

IN THE SENATE

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 101

BY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

1
2 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, TO THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE OF
3 THE UNITED STATES, TO THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND THE CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTA-
5 TIVES OF THE STATE OF IDAHO IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and the House of Representatives of
7 the State of Idaho assembled in the First Regular Session of the Sixty-first
8 Idaho Legislature, do hereby respectfully represent that:

9 WHEREAS, the National Forest System, managed by the Forest Service of
10 the United States Department of Agriculture, was established in 1907 and has
11 grown to include approximately 192,000,000 acres of federal lands, of which
12 more than 20,458,276 acres are in Idaho; and

13 WHEREAS, Congress recognized that, by its decision to permanently se-
14 cure these lands in federal ownership, the counties across the United States
15 where these lands are situated, of which thirty-four counties and one hun-
16 dred fifteen public school districts are located in Idaho, would be deprived
17 of opportunities for economic development and K-12 public educational ser-
18 vices and of tax revenues they would otherwise receive if the lands were held
19 in private ownership; and

20 WHEREAS, these same counties and public school districts have expended
21 public funds for nearly one hundred years to provide services such as K-12
22 public education, road construction and maintenance, search and rescue, law
23 enforcement, fire protection, watershed protection, and forest enhancement
24 and conservation; and

25 WHEREAS, to accord a measure of compensation to these affected counties
26 and public school districts for the critical services they provide to county
27 residents, public school children and the general citizenry that receive
28 benefits from these lands and for the lost economic opportunities stemming
29 from federal ownership as compared to private ownership, Congress deter-
30 mined that the federal government should share with these counties a portion
31 of the revenues the United States receives from these federal lands; and

32 WHEREAS, Congress enacted in 1908 and subsequently amended a law that
33 requires that twenty-five percent of the revenues derived from the National
34 Forest System lands be paid to the states for use by counties where the lands
35 are situated for the benefit of public schools and roads; and

36 WHEREAS, Idaho counties dependent on and supportive of these federal
37 lands received and relied on shared revenues from these lands for many
38 decades to provide essential funding for schools, road maintenance and other
39 critical public services; and

40 WHEREAS, in recent years, the principal source of these revenues, fed-
41 eral timber sales, has been sharply curtailed, and as the volume of timber
42 sold annually from the federal lands in Idaho has decreased substantially,
43 so too have the revenues shared with the affected counties, adversely af-

1 fecting funding for education, road maintenance and other public programs
2 and services; and

3 WHEREAS, in the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination
4 Act of 2000, Congress recognized this trend and mitigated the adverse con-
5 sequences by providing annual payments through federal fiscal year 2006,
6 with a one-year extension through federal fiscal year 2007, and a subsequent
7 four-year extension from federal fiscal year 2008 through federal fiscal
8 year 2011, to counties across the United States, including counties in Idaho
9 that traditionally shared in timber receipts from national forest lands; and

10 WHEREAS, the authority for these payments will expire in federal fiscal
11 year 2011; and

12 WHEREAS, without these payments, revenue sharing is based only on ac-
13 tual federal timber receipts, and Idaho will lose more than \$30,086,006 mil-
14 lion per year in payments for rural public schools and counties under Ti-
15 tles I and III of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination
16 Act of 2000, with associated losses of essential programs and services and
17 thousands of jobs in both the government and private sectors, and Idaho will
18 lose an additional \$4,080,943 million per year that is currently spent by
19 counties on special conservation projects under Title II of the Secure Ru-
20 ral Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, for a total loss of
21 more than \$34,166,949 per biennium, most of which are spent on programs and
22 services that the state cannot replace; and

23 WHEREAS, there is a need to maintain funding for public education, road
24 maintenance and other public services through predictable payments to the
25 affected counties, as well as job creation in those counties and other op-
26 portunities associated with restoration, maintenance and stewardship of
27 federal lands that benefit all citizens available under the Secure Rural
28 Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

29 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular
30 Session of the Sixty-first Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of
31 Representatives concurring therein, that we urge the Congress of the United
32 States to pass the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination
33 Reauthorization Act of 2012 that will reauthorize and extend the Secure
34 Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2008 (P.L. 106-3893)
35 for an additional ten-year period through federal fiscal year 2021, and that
36 the Act be continued at federal fiscal year 2008 funding levels and be funded
37 through mandatory, continuing appropriations.

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the Congress of the United States is un-
39 able to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determina-
40 tion Act for an additional ten-year period through federal fiscal year 2021,
41 that we urge the Congress of the United States to keep its commitment to pro-
42 vide funding for roads and schools in counties with federal forest land and
43 develop an appropriate funding mechanism to provide payment for county roads
44 and schools to mitigate the loss of property tax revenues on federal forest
45 land within Idaho counties.

46 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate be, and she is
47 hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of this Memorial to the
48 President of the United States, the Secretary of Agriculture of the United
49 States, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Repre-

1 sentatives of Congress, and the congressional delegation representing the
2 State of Idaho in the Congress of the United States.