

November 4, 2013

Mr. David Nimkin
National Parks Conservation Association
Southwest Region
307 West 200 South, Suite 3000
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

Dear Mr. Nimkin and Forum attendees:

Welcome to the first Utah Gateway Community Forum organized by the National Parks Conservation Association Southwest Region. Regrettably, I am unable to attend this event in person. Please know, however, that I appreciate your efforts to address the challenging issues facing many gateway communities in Utah and look forward to hearing the ideas you generate.

Your work is important to many Utah communities and to the State. Utah's beauty—nowhere displayed better than at our National Parks—draws visitors from all over the world and spurs a tourism industry that is indispensable to our state economy. The recent federal government shutdown of those parks highlighted their value to all of us.

Many visitors to our National Parks spend time in gateway communities. Their perception of Utah is molded largely by the good experiences they have in those communities. Therefore, gateway communities are important members of our tourism team.

I also recognize that gateway communities face unique challenges. You are gathered to help address those challenges and take advantage of the tremendous opportunities proximity to National Parks affords. I wish you well as you share experiences, gain a greater understanding of gateway communities' issues and interests, and build relationships that will foster ongoing information exchange and creative approaches to help gateway communities succeed.

Sincerely,

Gary R. Herbert
Governor