

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. SJ0001

State management-federal mineral leases.

Sponsored by: Select Federal Natural Resource Management  
Committee

A JOINT RESOLUTION

for

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION requesting Congress to introduce a bill  
2 and enact law to amend the federal Mineral Leasing Act to  
3 authorize the state of Wyoming to administer and manage  
4 mineral leasing on federal lands located in Wyoming.

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6 WHEREAS, in 1920, Congress enacted into law the Mineral  
7 Leasing Act, which authorizes the leasing of federal lands  
8 for the exploration and development of minerals owned by the  
9 United States; and

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11 WHEREAS, the Mineral Leasing Act governs energy minerals,  
12 including oil, gas and coal and solid leasable minerals,  
13 including phosphate, potassium, sodium and oil shale; and

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1 WHEREAS, the Mineral Leasing Act authorizes the United States  
2 Secretary of Interior (Secretary) to lease and regulate the  
3 development of minerals owned by the United States; and  
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5 WHEREAS, the Secretary delegated authority under the Mineral  
6 Leasing Act to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), a federal  
7 agency that is part of the United States Department of  
8 Interior; and  
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10 WHEREAS, the BLM administers the leasing program for minerals  
11 on federal lands, including federal lands controlled by the  
12 BLM and federal lands under the jurisdiction of other federal  
13 agencies; and  
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15 WHEREAS, the federal administration of mineral leasing on  
16 federal lands in Wyoming over the past ten (10) years has  
17 been inconsistent, unpredictable and subject to political  
18 delays that negatively impact Wyoming's economy, energy  
19 industry and citizens; and  
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21 WHEREAS, the federal administration of mineral leasing has  
22 been subject to prolonged leasing moratoriums, regulatory  
23 uncertainty and delayed environmental reviews under the

1 National Environmental Policy Act that have resulted in a  
2 decrease in mineral activity on federal lands within Wyoming;  
3 and

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5 WHEREAS, even after federal lands in Wyoming are leased, the  
6 federal government retains legal title to the federal lands  
7 and the federal government receives money from sales,  
8 bonuses, royalties and rentals from federal mineral leasing;  
9 and

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11 WHEREAS, Wyoming's management of mineral leasing on state  
12 lands demonstrates that Wyoming can adequately and  
13 efficiently manage and administer mineral leasing on federal  
14 lands; and

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16 WHEREAS, Wyoming possesses an unparalleled understanding of  
17 land within its borders, making Wyoming better equipped than  
18 the federal government to administer and manage mineral  
19 leasing on federal lands located within the state; and

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21 WHEREAS, Wyoming could administer and manage mineral leasing  
22 on federal lands located within the state more efficiently  
23 and at a lower cost than the federal government; and

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2 WHEREAS, Wyoming has knowledge of the state's unique terrain,  
3 geology, wildlife habitats and ecosystems, which enables  
4 Wyoming to assess site-specific environmental impacts more  
5 accurately and quickly and tailor leasing decisions to local  
6 conditions; and

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8 WHEREAS, Wyoming's state agencies are in constant  
9 communication with local governments, landowners and industry  
10 stakeholders, which would result in a more responsive,  
11 efficient and balanced decision making process regarding  
12 mineral leasing and in a manner that reflects Wyoming's  
13 policies and priorities; and

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15 WHEREAS, authorizing Wyoming to administer and manage mineral  
16 leasing of federal minerals not only respects the principles  
17 of federalism and local control but also ensures that  
18 decisions are made by those who know the land best and are  
19 most invested in its long-term sustainability.

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21 *NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE*  
22 *LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WYOMING:*

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1           **Section 1.**

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3           (a) That the Wyoming Legislature requests that Congress  
4 enact legislation amending the federal Mineral Royalty Act to  
5 authorize the United States secretary of the interior to enter  
6 into cooperative agreements with the state of Wyoming under  
7 which the state may, at its election and subject to federal  
8 approval, assume administrative primacy for mineral leasing  
9 on specified federal lands located within Wyoming. Any  
10 authorization under this subsection shall:

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12                   (i) Apply only to federal lands mutually  
13 designated by the state and the secretary of the interior  
14 under a cooperative agreement;

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16                   (ii) Preserve federal ownership of the lands and  
17 the underlying mineral estate;

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19                   (iii) Require state administration to be  
20 consistent with applicable federal law unless otherwise  
21 expressly provided by Congress;

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