



# STATE OF UTAH

GARY R. HERBERT  
GOVERNOR

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## **Utah named #1 again, and again, and again**

*Utah identified as a symbol of economic growth that other states should use as a model*

SALT LAKE CITY — (July 16, 2014) For the third consecutive year, Utah has been recognized as the top pro-business state by Pollina Corporate based on 32 factors controlled by state government.

“Cultivating an environment where businesses can thrive has been a significant focus of our economic development efforts,” said Gov. Gary R. Herbert. “It’s one thing to win once, but to consistently rank in the top spot shows something special is going on here. I am proud of the hard work being done by the private sector that has resulted in Utah being recognized once again by Pollina Corporate.”

As rankings go, receiving a top title from Pollina Corporate carries a lot of weight. The study is considered the most comprehensive, unbiased and unvarnished by the economic development industry. The factors used to evaluate states include: taxes, human resources, education, right-to-work legislation, energy costs, infrastructure spending, regulatory environment, workers compensation laws, economic incentive programs and economic development efforts.

Utah scored highly in high school and college completion, unemployment rate and workers compensation to name a few. The state also scored very strongly across all tax categories.

Pollina noted some areas where Utah can still improve, such as teacher compensation, incentives and college funding per-student.

“In Utah we are always working to improve,” said Sophia DiCaro, interim executive director of the Governor’s Office of Economic Development. “For example, our incentives are based on post-performance criteria and may not be as monetarily generous as other states, but businesses choose to locate in Utah because they recognize the combination of our workforce, business friendly regulatory environment, competitive incentives, low operating costs and high quality of life are unparalleled.”

Regardless of Utah's number one ranking it is continually looking for ways to build on its success in economic development. To that end, the State of Utah is extending its incentive and business services programs into rural Utah communities through the Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR) Program in the GOED Rural Development Office. This program proactively reaches out to rural community and government leaders to identify key economic development opportunities that will benefit local communities. The BEAR program then allows Utah to implement its full quiver of resources, including the post-performance Rural Fast Track grant program which can award up to \$50,000, to successfully jumpstart economic development projects.

“A true success story, under Governor Gary Herbert's leadership, Utah #1 has held the top position for the third year in a row. In 2005, Utah ranked #23 and by 2012 it ranked #1 moving up in rank 22 places in only seven years,” Brent Pollina, VP of Pollina Corporate and co-author of the study explains. “Utah is a great example of what enlightened and motivated political leadership can accomplish with a solid plan. Like the early Utah pioneers, the recent political leaders of Utah have relied on their own "industry" to prosper.”

Part of Utah's success can be attributed to the cohesive partnership between GOED and the Economic Development Corporation of Utah (EDCUtah).

“The EDCUtah-GOED partnership succeeds because of the way we mutually uphold our standards,” said Jeff Edwards, president and CEO of EDCUtah. “This coordination translates directly to our success in planning and transparency as we work to grow Utah's economy.”

The Pollina Corporate annual 50-state ranking indicates how each state has positioned itself to retain and create jobs and sustain America's middle class. Now in its eleventh edition, the study has also become an important tool for corporations to evaluate their current and future U.S. locations.

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**About the Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED)**

**Web: [business.utah.gov](http://business.utah.gov)**

The Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) charter is based on Governor Gary Herbert's commitment to economic development statewide. Utah's economic development vision is that Utah will lead the nation as the best performing economy and be recognized as a premier global business destination. The mandate for this office is to provide rich business resources for the creation, growth and recruitment of companies to Utah and to increase tourism and film production in the state. GOED accomplishes this mission through the administration of programs that are based around targeted industries or “economic clusters” that demonstrate the best potential for development. GOED utilizes state resources and private sector contracts to fulfill its mission. For more information please contact: Michael Sullivan, 801-538-8811 or [mgsullivan@utah.gov](mailto:mgsullivan@utah.gov)