

House Joint Memorial 25

Sponsored by Representative COWAN; Representatives BAILEY, BARKER, BARNHART, BENTZ, BERGER, BEYER, BOONE, BUCKLEY, CAMERON, CANNON, CLEM, ESQUIVEL, GARRARD, GILLIAM, HANNA, HICKS, HOLVEY, HOYLE, HUFFMAN, HUNT, JENSON, JOHNSON, KENNEMER, KOMP, KRIEGER, NATHANSON, OLSON, ROBLAN, SCHAUFLER, G SMITH, THOMPSON, WAND, WHISNANT, WITT, Senators ATKINSON, BATES, BEYER, BOQUIST, COURTNEY, EDWARDS, FERRIOLI, GIROD, JOHNSON, KRUSE, MORSE, PROZANSKI, VERGER, WHITSETT

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Urges Congress to reauthorize and extend Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

JOINT MEMORIAL

1
2 To the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United
3 States of America, in Congress assembled:

4 We, your memorialists, the Seventy-Sixth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legis-
5 lative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

6 Whereas the National Forest System, managed by the Forest Service of the United States De-
7 partment of Agriculture, was established in 1907 and has grown to include approximately 192,000,000
8 acres of federal land, of which more than 15,000,000 acres are in Oregon; and

9 Whereas the revested Oregon and California Railroad ('O & C') grant lands and the reconvened
10 Coos Bay Wagon Road grant lands, which are managed predominantly by the Bureau of Land
11 Management, were once in private ownership but were returned to federal ownership in 1916 and
12 1919 and now comprise approximately 2,600,000 acres of federal lands, all of which are in Oregon;
13 and

14 Whereas Congress recognized that, by its decision to secure timberlands in federal rather than
15 private ownership, the counties across the United States where these lands are situated, of which
16 33 counties are located in Oregon, would be deprived of opportunities for economic development and
17 of tax revenues for use in providing essential public services, including K-12 public education; and

18 Whereas these same counties have expended public funds year after year to provide services,
19 such as road construction and maintenance, search and rescue, law enforcement, waste removal and
20 fire protection, that directly benefit these federal lands and people who use these federal lands; and

21 Whereas to accord a measure of compensation to the adversely affected rural public schools,
22 and to counties for the critical services they provide to both county residents and visitors to these
23 federal lands, and for the lost economic opportunities due to federal as compared to private owner-
24 ship, Congress determined that the federal government should share with these rural public schools
25 and counties a portion of the revenues that the United States receives from federal lands; and

26 Whereas Congress enacted in 1908 and subsequently amended a law that requires 25 percent of
27 the revenues derived from the National Forest System lands to be paid to the states for use by
28 counties where the lands are situated for the benefit of public schools and roads; and

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 Whereas Congress enacted in 1937 and subsequently amended the O & C Act (43 U.S.C. 1181
2 et seq.), which requires that revenues derived from the O & C grant lands and the Coos Bay Wagon
3 Road grant lands be shared with the counties in which those lands are situated and be used for a
4 broad range of essential public services, as are other county funds; and

5 Whereas Oregon counties dependent on and supportive of these federal lands received and relied
6 on shared revenues from these lands for many decades to provide essential funding for public
7 schools, road maintenance and other critical public services; and

8 Whereas the principal source of these revenues, federal timber sales, has been sharply curtailed;
9 and

10 Whereas the reduced volume of timber sales from the federal lands in Oregon has decreased the
11 revenues shared with the affected counties and school districts, adversely affecting funding for ed-
12 ucation, road maintenance and other public programs and services; and

13 Whereas in the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, Congress
14 recognized this trend and temporarily mitigated the adverse consequences by providing annual pay-
15 ments through 2006, with a one-year extension through 2007, and a subsequent four-year extension
16 from 2008 through 2011, to counties and rural schools across the United States, including all coun-
17 ties and schools in Oregon that traditionally shared in timber receipts from national forest lands,
18 O & C grant lands and Coos Bay Wagon Road grant lands; and

19 Whereas the authority for these safety-net payments will expire in 2011; and

20 Whereas without these safety-net payments, revenue sharing is based only on actual federal
21 timber receipts; and

22 Whereas Oregon will lose more than \$215.6 million per year in payments for rural public schools
23 and counties under Titles I and III of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination
24 Act, with associated losses of essential programs and services and thousands of jobs in both the
25 government and private sectors; and

26 Whereas Oregon will lose an additional \$20.2 million per year that is currently spent on special
27 conservation projects by Resource Advisory Committees under Title II of the Secure Rural Schools
28 and Community Self-Determination Act; and

29 Whereas Oregon will suffer a total loss of more than \$471.6 million per biennium, which the
30 state cannot replace; and

31 Whereas there is a need to maintain funding from the Secure Rural Schools and Community
32 Self-Determination Act for rural public education, road maintenance and other public services
33 through predictable payments to the affected counties and schools; now, therefore,

34 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

35 (1) The Congress of the United States is urged to pass legislation that will reauthorize and ex-
36 tend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, as amended and ex-
37 tended in 2008, for an additional 10-year period, from 2012 through 2021, and to provide that the
38 Act be continued at 2008 funding levels and be funded through a mandatory, continuing appropri-
39 ation.

40 (2) A copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of the United States, to the Senate
41 Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to each member of the Oregon
42 Congressional Delegation.