

ORIGINAL SENATE
JOINT RESOLUTION. SJ0009

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 4, SENATE

SIXTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WYOMING
2026 BUDGET SESSION

A JOINT RESOLUTION requesting Congress recognize the protection of Wyoming's freedom of access to public lands, to allow responsible development of resources, recreation, agriculture, hunting, fishing, trapping, and conservation under multiple-use frameworks, to protect local participation in land management decisions, and to keep public lands available to the people of Wyoming.

WHEREAS, federal public lands are central to Wyoming's heritage, economy, culture and way of life; and

WHEREAS, while Congress and the executive branch have a duty to manage these lands for multiple use and sustained yield in the public interest, disposal of lands should not occur without meaningful input from state and local governments and affected communities; and

WHEREAS, Wyoming residents access our federal public lands more than any other state in the United States, with approximately ninety-one percent (91%) of Wyoming's population utilizing public lands for work, recreation and subsistence; and

WHEREAS, Wyoming's natural resource industries have driven the state's economy for over a century, contributing over eleven billion dollars (\$11,000,000,000.00) annually to the gross state product (GSP), accounting for roughly between twenty-five percent (25%) and thirty percent (30%) of total GSP and employing nearly fifteen percent (15%) of the state's workforce; and

WHEREAS, Wyoming agriculture is foundational to the state and nation, and continued and improved access to public lands for grazing and agriculture use is essential; and

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WHEREAS, Wyoming's firearms heritage, which is rooted in responsible ownership, hunting, sport shooting and self-reliance, is strengthened through growing youth shooting sports programs like those offered by 4-H, and supported by the expanding firearms industries in Wyoming, which contributes to education, workforce development, conservation and the state's outdoor economy; and

WHEREAS, Article 1, Section 39 of the Wyoming Constitution affirms "the opportunity to fish, hunt, and trap wildlife is a heritage that shall forever be preserved to the individual citizens of the state" and is the foundation for a multiple use framework which has led to the highest percentage of hunters of any state and world-class wildlife resources which support a hunting, fishing and tourism economy; and

WHEREAS, although existing federal laws already provide a process for land purchases, exchanges or limited disposals when a clear and justified public purpose exists, including Title 43 of the United States Code governing public lands, and such processes have been used successfully in Wyoming, those processes need to be more efficient and less costly for both public and private landowners; and

WHEREAS, recent proposals and public discussions have raised concern regarding broad, quota-driven or large-scale sales of federal public lands as a policy or revenue mechanism, without sufficient local input or analysis; and

WHEREAS, widespread disposal of public lands without clear criteria shifts significant long-term costs for access, wildfire response, infrastructure and law enforcement onto state and local governments without dedicated funding; and

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WHEREAS, Wyoming's counties have adopted land-use and natural resource plans through public processes tailored to their unique needs, and actions that disregard these plans erode local governance and the spirit of federalism; and

WHEREAS, Wyoming has a long tradition of collaboration, transparency and locally driven decision making rather than top-down, command-and-control directives; and

WHEREAS, agriculture, natural resource and recreation industries in Wyoming are the best and proudest stewards of public lands; and

WHEREAS, if land disposal is determined to be necessary then Wyoming community input must be a consideration because meaningful improvements to land management are best achieved through stakeholder engagement, streamlining existing processes and community-led solutions grounded in local knowledge with robust local public input and consultation with state and local government.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WYOMING:

Section 1. That the Wyoming Legislature opposes any state or federal legislation or policy that promotes the broad or indiscriminate sale or exchange of public lands.

Section 2. That the state of Wyoming demands Congress and federal agencies respect existing land management frameworks, county land-use plans and the voices of local communities most directly affected by federal land decisions, especially when evaluating any proposed changes to federal land management or the disposition of lands.

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Section 3. That the Wyoming Legislature supports responsible, locally supported land exchanges, adjustments or disposals under existing laws and procedures when they demonstrably enhance public access, natural resource use or community benefit.

Section 4. That the Wyoming Legislature supports adequately funding state and federal agencies and the corresponding programs that exist so that the agencies can efficiently and effectively review land purchases, exchanges or limited disposals under the existing legal framework.

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Section 5. That the secretary of state transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress and to the Wyoming congressional delegation.

(END)

I hereby certify that this act originated in the Senate.

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Governor

TIME APPROVED: _____

DATE APPROVED: _____

I hereby certify that this act originated in the Senate.

Chief Clerk