



WELCOME TO OUR NEW “**ONLY IN UTAH**” SERIES, where we illuminate provisions in state law that give billboard owners privileges and benefits that are not granted in any of our peer states. Only in Utah is the billboard industry given such a radically favorable and unlevel playing field vs. other property owners, municipalities, and residents.

Here’s the first “Only in Utah” headslinger: A billboard owner can move a sign to any commercial or industrial zoned location, within one mile of the original location, for any private reason, irrespective of zoning ordinances. If zoning laws prohibit billboards at the owner’s preferred location, local governments must either buy out the billboard (by initiating an eminent domain process), allow it to be rebuilt, or allow the billboard to move regardless of zoning laws.

This statute doesn’t exist in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Texas, or Wyoming, all of which are generally considered billboard-friendly states.

A few ‘insider’ details that matter in setting us apart:

- “Eminent domain” is an action triggered by a government entity seeking to take private property for a public purpose, conditional on paying ‘just compensation.’ Only in Utah can a private entity – specifically a billboard company – trigger an eminent domain process, charge exorbitant and often arbitrary compensation payments, and get its way if government can’t or won’t pay the high buy-out price.
- Only in Utah can the billboard in question be either conforming or non-conforming. A conforming billboard is lawfully erected and complies with federal, state, and local regulations. A non-conforming billboard was lawfully erected in the past but no longer complies with laws or regulations that were adopted later. (Incidentally, most billboard in Utah are non-conforming.) None of our peer states allow a non-conforming billboard to be moved or reconstructed. Only in Utah is there no difference between a conforming and a non-conforming billboard!

Forward this [billboard statutes info graphic](#) to your local leaders and state reps, and ask them to ‘normalize’ outdoor advertising laws in Utah.