators, began challenging House Bill 119. A few days prior to its introduction, forty-two of the seventy-five legislators in the House of Representatives signed onto the bill as co-sponsors. The rural legislators, however, seemed to believe the bill was about state government interfering in local planning and zoning, where the control would take away the rights of land owners. Representative Katherine Bryson (R-Orem), said she had "first hand experience with government land controls in southern Utah and northern California....I have seen environmentalists usurp the power of the people....I vow to fight the bill" (Fahys and Walsh 1999). Other opponents suggested the bill would allow government too much money to buy the land that it wants.

Representative Garn said, "The bill hopes to protect property rights, prevent a decline in total private ownership of real estate, and protect property tax revenues. It also is aimed at breaking down barriers to affordable housing or high-density housing" (Wakley 1999). He also added that the bill will allow the free market system to function and that the Quality Growth Commission does not and will not exercise any regulatory authority. By the end of the two-hour debate it seemed to the author as if rural legislators were putting up barricades to a phrase, growth management, and putting no effort into understanding the purposes of this specific bill. At one point in the debate, the opposing side was charged with creating bogymen, or problems that did not exist and were not relevant, in order to stop the progression

of the bill. When the vote was finally called for, House Bill 119 passed the House with 47 yes votes and 23 no votes. Republicans: 28 yes, 22 no, 4 absent; Democrats: 19 yes, 1 no, 1 absent.

After its easy passage in the Senate, 24 yes votes and 5 no votes, the bill came back to the House of Representatives for final approval, or concurrence. The conservative caucus once again attempted to stop its passage. Representative Melvin Brown, R-Murray, former Speaker of the House, told the legislature that "ignorance is bliss," and said that the bill was about statewide planning and contrary to individual property rights. He then suggested that the bill be delayed and studied for a year. At this point Speaker of the House, Marty Stephens, R-Farr West, stepped down from the Speaker's chair onto the House floor to speak in favor of the bill and express his disagreement with the views of the opposition. It was clear to Speaker Stephens that, as Representative Garn had said earlier, "this bill is all about enhancing and preserving the quality of life that all of us have come to know and love," and not about state control (Garn 1999a). The Quality Growth Act, after few modifications, passed in the House 51 to 23, and it was signed into law by Governor Michael Leavitt just a week after its passage.

Opposition to the bill had come from various people and organizations, but most notable and strongest were the efforts made by the Utah Association of Realtors and the Rural Caucus. Many organizations and interest groups also stepped forward and voiced their support for the bill during its creation and debate at the legislature. It is worth noting, here, some of the organizations who supported it. The Utah Chapter of the American Planning Association released a statement (1999) strongly supporting HB 119. Within the statement it said,

In response to growing public concern about growth and related issues, the 1999 House of Representatives...have worked with the Governor's Office, the Utah League of Cities and Towns, the Utah Association of Counties, private business interest groups and others to prepare a bill that will help citizens and local governments take a fresh look at the problems of growth in Utah and begin a dialog on possible solutions....We applaud and endorse the establishment of the Quality Growth Commission....For the first time, a diverse group of people would be formally charged with the responsibility of looking at growth issues from a joint perspective....The Association heartily endorses the concepts embodied in the proposed Quality Growth Act.

Within its statement the Utah APA Chapter referred to other organizations which supported the Growth Act. Among other supporters not mentioned previously in the article were the Utah Foundation, a private nonprofit research group; and the Proterra Companies, developers. These organizations wrote and distributed statements in favor of the Growth Act.

Both sides of the issue made strong cases either for or against the bill, but ultimately those in favor of the legislation

saw victory. With the passage of the Quality Growth Act of 1999, we can now revisit the question raised earlier in this essay—can we manage growth effectively?

### **HB119: THE QUALITY GROWTH ACT OF 1999**

The Quality Growth Act (U.C.A. 11-38-101) is a means of finding a way to manage Utah's incredibly fast-paced population expansion. The Act creates a Quality Growth Commission, composed of members from the public and the private sector who will look at ways to manage growth and then bring those ideas back, as recommendations, to the Legislature. The Act also creates a funding source to provide local governments with incentives to address their own growth problems in an innovative and economical way. The main ideas of the Growth Act are summarized below.

#### **FIVE BASIC GOALS**

The Quality Growth Act is based on five basic goals: (1) encouraging conservation of critical lands and discouraging urban sprawl, (2) eliminating barriers to affordable housing, (3) promoting the effective workings of the free-market sector, (4) encouraging efficient development of infrastructure and efficient use of land, and (5) addressing issues through economic incentives to local government, not through state mandates.

#### **THREE CORE ISSUES**

The Quality Growth Act addresses three core issues. (1) Urban Sprawl: Sprawl consumes thousands of acres of farmland, woodlands and wetlands. It requires government to spend millions of dollars to build new schools, streets, and water and sewer lines. This Act will give incentives and offer support to local governments to put into place a long-term policy for promoting the orderly expansion of land use. (2) Housing and Home Ownership: Local government often has erected barriers to housing, such as low-density zoning requirements. The efforts made through the Act will be toward eliminating these barriers through economic incentives. (3) Green Space and Agricultural Preservation: The Act includes a state funding mechanism to preserve green-space and agricultural lands.

