



**Public Comment from the Blanding City Council  
Regarding Implementation of HB 53**

The Blanding City Council appreciates the intent of House Bill 53 and the State of Utah's efforts to improve safety and reduce litter through the enforcement of covered load requirements at landfills across the state. However, we would like to express our **formal concerns regarding San Juan County's proposed implementation** of this law.

We have a couple of concerns. First, the **Encouragement of Illegal Dumping** by increasing the financial burden on residents—many of whom already face economic challenges—may lead to more **illegal dumping throughout the county and the surrounding areas around Blanding as we have seen near the old dump site west of town**, which poses its own health, safety, and environmental risks. Second, the **Premature Implementation** of the fine. While HB 53 allows implementation no later than **July 1, 2026**, the Landfill is proposing to begin enforcement as early as **September 2025**, nearly a year ahead of schedule. I understand that a report must be done by **March 2026**, but we believe this accelerated timeline does not allow sufficient time for public outreach and education.

While HB 53 clearly establishes a **minimum fine of \$10 for uncovered loads**, we understand that **San Juan County is considering a significantly higher fine**, potentially tied to **double the tipping fee**. The Blanding City Council **opposes any fine amount above the \$10 minimum set forth in HB 53**. We do not believe it is appropriate for the landfill to use this requirement as a possible revenue stream, which was stated that it would not be, but with only **\$5** of the amount collected going to the state, it sure looks to be a possible revenue source, even if only for a short while. We do not believe that exceeding the state-mandated minimum is in the best interest of San Juan County residents. As the elected representatives of Blanding residents, we are concerned that such a policy goes **well beyond the intent of the state legislation**.

We encourage the San Juan County Commissioners to adopt a **reasonable, education-first approach** that emphasizes compliance over punishment, and that does not create additional financial hardship for those trying to dispose of waste legally and responsibly. We also ask that this not be put into place until the required date of July 1, 2026.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

**Respectfully,**  
Blanding City Mayor & Council