

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: David P. Hinkins

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;



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

44 WHEREAS, sheep and cattle grazing rights have been dramatically reduced, by more
45 than 70%, by the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management since the
46 1950s;

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

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

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

56 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.