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Office of the Governor

July 14, 2026

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and
Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chair
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources
1332 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Lee and Westerman and Ranking Members Heinrich and Huffman:

Thank you for your continued leadership on our nation's natural resource issues. Nevada, where more than 80 percent of land is federally managed, understands both the tremendous value of our public lands and the practical challenges that arise when so much of daily life is shaped by federal land management decisions.

For the past three decades, communities across Nevada have worked with members of the Nevada Congressional Delegation to advance a balanced approach to land management—one that identifies appropriate areas for housing, public recreation, municipal use, infrastructure, economic growth, and conservation. However, important legislation designed to meet the needs of Nevada communities and strengthen meaningful land management decision-making has stalled in Congress, in many cases for nearly a decade. Today, nearly ten Nevada lands bills remain pending despite broad local support and the urgent needs they would address.

Over the last decade, land access challenges have contributed to Nevada's housing crisis. Without adequate and accessible housing, economic growth in both urban and rural communities is constrained. Two of Nevada's most urban counties, Washoe and Clark, are estimated to be out of developable land by 2027 and 2032, respectively, as homeownership moves further out of reach for the average Nevadan, with median home prices recently reaching \$670,000 in Reno and \$490,000 in Las Vegas. Unlike most other communities facing housing shortages, Nevada

\$490,000 in Las Vegas. Unlike most other communities facing housing shortages, Nevada communities, which are often surrounded by federal land, have limited flexibility to add housing stock and help lower costs. Too often, securing the land necessary to meet housing demand requires either an act of Congress or reliance on a severely backlogged and understaffed federal agency. I applaud the Nevada Congressional Delegation's continued efforts to introduce and advocate for legislative solutions to these immense housing and land access challenges. Yet, while these bills are largely consistent with Congress' collective support for locally driven legislation, they have failed to advance year-after-year.

The frustration I feel and hear from Nevadans across the state is both real and understandable. Rural and urban communities alike need affordable and attainable housing, workable pathways for the successful deployment of essential infrastructure, and durable tools to protect Nevada's unique landscapes (and the many species that depend on them) for future generations. They also need the flexibility to better navigate persistent land management challenges in the West, including those created by checkerboard land ownership patterns.

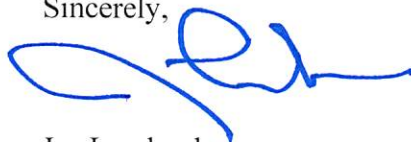
Existing statutes, including the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA; P.L. 94-579), established mechanisms for land sales and exchanges. In practice, however, the process favors exchanges over the sale of public lands. With less than 20 percent of land in our state privately managed, reliance on exchanges alone—and a “no, never” approach to land sales—creates serious challenges for community leaders and everyday Nevadans.

To be clear, I recognize the importance and value of retaining public lands, but there must also be reasonable, predictable, and efficient processes for land disposal under appropriate circumstances. Nevada has repeatedly turned to federal legislation to solve these challenges. Our congressional delegation has brought community-driven, community-specific, and Nevada-led solutions to Congress, and I would urge you to help ensure that these bills reach President Trump's desk.

Nevadans value our magnificent and expansive public lands, but our communities must also be able to meet essential needs. Laying fiber; building a new school, library, or cemetery; making affordable homeownership a reality; and welcoming a job-growing economic opportunity can all become complicated—or nearly impossible—when they are tied to federal lands. We are fortunate to have a strong and productive working relationship with our federal land management agencies, but Nevada's future often ultimately depends on congressional action.

I urge you to work with the Nevada Congressional Delegation and the State of Nevada to break this logjam and advance Nevada lands bills. Thank you for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,



Joe Lombardo
Governor of Nevada