

REFERENCE TITLE: Grand Canyon Footprints monument; repeal

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Introduced by
Representatives Biasiucci: Carter, Chaplik, Cook, Diaz, Gillette,
Grantham, Griffin, Heap, Hendrix, Jones, Marshall, McGarr, Parker B,
Parker J, Payne, Peña, Smith, Toma, Willoughby, Wilmeth

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)

1 To the President of the United States:

2 Your memorialist respectfully represents:

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

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

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

21 Whereas, under the Obama Administration, the United States
22 Department of the Interior exercised unilateral authority to effectuate
23 temporary bans on all new mineral and hardrock mining claims in the Grand
24 Canyon area, including a two-year ban in 2009, a six-month extension and a
25 20-year ban in 2012; and

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

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

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

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

42 Whereas, in 2023, despite vehement state opposition, President Joe Biden
43 designated Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the
44 Grand Canyon National Monument near the Grand Canyon National Park;
45 and

1 Whereas, this designation restricts access to approximately
2 1 million acres of state and federal land located in Northern Arizona in
3 a remote region of the state known as the "Arizona Strip," which
4 provides world class opportunities for ranching, farming, mining,
5 logging, hunting, recreation and other multiple uses that local
6 communities depend on for social and economic support; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

36 Whereas, a plain reading of the Antiquities Act of 1906 reveals
37 that the President may declare a national monument only to protect
38 eligible objects, which are limited to "historic landmarks,"
39 "historic" or "prehistoric structures," or "other objects of historic
40 or scientific interest," (54 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 320301(a))
41 and that, in reserving land related to the national monument, the
42 President may reserve only the "smallest area compatible with the
43 proper care and management" of the eligible objects (54 U.S.C.
44 § 320301(b)); and

1 Whereas, since 1906, U.S. Presidents have used the Antiquities Act
2 of 1906 to establish 18 national monuments in Arizona, totaling
3 3.7 million acres and increasing in size each designation; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

39 Wherefore your memorialist, the House of Representatives of the State of

40 Arizona, the Senate concurring, prays:

41 1. That the President of the United States rescind or revoke the
42 designation of the Grand Canyon National Monument.

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

5 3. That the President of the United States not designate any
6 national monument, park, wildlife refuge, conservation area, area of
7 critical environmental concern, wild and scenic river, wilderness or
8 wilderness characteristic area or any other federal special use
9 designation or land or mineral reservation or withdrawal in Arizona
10 without having the express authorization of each of the following:

- 11 (a) The United States Congress.
- 12 (b) The Legislature of the State of Arizona while in session.
- 13 (c) The members of the county board of supervisors in each county
14 that would be impacted by the designation, reservation or withdrawal.

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