

**JOINT RESOLUTION REJECTING EXCHANGE OF SCHOOL  
AND INSTITUTIONAL TRUST LANDS**

2024 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Casey Snider**

Senate Sponsor: Scott D. Sandall

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This joint resolution rejects a proposed land exchange of state school and institutional trust lands and mineral interests for federal lands and mineral interests.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This resolution:

- ▶ rejects the proposed exchange of state school and institutional trust lands and mineral interests in and around the Bears Ears National Monument for United States government lands;
- ▶ recognizes that the state would better manage and administer the lands in the proposed exchange for the benefit of the state's trust land beneficiaries and economy than the federal government; and
- ▶ condemns the federal government's planning effort and lack of coordination with the state.

**Special Clauses:**

None

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

WHEREAS, by presidential proclamation dated October 8, 2021, the President of the United States created the Bears Ears National Monument (Monument), which encompasses



28 approximately 1.2 million acres of federal land and which surrounds, as stranded inholdings,  
29 approximately 130,000 acres of scattered school and institutional trust land parcels managed by  
30 the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration for the support of Utah's public  
31 schools, public school children, and other beneficiary institutions;

32 WHEREAS, the Governor of the state of Utah and the United States Secretary of the  
33 Interior signed a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding on March 17, 2023, that  
34 provides for an exchange of school and institutional trust lands and mineral interests in Iron,  
35 Kane, San Juan, Tooele, and Uintah counties for United States government lands in Beaver,  
36 Carbon, Duchesne, Emery, Garfield, Grand, Iron, Kane, Millard, Rich, San Juan, Sanpete,  
37 Sevier, Tooele, Uintah, Utah, Wasatch, Washington, and Wayne counties;

38 WHEREAS, Utah Code Subsection [63L-2-201\(2\)](#) requires legislative approval before a  
39 governmental entity or state officer may legally bind the state by executing an agreement to sell  
40 or transfer to the United States government 500 or more acres of any state lands or school and  
41 institutional trust lands;

42 WHEREAS, the Memorandum of Understanding has not been executed and ratified by  
43 the United States Congress, and is therefore not legally binding on the state;

44 WHEREAS, the historical practice for federal land management on national  
45 monuments has prioritized the multiple uses and sustained yield of the lands, as well as  
46 reasonable access to the lands for recreation by local communities, while maintaining the  
47 objects of antiquity and of historic or scientific interest consistent with federal law; and

48 WHEREAS, the federal government has signaled that it will adopt an exceptionally  
49 restrictive and unreasonable land management plan that would negatively impact the  
50 communities surrounding the Monument and the state's public school children, by restricting  
51 community access to grazing land, resource development, and recreation:

52 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah  
53 rejects the land exchange between the state of Utah and the United States government, as  
54 proposed by the Memorandum of Understanding.

55 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature calls on the federal government to  
56 put forth a land management plan in line with historical practice that would benefit all local  
57 communities and trust land beneficiaries impacted by the proposed land exchange.

58 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to the President of

59 the United States of America, the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, and the members  
60 of the Utah congressional delegation.