



# STATE OF UTAH

GARY R. HERBERT  
GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH  
84114-2220

GREG BELL  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

February 16, 2010

Honorable Kenneth L. Salazar, Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C. Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

On behalf of the State of Utah, I would like to take this opportunity to provide comment on the proposed extended withdrawal of 993,549-acres of Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service lands in northern Arizona from hardrock mineral exploration and mining. The immediate effect of this withdrawal will unnecessarily stifle the responsible development of uranium resources required to achieve the balance of energy sources for the Nation envisioned by the President's recognition of nuclear power as part of that balance.

It is imperative that we exercise good stewardship of the lands, protect our water sources and protect national treasures such as the Grand Canyon National Park. However, the need for energy security, the need to utilize energy production which releases less carbon and the need to stimulate robust local economies are also state and federal priorities. The Department of the Interior's stated purpose for withdrawal of these lands "to protect the Grand Canyon watershed from adverse effects of locatable hardrock mineral exploration and mining" is appropriate; however, we believe these goals can and will be met with existing state and federal laws, regulatory oversight and prudent land management.

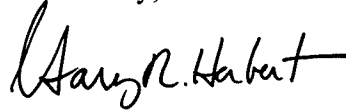
As you know, according to the United States Geological Survey, it is estimated that geologic formations in Northern Arizona contain nearly 42% of the nation's undiscovered uranium. The regulatory tools are available to protect the land and environmental resources, while allowing the Nation's need for uranium to be satisfied. Wholesale withdrawal of these lands for an extended period of time is an overreaction to the nature of uranium mining in the area.

Additionally, I respectfully ask that you consider the economic benefits that responsible mining can provide to the area, including residents of Utah. The industry can

provide stable, good paying jobs for many years. The proposed plan for the development of the mines envisions phased development throughout many years, thereby keeping the threat of the boom and bust cycle to a minimum. Mining will properly diversify the local economies, building stability in partnership with tourism. Other businesses such as trucking, materials production and the nearby uranium mills will also benefit.

I appreciate your time in re-considering the adverse impacts this withdrawal of land and mineral resources will have on the State of Utah. Please do not hesitate to contact Mike Mower, State Planning Coordinator, at (801) 538-1924 or me if you have questions or concerns about this very important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary R. Herbert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gary R. Herbert  
Governor

cc: Michael Mower  
John Harja  
Diane Nielson  
Amanda Smith