

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-040

A RESOLUTION URGING CONGRESS TO PRESERVE ACCESS TO THE URANIUM RESERVES OF NORTHERN ARIZONA, IN ORDER TO MEET AMERICA'S DEMAND FOR CLEAN NON-CARBON EMITTING ENERGY AND ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

WHEREAS, there is a need to utilize northern Arizona's rich uranium reserves to meet America's pressing demand for clean, domestic non-carbon emitting energy; and

WHEREAS, NACo urges Congress to allow ongoing uranium and other mineral development on the Arizona Strip, the far northwestern corner of Arizona north of the Colorado River and south of the Utah border, and urges Congress to reject H.R. 644 (111th Cong.) and any other attempt to withdraw the Arizona Strip from mineral location, entry and patent; and

WHEREAS, America's demand for domestic non-carbon emitting energy sources like uranium far outpaces current domestic supply, and that demand is growing. The US is 68% dependent on foreign countries for oil. For uranium, the U.S. currently imports 90% (much of it from Russia) to operate America's 120 operating nuclear power plants. As the nations of the world turn increasingly to nuclear power in an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, this huge domestic resource stands to play a pivotal role in supplying domestic uranium to utilities here and reducing our foreign dependence. Uranium energy provides a non carbon-emitting reliable proven source of electricity generation, which is so vital to our nation's energy independence, economic stability and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, the Arizona Strip region, located in the Utah-Arizona border region, is estimated to contain a resource endowment of 375 million pounds of uranium oxide (US Geological Survey Circular 1051) making it the second most important in the United States. The energy potential of this quantity of uranium rivals the energy equivalence of the total recoverable oil discovered at Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, the largest oil field in North America. This quantity of uranium comprises over 40% of the nation's estimated uranium resource endowment, and Arizona Strip area uranium is by far the highest grade uranium nationally; and

WHEREAS, ten years of past uranium mining and exploration in the Arizona Strip have been fully backfilled and reclaimed, producing only a small disturbance over a relatively short mine life (5 – 7 years), which is barely detectible after reclamation; and

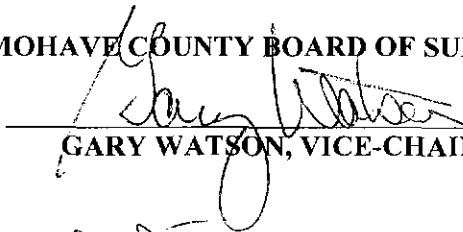
WHEREAS, allegations of a threat to the watershed are scientifically unsubstantiated. Uranium is naturally occurring in breccias pipe formations inside the Grand Canyon. EPA water quality studies validate that Colorado River water contains trace elements of uranium at levels far below that which is considered any sort of health threat to human beings. According to USGS data, uranium traces in the Colorado River drainage is 4.6 ppb, far below the 30 ppb Safe Drink Water Standard set by EPA. The deepest mine ever drilled on the Strip was fully 1000 feet above the nearest aquifer. No new mines will use water-laden in-situ leaching as a mining technique, because little water is available and better non-water use mining techniques are available. Companies holding valid claims inside the area are subject to the most stringent environmental and reclamation requirements ever imposed; and

WHEREAS, Congressional bi-partisan foresight in the early 1980's kept the Arizona Strip open for uranium mining, providing jobs, tax base, economic growth and stability for communities in Mohave County. Continued uranium exploration and mining activities in the Arizona Strip will continue to stimulate and revitalize the economy of this region.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of Mohave County, Arizona, urges Congress to allow ongoing uranium and other mineral development on the Arizona Strip, and urges Congress to reject H.R. 644 (111th Cong.) and any other attempt to withdraw the Arizona Strip from mineral location, entry and patent.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 5th day of February, 2009

MOHAVE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS


GARY WATSON, VICE-CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:


Linda Romero, Deputy Clerk of the Board

