

Senate Joint Memorial 4

Sponsored by Senator SMITH DB, Representative RESCHKE; Senators FINDLEY, GIROD, LINTHICUM, THATCHER, WEBER, Representatives DIEHL, MORGAN, OSBORNE, WRIGHT

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Urges Congress to pass legislation to allow for optional, incremental transfer of federal lands to states.

JOINT MEMORIAL

1
2 To the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United
3 States of America, in Congress assembled:

4 We, your memorialists, the Eighty-second Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legis-
5 lative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

6 Whereas national forests, revested Oregon and California Railroad grant lands (O&C lands) and
7 other lands owned by the United States make up nearly 53 percent of the land base in the State of
8 Oregon, yet those federal lands pay no property taxes to support local government services or
9 schools; and

10 Whereas national forests and O&C lands were made subject to federal legislation in 1908, 1911
11 and 1937 that required the federal government to share proceeds from timber sales to help support
12 counties and schools, and for many decades shared federal timber receipts were a substantial con-
13 tributor to the economic well-being of communities, local governments and schools; and

14 Whereas environmental concerns and changing national priorities in the 1990s resulted in
15 drastic reductions in timber harvests from national forests and O&C lands, with correspondingly
16 drastic reductions in payments to counties and schools in Oregon and more than 40 other states,
17 creating severe funding shortages for many counties and schools; and

18 Whereas Article 4, section 3, clause 2, of the United States Constitution, vests in Congress the
19 power to dispose of public lands; and

20 Whereas millions of acres of state-owned public lands were originally transferred to the states
21 from the federal government decades ago, and those state-owned lands continue to be among the
22 most productive, well-managed public lands in America; and

23 Whereas the clear solution to federal mismanagement of our public lands is to bring the deci-
24 sions closer to home so that meaningful, sustainable reforms can be instituted by the people who
25 care about proper management of these lands the most; now, therefore,

26 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

27 That we, the members of the Eighty-second Legislative Assembly, respectfully urge the Congress
28 of the United States of America to pass, and the President of the United States to sign, legislation
29 that would allow for the optional, incremental transfer of public lands to states that are ready and
30 willing to manage the lands responsibly; and be it further

31 Resolved, That a copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of the United States, to

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted.
New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

SJM 4

1 the Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to each member
2 of the Oregon Congressional Delegation.

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