

REFERENCE TITLE: state lands; mining; exploration

State of Arizona
Senate
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SCM 1007

Introduced by
Senator Melvin

A CONCURRENT MEMORIAL

URGING THE SECRETARY OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR TO
REFRAIN FROM WITHDRAWING CERTAIN ARIZONA LANDS FROM NEW MINING CLAIMS AND
EXPLORATION.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 To the Congress of the United States of America, the Secretary of the United
2 States Department of the Interior, the Secretary of the United States
3 Department of Energy, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management and
4 the Chief of the United States Forest Service:

5 Your memorialist respectfully represents:

6 Whereas, currently, Arizona lands are significantly encumbered and
7 controlled by a variety of federally managed public lands and other
8 government designations, including 12.2 million acres of Bureau of Land
9 Management surface lands and an additional 17.5 million acres of subsurface,
10 11.4 million acres of United States Forest Service lands, 7.9 million acres
11 of military installations and 24.7 million acres of Indian tribal lands; and

12 Whereas, the Secretary of the Department of the Interior withdrew some
13 1.1 million acres of land from new mining claims and exploration; and

14 Whereas, the people of Arizona rely on access to these public lands for
15 a various economic, infrastructure and recreational purposes, including
16 mining, oil and gas development, grazing, outdoor recreation, employment and
17 jobs; and

18 Whereas, Arizona's economy relies on these important industries to fuel
19 its economy and tax base; and

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

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

24 Whereas, the Arizona Strip is estimated by the United States Geological
25 Survey to contain 375 million pounds of uranium oxide with the energy
26 equivalent of 13 billion barrels of oil, an amount about equal to the total
27 known recoverable oil from Prudhoe Bay, the largest oil field in North
28 America; and

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

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

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

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

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

42 Whereas, these lands that have been withdrawn from new mining claims
43 and exploration will cost Arizona hundreds of millions of dollars in lost
44 revenues that help fund local communities and schools; and

1 Whereas, the area on the Arizona Strip and the Colorado Plateau
2 contains the largest uranium reserve known in the United States, and the
3 Brescia pipes containing the uranium are the highest quality and the easiest
4 to mine with no harmful degradation to the environment or the Colorado River
5 water; and

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

10 Wherefore your memorialist, the Senate of the State of Arizona, the House of

11 Representatives concurring, prays:

12 1. That the Secretary of the Department of the Interior refrain from
13 withdrawing Arizona lands from new mining claims and exploration.

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

17 3. That the Secretary of the Department of the Interior not take these
18 lands from state jurisdiction, preventing Arizona from pursuing its plans for
19 these resources.

20 4. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies
21 of this Memorial to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of
22 the United States House of Representatives, the Secretary of the United
23 States Department of the Interior, the Secretary of the United States
24 Department of Energy, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, the
25 Chief of the United States Forest Service and each Member of Congress from
26 the State of Arizona.