

Casey Snider proposes the following substitute bill:

House Joint Resolution to Approve the Transfer of Land

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Casey Snider

Senate Sponsor: Scott D. Sandall

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This resolution approves the proposed transfer of state-owned lands.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- acknowledges that the state and the United States government have disputed the ownership of 3,760 acres of land along the Great Salt Lake;
- describes the terms of a proposed settlement agreement between the state and the United States government for the transfer of 22,311 acres of land located below the ordinary high water mark of the Great Salt Lake (settlement lands);
- describes the process for a state agency to obtain approval from the Legislature for the transfer of 500 or more acres of state-owned lands to the United States government; and
- approves the transfer of the settlement lands to the United States government as part of the proposed settlement negotiated between the state and the United States government.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

WHEREAS, the state of Utah and the United States government have disputed, among other issues, the ownership of 3,760 acres of land (disputed lands) used for wildlife refuge along the Great Salt Lake, in a pending lawsuit, State of Utah v. United States, No. 2:12-cv-00378-HCN-DAO (D. Utah);

WHEREAS, the state of Utah through the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, created in Utah Code Section 65A-1-4, has negotiated a proposed settlement agreement with

29 the United States government that transfers title of 22,311 acres of land located below the
30 ordinary high water mark of the Great Salt Lake (settlement lands) to the United States
31 government and resolves all remaining disputes, including any title disputes, related to the
32 disputed lands;

33 WHEREAS, the proposed settlement provides for the transfer of the settlement lands to the
34 United States government for the payment of at least \$60,000,000 to the state of Utah, which
35 shall be used exclusively for the benefit of the Great Salt Lake;

36 WHEREAS, the proposed settlement provides that the United States government, through
37 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, shall provide public use and access to the
38 settlement lands consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, 16
39 U.S.C. Secs. 668dd through 668ee, and other federal statutes, rules, and regulations, as
40 applicable;

41 WHEREAS, the proposed settlement provides that, if the United States government
42 disposes of settlement lands in the future, the United States government shall offer the state of
43 Utah a first right to purchase the settlement lands or obtain the settlement lands in a land
44 exchange;

45 WHEREAS, the proposed settlement provides that the state of Utah reserves and retains all
46 mineral interests, including subsurface and suspended minerals within the waters or brines of
47 the Great Salt Lake;

48 WHEREAS, in accordance with Utah Code Subsection 63L-2-201(2), a state agency shall
49 submit to the Legislature, for the Legislature's approval or rejection, a proposed agreement to
50 sell or transfer to the United States government 500 or more acres of state controlled lands; and

51 WHEREAS, the United States government, principally through the United States
52 Department of Justice and the United States Department of the Interior, including the United
53 States Fish and Wildlife Service, will conduct a settlement review and approval process before
54 making a final determination about the proposed settlement agreement:

55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah approves
56 the proposed agreement negotiated by the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands with the
57 United States government for the transfer of the settlement lands.