

A PEOPLE'S PROCLAMATION

TO INVEST IN RURAL UTAH

A bold and urgent movement to revitalize Utah's rural economies

INSPIRED BY THE UNITED STATES MARSHALL PLAN OF 1948

We

, as people who are interested in the economic vitality and security of all of Utah, proclaim the need and vision to invest in rural Utah. Inspired by the great Marshall Plan of 1948 that rebuilt the economies of Europe, we envision purposeful action that will create more economic security and sustainability, and reduce economic hardship in rural communities. We seek a specific, immediate process to cultivate empowerment of rural leaders, greater investment in rural human and physical capital, and more urban-rural collaboration. We believe such a movement will support Gov. Herbert's 25K JOBS initiative and other rural priorities of the administration. In keeping with these objectives, we pledge our support for investment that reflects these mutual aspirations and plans:

1. **Common vision of prosperity** – We share a common vision for economic prosperity. Both urban and rural economies achieve greater prosperity together.
2. **Priority of statewide significance** – We view the economic success of rural communities as a priority of statewide significance. We envision state leadership through the governor's office with significant and meaningful local direction and engagement.
3. **Bold action** – We believe future solutions require bold action. Past actions, strategies, and programs on the part of state and local government have not been sufficient to stop economic contraction in many rural communities.
4. **Significant investment** – We believe it will take a sizeable investment to jumpstart rural Utah economies. Innovative funding sources must be tapped, including private investment. We should analyze ways to better coordinate and leverage existing funding sources, and streamline access for eligible applicants.
5. **Regional focus** – We believe revitalization must transcend political boundaries. Markets do not follow county and city lines. Communities and counties must work together to develop the regional economy.
6. **Process** – We envision a process led by Gov. Herbert, Lt. Gov. Cox, and the Governor's Rural Partnership Board. With the help of an independent technical team of current state and local economic development experts, our leaders will identify focus areas, evaluate existing programs and policies, identify new projects and policies, and release a draft plan for comment. They will then revise and finalize the plan and begin implementation.
7. **Timeline** – We propose that an evaluation of existing programs and policies begin immediately, and a handful of projects and policies be submitted to the Utah Legislature for funding in the 2018 General Session, with additional research and recommendations to follow for a period of four years.
8. **Projects and policies, not plans** – We seek to develop a strategy that directs funds to projects and policies with the greatest potential to create wealth in rural economies.
9. **Big ideas** – We encourage all Utahns to share their best, biggest, and boldest ideas.

We pledge our best efforts to invest in rural Utah and invite others to join us.

Presented at the Utah Rural Summit on August 3, 2017