

1                   **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING CONGRESS TO**  
2                   **SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE'S**  
3                   **SAGE-GROUSE CONSERVATION PLAN**

4                                   2015 GENERAL SESSION

5                                   STATE OF UTAH

6                                   **Chief Sponsor: Kevin T. Van Tassell**

7                                   House Sponsor: Scott D. Sandall

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9                   **LONG TITLE**

10                   **General Description:**

11                   This concurrent resolution of the Legislature, the Governor concurring therein, urges  
12 Congress to support the state's sage-grouse conservation plan.

13                   **Highlighted Provisions:**

14                   This resolution:

- 15                   ▶ urges Congress to provide no funding to the United States Secretary of the Interior
- 16 to consider, prepare, write, or issue a petition finding or proposed regulation for
- 17 greater sage-grouse management through fiscal year 2025;
- 18                   ▶ resolves that the state implement its sage-grouse conservation plan; and
- 19                   ▶ urges Congress to enact legislation recognizing and encouraging state primacy in
- 20 the long-term management of sage-grouse and its habitat.

21                   **Special Clauses:**

22                   None

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

25                   WHEREAS, the state of Utah is committed to the conservation of greater sage-grouse  
26 (Centrocercus urophasianus) and its present habitat located within the state;

27                   WHEREAS, the state of Utah has produced a statewide sage-grouse conservation plan  
28 in support of this commitment;

29                   WHEREAS, the Division of Wildlife Resources in the Department of Natural

30 Resources possesses significant expertise in the management of greater sage-grouse and its  
31 habitat, and experts in the division have been working extensively in full cooperation with the  
32 federal agencies managing federal lands within the borders of the state;

33 WHEREAS, the Endangered Species Act requires the United States Secretary of the  
34 Interior to take into account the state of Utah's efforts to protect greater sage-grouse prior to the  
35 Secretary's determination that the species is endangered or threatened;

36 WHEREAS, implementation of the state's conservation plan will produce scientific data  
37 related to disease or predation of the species, the adequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms,  
38 and other natural or human-influenced factors affecting the species' existence, all of which  
39 must be considered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in making a determination  
40 whether to list greater sage-grouse as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species  
41 Act;

42 WHEREAS, categorical exclusions from the National Environmental Policy Act are  
43 necessary to allow the federal land management agencies to remove pinyon-juniper trees that  
44 are harmful to greater sage-grouse habitat;

45 WHEREAS, the state of Utah wishes to continue its collaboration with other states  
46 possessing current habitat for greater sage-grouse;

47 WHEREAS, the United States Congress and the President of the United States are to be  
48 commended for recognizing the unprecedented collaboration among the various states  
49 regarding greater sage-grouse conservation and the need to continue on-the-ground  
50 conservation and monitoring activities, as recognized through the enactment of Section 122 of  
51 the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015; and

52 WHEREAS, time is needed to finalize and implement the state conservation plan over a  
53 period of multiple, consecutive sage-grouse life cycles to determine the efficacy of the plan and  
54 the need for modification, if any;

55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the  
56 Governor concurring therein, urges Congress to provide no funding to the United States  
57 Secretary of the Interior to consider, prepare, write, or issue, pursuant to Section 4 of the

58 Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. Sec. 1533), a petition finding or proposed  
59 regulation for greater sage-grouse for a period of 10 years through and including fiscal year  
60 2025.

61 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that during this period, the state of Utah will implement  
62 its sage-grouse conservation plan, thereby establishing and enhancing its efficacy over time.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor  
64 concurring therein, urges Congress to enact legislation recognizing and encouraging state  
65 primacy in the long-term management of sage-grouse and its habitat to ensure an effective and  
66 balanced approach that seeks to recover and protect sage-grouse populations while protecting  
67 state economic interests, educational funding from state lands, and valid existing rights,  
68 including private property rights.