

Enrolled
Senate Joint Memorial 201

Sponsored by Senators GIROD, ATKINSON; Senators FERRIOLI, JOHNSON, KRUSE, VERGER,
Representatives CLEM, HUNT, MCLANE, ROBLAN, WINGARD (Presession filed.)

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

We, your memorialists, the Seventy-sixth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas the unique revested Oregon and California Railroad grant lands, commonly known as O&C lands, once provided revenues vital to the economic survival of many county governments in Oregon; and

Whereas failures in federal management of the O&C lands have resulted in a drastic decline in revenues from those lands and left many of the 18 Oregon counties in which O&C lands are located without adequate revenues to provide essential public services, including the protection of public safety; and

Whereas federal management of the O&C lands has reduced timber harvests by 90 percent over the last 20 years and deprived communities and industries of the raw material necessary to sustain local economies and provide employment opportunities; and

Whereas federal management of the O&C lands has caused significant increases in the production of greenhouse gases due to forest fires; and

Whereas public and private resources within Oregon counties in which O&C lands are located are capable of managing those lands in a responsible and balanced manner for the greatest public benefit; and

Whereas the management of O&C lands by public and private resources within Oregon counties would produce greater benefit to the counties and to the long-term health of O&C lands than is realized under current federal management; and

Whereas three members of the Oregon Congressional Delegation have proposed a bipartisan plan for an Oregon trust operating under Oregon laws to manage nearly 60 percent of the O&C lands in Oregon for sustained-yield timber production to benefit the Oregon counties in which O&C lands are located and all Oregonians; and

Whereas Representatives DeFazio, Schrader and Walden have offered the O&C Trust, Conservation and Jobs Plan, which would result in the restoration of sufficient county revenues to avert the financial crisis currently confronting many Oregon counties and allow those counties to continue functioning with acceptable levels of public safety services and other essential services; and

Whereas the O&C Trust, Conservation and Jobs Plan would ensure a sufficiently stable timber supply to justify investments in new plants and equipment, would provide raw material to support manufacturing and other jobs and would create up to 12,000 new jobs in parts of Oregon where extraordinarily high unemployment rates are a chronic problem; and

Whereas, in addition to helping revive an ailing economy, the O&C Trust, Conservation and Jobs Plan would ensure that timber and other resources are conserved for the benefit of current and future generations by requiring sustained-yield forestry, permanently protecting all remaining old-growth timber on more than one million acres of O&C lands, adding more than 90,000 acres to wilderness protection and giving an additional 150 miles of streams wild and protected status; now, therefore,

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

That we, the members of the Seventy-Sixth Legislative Assembly, urge the President and the Congress of the United States of America to allow Oregon counties in which revested Oregon and California Railroad grant lands are located to exercise full management authority over those lands, by transferring title to the lands to the counties without cost, by long-term lease of the lands to the counties for a token amount or by enacting without delay the O&C Trust, Conservation and Jobs Plan proposed by Representatives DeFazio, Schrader and Walden; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this memorial be sent to the President of the United States and to each member of the Oregon Congressional Delegation.

Adopted by Senate February 15, 2012

Robert Taylor, Secretary of Senate

Peter Courtney, President of Senate

Adopted by House February 27, 2012

Bruce Hanna, Speaker of House

Arnie Roblan, Speaker of House