A CONCURRENT MEMORIAL

URGING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO RESCIND OR REVOKE THE DESIGNATION OF THE ANCESTRAL FOOTPRINTS OF THE GRAND CANYON NATIONAL MONUMENT AND OPPOSING ANY SUCH FUTURE DESIGNATION IN THE STATE OF ARIZONA.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)
To the President of the United States:

Your memorialist respectfully represents:

Whereas, for decades, radical environmental activist groups and others have sought to remove state and federal land in Arizona from economic production, to permanently ban critical mineral and metal mining, cattle grazing and other multiple-use activities on federal controlled lands in this state and to acquire or otherwise exert additional political and economic control over Arizona's land, water, and natural resources, especially in the resource-rich area in Northern Arizona; and

Whereas, multiple attempts have been made in Congress to permanently ban critical mineral and metal mining and other multiple-use activities outside the Grand Canyon area that would permanently set aside millions of acres of federally controlled lands both north and south of the Grand Canyon National Park; and

Whereas, multiple attempts by radical environmental activist groups have been made to direct the United States Secretary of the Interior or the President of the United States to circumvent Congress and unilaterally declare the establishment of national monuments that would permanently withdraw mining and other multiple-use activities in the Grand Canyon area; and

Whereas, under the Obama Administration, the United States Department of the Interior exercised unilateral authority to effectuate temporary bans on all new mineral and hardrock mining claims in the Grand Canyon area, including a two-year ban in 2009, a six-month extension and a 20-year ban in 2012; and

Whereas, radical environmental activist groups and others have stated publicly that the goal is to obtain a permanent withdrawal of mineral and mining rights on the land; and

Whereas, to effectuate such a ban, radical environmental activist groups in 2016 proposed the establishment of a national monument to set aside up to 1.7 million acres of land north and south of the Grand Canyon National Park, including approximately 64,000 acres of Arizona state trust land and 22,000 acres of private land; and

Whereas, by locking up 64,000 acres of state trust land, the national monument would have denied the Arizona State Land Department the ability to put such lands to highest and best use and, therefore, has reduced by hundreds of millions of dollars the amount of monies available to state trust beneficiaries, including K-12 education; and

Whereas, in 2021, it was estimated that the economic impact of establishing this national monument would be $29 billion in lost economic activity and as many as 4,000 jobs destroyed; and

Whereas, in 2023, despite vehement state opposition, President Joe Biden designated Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument near the Grand Canyon National Park; and
Whereas, this designation restricts access to approximately 1 million acres of state and federal land located in Northern Arizona in a remote region of the state known as the "Arizona Strip," which provides world class opportunities for ranching, farming, mining, logging, hunting, recreation and other multiple uses that local communities depend on for social and economic support; and

Whereas, the portion of Northern Arizona in the Arizona Strip and other areas surrounding the greater Grand Canyon region contain some of the nation's best uranium deposits as a result of the unique collapse breccia pipe uranium mineralization, which is a natural part of the environment in this region; and

Whereas, uranium mining on the Arizona Strip has been a major source of economic development in previous years, and there are as many as 10,000 existing mining claims on United States (U.S.) Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service land near the Grand Canyon for all types of hardrock mining; and

Whereas, the designation of the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument blocks the production of uranium from domestic sources and other reasons, making the United States alarmingly reliant on foreign countries for enriched uranium and requiring the importation of approximately 95% of our nation's uranium from foreign countries, including Russia and Kazakhstan; and

Whereas, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the United States produces only 5% of the uranium it needs; and

Whereas, Arizona news sources indicate one of the main purposes of designating the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument was to extend the current moratorium on uranium mining indefinitely, which would continue and potentially exacerbate U.S. reliance on foreign imports of enriched uranium; and

Whereas, if allowed to stand, the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument will forever close this area to new uranium production and will continue America's reliance on uranium supplied from foreign nations, reducing our ability to provide for the defense of our nation and increasing the cost of delivering safe and reliable power to customers nationwide; and

Whereas, a plain reading of the Antiquities Act of 1906 reveals that the President may declare a national monument only to protect eligible objects, which are limited to "historic landmarks," "historic" or "prehistoric structures," or "other objects of historic or scientific interest," (54 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 320301(a)) and that, in reserving land related to the national monument, the President may reserve only the "smallest area compatible with the proper care and management" of the eligible objects (54 U.S.C. § 320301(b)); and
Whereas, since 1906, U.S. Presidents have used the Antiquities Act of 1906 to establish 18 national monuments in Arizona, totaling 3.7 million acres and increasing in size each designation; and

Whereas, at nearly 1 million acres, the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument represents the largest, single designation of a national monument in Arizona history in terms of land mass, yet the Monument fails to indicate any "objects" eligible for designation as a national monument, as defined in the Antiquities Act of 1906; and

Whereas, significant portions of the acreage within the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument are already protected through wilderness designations or successfully managed by the Arizona Game and Fish Department in a multiple-use framework and partnership with the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service; and

Whereas, withdrawing federal Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service land from multiple use would impact not only uranium mining in the area but also other multiple-use activities, such as hunting, fishing, logging, and cattle grazing on federal grazing allotments; and

Whereas, Arizona's great strength lies in the value of its public and private lands and the ability of the public to access and use those lands for a variety of economic and recreational uses; and

Whereas, in total, local, state, tribal and federal governments control over 81% of all land in Arizona, which leaves only 18% of all Arizona land to private owners; and

Whereas, the designation of additional special use areas, including the Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument, further restricts Arizona's ability to maximize economic production for the national interest and recreation for the people and visitors of Arizona; and

Whereas, multiple legislative measures have been proposed to protect Arizona's land, water, and natural resources and send a clear message to the United States that responsible economic production of these resources, including uranium, minerals and aggregate mining, cattle grazing and other multiple uses, are critical to the U.S. economy, food and energy supply, and national interest; and

Whereas, no additional federal land reservation or special use designation should be made or declared in Arizona without the express vote and consent of Congress, the Arizona Legislature and the local communities that will be impacted.

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

1. That the President of the United States rescind or revoke the designation of the Grand Canyon National Monument.
2. That the United States President oppose the designation of any future permanent federal land or mineral withdrawal that seeks to limit critical mineral, metal and aggregate mining, cattle grazing, or multiple-use activities in the Arizona Strip.

3. That the President of the United States not designate any national monument, park, wildlife refuge, conservation area, area of critical environmental concern, wild and scenic river, wilderness or wilderness characteristic area or any other federal special use designation or land or mineral reservation or withdrawal in Arizona without having the express authorization of each of the following:
   (a) The United States Congress.
   (b) The Legislature of the State of Arizona while in session.
   (c) The members of the county board of supervisors in each county that would be impacted by the designation, reservation or withdrawal.

4. That the Secretary of State of the State of Arizona transmit copies of this Memorial to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and each Member of the United States Congress from the State of Arizona.