

Representative John R. Westwood proposes the following substitute bill:

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING RANCHERS

GRAZING LIVESTOCK ON PUBLIC LANDS

2017 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: John R. Westwood

Senate Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This concurrent resolution expresses support for Utah ranchers grazing livestock on Utah's public lands.

Highlighted Provisions:

This concurrent resolution:

- highlights the positive impact ranching has on the state of Utah;
- expresses support for continued livestock grazing on public lands; and
- urges the federal government to implement policies supportive of grazing on public lands.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:

WHEREAS, ranchers have commercially grazed sheep and cattle across the Utah landscape since it was settled by pioneers more than 150 years ago;

WHEREAS, the sheep and cattle sectors of Utah's agriculture industry contribute more than \$1.5 billion annually to the state's economy;



WHEREAS, livestock production is the dominant agricultural sector in 25 of Utah's 29 counties;

WHEREAS, approximately three quarters of the land in Utah is publicly owned;

WHEREAS, sheep and cattle ranches have had to combine private and public lands, coupled with privately held water rights, to establish economically viable and sustainable businesses;

WHEREAS, public lands are mandated by Congress to be managed under the principle of multiple use, which provides benefits to all Americans;

WHEREAS, public lands are intended to be managed in a manner that will provide food, energy, timber, recreation, and habitat for fish, wildlife, and domestic animals;

WHEREAS, the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act recognizes the importance of public lands to the future of the western states and mandates that these public lands be managed to meet the "nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, energy, food, timber, and fiber";

WHEREAS, the federal land management agencies need to meet their obligation under the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act as they evaluate agency policies and decisions related to livestock ranching in the state and recognize ranching's contribution to the history, culture, and economy of rural Utah;

WHEREAS, sheep and cattle grazing rights have been dramatically reduced, by more than 70%, by the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management since the 1950s;

WHEREAS, cooperative planning and assessment between agencies and livestock ranchers provides a proactive approach to grazing allotment management, which maintains healthy rangelands and watershed and is beneficial to wildlife habitat;

WHEREAS, on many of Utah's public lands, the broad range of species, including both plants and animals, that exists in these western ecosystems persists in large part due to longstanding good stewardship practices by ranchers who are committed to a healthy and productive future for the state's rangelands;

WHEREAS, continued livestock grazing on Utah's public lands is vital to maintaining the historic and important way of life of many of the state's residents; and

WHEREAS, livestock grazing on public lands is a key component of the economic

57 viability of rural Utah:

58 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
59 Governor concurring therein, expresses support for Utah ranchers grazing livestock on Utah's
60 public lands.

61 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge the federal
62 government to implement policies that encourage grazing on public lands and reduce barriers
63 to continued stewardship of Utah's rangelands by local ranchers.

64 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the United
65 States Department of the Interior, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Majority
66 Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives,
67 and the members of Utah's congressional delegation.