

Senate Joint Resolution No. 2—Senators Titus, Rhoads, Coffin, Wiener, Amodei, Beers, Care, Carlton, Cegavske, Heck, Horsford, Lee, Mathews, Raggio, Schneider, Tiffany and Washington

Joint Sponsors: Assemblymen Buckley, Mortenson, Ohrenschall, Manendo, Giunchigliani, Allen, Anderson, Arberry Jr., Atkinson, Carpenter, Claborn, Conklin, Denis, Gerhardt, Goicoechea, Grady, Hardy, Hogan, Horne, Kirkpatrick, Koivisto, Leslie, Mabey, McClain, McCleary, Munford, Ocegueda, Parks, Parnell, Perkins, Pierce, Seale, Sherer, Sibley and Smith

FILE NUMBER.....

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION—Urging the President of the United States to reverse his position on, and alternatively urging Congress to reject, his federal budget proposal to use money derived from the sale of land in Nevada to lower the federal deficit.

WHEREAS, In 1998, Congress passed the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act, Public Law No. 105-263, which allows the Bureau of Land Management to sell certain federal lands in Clark County, Nevada, for possible development, while also allowing for the acquisition, conservation and protection of environmentally sensitive lands in the State of Nevada; and

WHEREAS, At the time of the passage of the Act, and to this day, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Area was the fastest growing urban area in the United States, and the Act was passed in response to that growth in an effort to offset negative environmental impacts on national recreational and conservation areas surrounding the Las Vegas Valley; and

WHEREAS, Under the provisions of the Act, 5 percent of the profits from sales of the land is allocated to fund education in Nevada, 10 percent is allocated for water and airport infrastructure projects, and the remaining 85 percent is deposited into an account to acquire other environmentally sensitive land in Nevada, to develop a multispecies habitat plan, to develop parks and trails and to provide for other conservation initiatives; and

WHEREAS, The passage of the Southern Nevada Land Management Act was intended to replace lost state revenue resulting from 84 percent of the land in the State of Nevada being owned by the Federal Government at the time of the passage of the Act, uniquely depriving this State of receiving any tax proceeds from a substantial majority of the land located in this State; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the benefits provided in Southern Nevada and in other areas of the State where environmentally

sensitive lands have been acquired, the Lake Tahoe Basin is now benefiting from a 2003 amendment to the Act which allocated \$300 million to be administered for the preservation of the Lake Tahoe Basin, the first installment of which was received in August 2004; and

WHEREAS, Since the first auction of land in 1999, this program has generated approximately \$1.6 billion, which has assisted the State of Nevada in funding education and numerous land and water conservation projects, and in acquiring environmentally sensitive lands; and

WHEREAS, In the face of a soaring federal deficit, estimated at \$527 billion, President Bush has proposed to change federal law and reallocate 70 percent of the profits from the land sales, generously approximated to reach \$70 million in future years, which would do little to offset the deficit; and

WHEREAS, The loss of such a substantial source of revenue for this State would have a direct and devastating impact on the State, negatively impacting dozens of ongoing and future projects; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the Nevada Legislature urge President Bush to reverse his position on this matter, abandoning his proposal to divert from this State profits from the sales of land in the State of Nevada that rightfully belong in this State to replace lost revenue resulting from the uniquely high percentage of federally owned property in this State; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Congress is similarly urged to reject this portion of President Bush's budget proposal and to allow the State of Nevada, its residents and visitors to be the sole beneficiaries of the proceeds from the sales of land in Nevada; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States as the presiding officer of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon passage.