



# STATE OF UTAH

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

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

April 15, 2009

Governor's Commission on Strengthening Utah's Democracy  
c/o Vice and Acting Chairman Kirk L. Jowers  
Hinckley Institute of Politics, University of Utah  
Orson Spencer Hall  
260 South Central Campus Drive, Room 253  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84112

Dear Commissioners:

I have observed with interest and appreciation the diligent and inspired work of the Commission on Strengthening Utah's Democracy. As you well know, I gave the Commission a broad mandate to review the laws, regulations, and other government programs that have an impact on citizens' ability and desire to vote. To that end, I asked the Commission to examine five areas (ethics laws, campaign finance rules, redistricting laws and procedures, lobbying regulations, and elections) that appear critical to improving Utah's civic engagement and democratic participation.

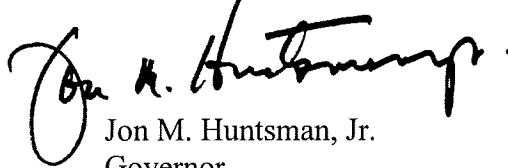
The Commission has made a significant impact. I am pleased and grateful for the extensive research and findings the Commission and its volunteer legal and administrative staff have made and posted on its website, [www.strengthenedemocracy.org](http://www.strengthenedemocracy.org). The documents on the Commission's website, available to all, serve the invaluable function of explaining Utah's laws, highlighting alternative models from other states, and describing the steps needed to enact reforms. I urge all executive and legislative branch officials and party leaders to review these documents, as applicable, to guide them in making Utah's government and elections more transparent to, and engaging for, the public.

The Commission's progress, coupled with strides being made independently by the Utah State Legislature (including its recent decision to elevate the Ethics Committee to a full standing committee), leads me to the conclusion that it is time to move beyond the preliminary fact-finding stage and firmly define the Commission's mandate. I gave the Commission an expansive initial scope of inquiry in order to confirm which areas merited the Commission's most immediate attention. In reviewing the efforts made by the Commission, it appears there is a significant need for further and more intense work in the areas of elections, lobbying, and campaign finance.

I realize each area is vast enough to occupy all of the Commission's remaining time and resources. Other states' commissions examining these topics were given a mandate including only one or two of these areas. Nevertheless, I believe Utah's rules and practices in elections, lobbying, and campaign finance are significant outliers from other states' practices and all three areas are critically in need of focused attention.

Again, I am grateful for a job well done in the Commission's thorough and insightful fact-finding efforts on ethics and redistricting. The Commission's work in these two areas has influenced reforms and will continue to guide improvements in the future. I look forward to the Commission's more extensive deliberations and final recommendations in elections, lobbying, and campaign finance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jon M. Huntsman, Jr." in a cursive style.

Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.  
Governor