#### **THE ACT CREATES A QUALITY GROWTH COMMISSION**

The Commission consists of 13 members: 2 state officials, 6 elected local government officials, and 5 members from the private sector. Though the Commission will not exercise any regulatory authority, it has several roles: (a) Advise the State Legislature on growth management issues; (b) administer the LeRay McAllister Critical Lands Conservation Fund; and (c) assist as many local entities as possible at their request, in identifying principles of growth management that the local entity may consider implementing, to help achieve the highest possible quality of growth for that entity.

#### **ISSUES THE QUALITY GROWTH COMMISSION WILL STUDY**

The Quality Growth Commission will study all issues related to growth. Specifically it will address several questions. (a) How shall protection of the rights of private property owners be ensured? (b) How should the policy be implemented, of no net decrease in the quantity or value of private real property available to generate property tax revenues, while recognizing that at some time additional public land will be needed and at other times public land that is not critical can be sold, exchanged, or converted to private ownership to accommodate growth and development? (c) How should the concept of local control over land-use and development decisions be implemented with state leadership and coordination? (d) How can we best maintain a balance of free-market and public-sector-planning solutions to growth management problems? And (e) how can we best help local entities define, identify, and establish quality growth areas?

#### **LOCAL PLANNING AND COOPERATION**

The Act will foster and encourage local planning and cooperation among local governments, and with the private sector. (a) The Legislature, through recommendations made by the Commission, will grant money to local entities to help them obtain the technical assistance they need. (b) The Commission will help cities conduct workshops or public hearings or use other similar methods to obtain public input and participation, in the process of each entity's identifying for itself the principles of quality growth and their implementation in its particular circumstances.

#### **FUNDING FOR CRITICAL LANDS CONSERVATION**

The Act creates a funding mechanism for critical lands conservation. (a) It provides for the use of the LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund to support critical land conservation. (b) The money for the fund may be appropriated by the Legislature, contributed by state and federal agencies, persons, corporations, and/or proceeds from the sale of surplus land that departments choose to place into the fund. Critical lands will also be financed through better energy management, which—it is intended—will not cost the taxpayers any additional money. (c) The fund will aid in the preservation or restoration of open land and agriculture land, and may also be used to establish land conservation easement. (d) Local governments will have funding incentives to address their own growth needs.

In summary, the Act will provide statewide direction on quality growth and emphasize that the state no longer intends to subsidize urban sprawl. The Act discourages urban sprawl and supports critical land conservation, housing availability, efficient development of infrastructure, and efficient use of land.

## CONCLUSION

It has been reiterated throughout this discussion, in statements made by Representatives Garn, Becker, Koehn, and Arent, and by numerous other interest groups that the purpose of the Quality Growth Act is to help the state and local governments manage growth effectively. This, I believe, is where the question begins to be answered. With the passage of HB 119, the first step in managing growth effectively has taken place. It has overcome the first of many obstacles, which demonstrates a positive answer to a difficult question. Yes, we will find a way to manage growth effectively. So, what does the outlook for the future look like with the Quality Growth Act in place?

On March 9, 1999, Governor Michael Leavitt announced the appointments to the 13-member Quality Growth Commission: Jon Huntsman Jr., Envision Utah Chairman and business owner; Kathleen Clarke, Utah Department of Natural Resources Executive Director; Cary Petersen, Executive Director of the Utah Department of Agriculture and Foods Commissioner; Lewis Billings, Provo Mayor; Carlton Christensen, Salt Lake City Councilman; Shauna Kerr, Park City Councilwoman; Gary Herbert, Utah County Commission Chairman; Carol Page, Davis County Commissioner; Lee Allen, Box Elder County Commissioner; Dan Lofgren, Prowswood Companies President and CEO; Max Thompson, Mansell & Associates Realty, Ogden Branch Broker; Leland Hogan, hay and cattle producer; and David Allen, business owner in production, agriculture, real estate, and investments. The Commission is in place and ready to take action.

Wilf Sommerkorn helped give light to the future outlook of the Quality Growth Act by saying,

During each legislative session, a number of bills are proposed that adjust or allow or prevent local governments from taking certain actions in dealing with growth. Each is handled on a case by case basis, with little thought given to the overall effect on the rest of the planning process. The quality Growth Commission and the process set forth in the Quality Growth Act are needed to give some order and sanity to the actions proposed each year in the legislature on planning and growth management.

The Commission will now begin looking at relevant information, discussing, and developing new ways to implement legislative action and public policy on growth. The tasks the Commission will face are bound to be difficult. The Utah State Legislature, Wasatch Front cities and counties, and the Commission have a lot of work to do, and undoubtedly, the future will be filled with tough new growth issues that will need to be addressed.

The road that led to the passage of the Quality Growth Act was full of difficult challenges, and surely the road ahead will continue to be rocky. But, with this new legislation in place, the future is looking brighter for Utah. And, with the

help of the Quality Growth Act of 1999, Utah can continue to be a place where we can grow and a place to call home.

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