



UTAH STATE LEGISLATURE

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To the legislative leaders of the sovereign States:

As chairs of Utah's newly established Commission on Federalism, we are writing to introduce you to the work of the Commission and to invite you to join with us to respond to the federal government's encroachment on the powers specifically reserved to the States and the people by the Constitution of the United States.

John Dickinson, a prominent founder, said during the ratification of the Constitution of the United States, "it will be their own faults, if the several states suffer the federal sovereignty to interfere in the things of their respective jurisdictions." Just over a year ago, Chief Justice Roberts of the United States Supreme Court stated, "the independent power of the States also serves as a check on the power of the federal government," and "the States are separate and independent sovereigns. Sometimes they have to act like it." It is time for every State to stand up and act like the independent and sovereign States envisioned by our Founding Fathers.

In an attempt to address the balance of our nation's unprecedented governing partnership, the State of Utah created the Commission on Federalism, consisting of seven members from both parties of the Utah State Legislature. The commission will collaborate with other States to study the rights, powers, and authority of States to serve as a check on the power of the federal government. We hope to establish a process through which states can work together and, with their congressional delegations, identify and address actions by the federal government that encroach upon the powers that have been reserved to the States and the people.

We believe that efforts to restore balance between the States and national government will have maximum effect if many States coordinate and collaborate together. In fact, it was this type of teamwork among the States, through the Committees of Correspondence, that led to the creation of the Constitution of the United States. We encourage you to consider engaging in a similar effort in your State. Working together, we can help stem the tide of federal encroachment on States' powers and rights, thus maintaining the sovereignty of the individual States and helping to preserve individual rights and liberties.

We encourage your participation in the upcoming Federalism Task Force hearing hosted by the Council of State Governments in Kansas City.

If you have any questions about the work of the Commission on Federalism or would like to share your own ideas or concerns about the principle of federalism, please contact us.

Respectfully,

President Wayne L. Niederhauser
Utah State Senate
Co-Chair, Commission on Federalism

Speaker Rebecca D. Lockhart
Utah House of Representatives
Co-Chair, Commission on Federalism