



Forty-ninth Legislature - First Regular Session

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State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Forty-ninth Legislature
First Regular Session
2009

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Introduced by

Representatives Jones, Konopnicki: Barto, Crandall, Hendrix, Kavanagh, Mason, Pratt, Quelland

A CONCURRENT MEMORIAL

URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO REFRAIN FROM ENACTING ANY LEGISLATION AFFECTING ARIZONA'S PUBLIC LANDS.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

To the United States Congress, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management and the Chief of the United States Forest Service:

Your memorialist respectfully represents:

Whereas, currently, Arizona lands are significantly encumbered and controlled by a variety of federally managed public lands and other government designations, including 12.2 million acres of Bureau of Land Management surface lands and an additional 17.5 million acres of subsurface, 11.4 million acres of United States Forest Service lands, 7.9 million acres of military installations and 24.7 million acres of Indian tribal lands; and

Whereas, the United States House of Representative's Committee on Natural Resources passed a resolution to withdraw nearly 1.1 million acres of land from new mining claims and exploration; and

Whereas, the people of Arizona rely on access to public lands for a large number of economic, infrastructure and recreational purposes, including mining, oil and natural gas development, grazing, outdoor recreation and rights of way for transportation, waterlines, electric transmission and telecommunication lines; and

Whereas, the state of Arizona's economy relies on these important industries to fuel its economy and tax base; and

Whereas, energy price increases have a disproportionately negative impact on Arizona's poor individuals and families; and

Whereas, Arizona schools, as well as state and local government, are among the benefactors of access to Arizona public lands; and

Whereas, the Arizona Strip is estimated by the United States Geological Survey to contain uranium with the energy equivalent of 375 billion barrels of oil, an amount equal to the total recoverable oil from the Alaskan pipeline through Prudhoe Bay; and

Whereas, the area is currently mining flagstone, sand and gravel, is known to have vanadium and may have copper and other minerals; and

Whereas, the world's shortage of uranium continues to escalate and our country continues to import more than three-fourths of the uranium we use from foreign sources; and

Whereas, uranium production will significantly reduce the United States' energy vulnerability; and

Whereas, in the 1980s, uranium mining operations existed that have now been so well reclaimed that it is difficult to discern where these mines existed; and

Whereas, there are no known detrimental effects of mining uranium in the area to the waters of the Grand Canyon or to the health and safety of the miners or surrounding communities; and

Whereas, the effort by Congress to withdraw these lands from new mining claims and exploration will cost Arizona hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenues that help fund local communities and schools; and

Whereas, locking away much of Arizona's valuable mineral resources from environmentally sound development not only hurts Arizona economically, but also weakens America by hamstringing the production of more energy in Arizona and the nation.

Wherefore your memorialist, the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona, the Senate concurring, prays:

1. That the United States Congress refrain from passing any new legislation to withdraw any lands in Arizona from mining, and refrain from enacting any wilderness designations in Arizona without the unanimous support of Arizona's congressional delegation.

2. That the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service not limit the public's access to public lands under their jurisdiction for mining, grazing, recreation or other uses.

3. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies of this Memorial to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, the Chief of the United States Forest Service and each Member of Congress from the State of Arizona.