

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 3—
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

(ON BEHALF OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION)

PREFILED FEBRUARY 4, 2011

Referred to Committee on Natural Resources

SUMMARY—Urges Congress to enact legislation to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey ownership of certain land to the State of Nevada to help fund education. (BDR R-90)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: No.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in **bolded italics** is new; matter between brackets **[omitted material]** is material to be omitted.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION—Urging Congress to enact legislation requiring the Secretary of the Interior to convey ownership of certain land to the State of Nevada to help fund education in Nevada.

1 WHEREAS, The State of Nevada and other western states face
2 unique challenges in providing the best education to their residents
3 due to vast acreages of untaxable federal lands within their borders;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Early in Nevada's history, the Congress of the
6 United States recognized the importance of supporting public
7 education in Nevada and established school trust lands in Nevada to
8 help fund education in the State; and

9 WHEREAS, When the Territory of Nevada was admitted to
10 statehood, the Federal Government provided Nevada with two
11 sections of land in each township for the benefit of common
12 schools, which amounted to 3.9 million acres, while other territories
13 that were subsequently admitted to statehood received four sections
14 of land in each township for the benefit of common schools; and

15 WHEREAS, The land originally granted by the Federal
16 Government to Nevada for common schools was not providing



1 sufficient revenue for education because the land included large
2 sections that were undesirable or difficult to survey; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1880, it was necessary for Nevada to agree to
4 exchange its 3.9 million acres for only 2 million acres of its own
5 selection, as Nevada had an immediate need for public school
6 revenues; and

7 WHEREAS, The disproportionately small amount of land
8 received from the Federal Government for the benefit of common
9 schools contributes only a small amount of revenue for the schools
10 in Nevada in comparison to other states and places an excessive
11 burden on the financial resources of each county in Nevada; and

12 WHEREAS, In Nevada, approximately 87 percent of the land,
13 which amounts to approximately 61 million acres, is held by the
14 Federal Government; and

15 WHEREAS, In 15 of the 17 counties in Nevada, more than
16 50 percent of the land is held by the Federal Government, and in
17 4 of the 17 counties, more than 90 percent of the land is held by the
18 Federal Government; and

19 WHEREAS, The management and control of such an extensive
20 amount of the land in Nevada by the Federal Government has an
21 adverse effect on the ability of Nevada to provide a quality
22 education to its residents; and

23 WHEREAS, Nevada and the other western states are falling
24 behind in education funding as measured by the growth of
25 expenditures per pupil; and

26 WHEREAS, The difficulty experienced by Nevada and the other
27 western states in providing a quality education to their residents is
28 exacerbated by projections that enrollment in public schools from
29 2007 to 2019 is expected to increase by approximately 34 percent in
30 Nevada and the other western states, but increase by less than
31 1 percent in the remaining states in the United States; now,
32 therefore, be it

33 RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF
34 NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the 76th Session of the
35 Nevada Legislature urge Congress and the Nevada Congressional
36 Delegation to enact legislation requiring the Secretary of the Interior
37 to convey ownership of federal land located in Nevada from the
38 Federal Government to Nevada to help fund education for the
39 residents of Nevada and to put the education system of Nevada in
40 parity with that of the other states in the United States; and be it
41 further

42 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and
43 transmit a copy of this resolution to the President of the United
44 States, the Vice President of the United States as the presiding
45 officer of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives



- 1 and each member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it
- 2 further
- 3 RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon
- 4 passage.

