

IN THE SENATE

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 103

BY RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

1  
2 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, TO THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE OF THE  
3 UNITED STATES, TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED  
4 STATES IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION REP-  
5 REPRESENTING 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 Second Regular Session of the Sixty-first  
8 Idaho Legislature, do hereby respectfully represent that:

9 WHEREAS, during the First Regular Session of the Sixty-first Idaho Leg-  
10 islature, we adopted Senate Joint Memorial No. 101, which urged the reau-  
11 thorization and full funding of the federal Secure Rural School and County  
12 Self-Determination Act ("SRS" or "Act"); and

13 WHEREAS, the SRS was enacted to meet the financial obligations of the  
14 federal government in rural communities with extensive federal land owner-  
15 ship as these lands do not contribute to the county tax base. The SRS law es-  
16 tablishes transfer payment schedules for federal moneys to be paid from the  
17 U.S. Treasury directly to the counties to help support their schools, roads  
18 and essential services; and

19 WHEREAS, in 2011, the SRS has provided approximately \$31 million dol-  
20 lars of federal funding to 34 Idaho counties for schools and roads with Na-  
21 tional Forest System lands in recognition of the federal government's obli-  
22 gation to these counties; and

23 WHEREAS, Congress has not yet reauthorized the SRS Act and the Act has  
24 now expired. Congress may still reauthorize, but current proposals for  
25 reauthorization are for less funding and for a shorter time than previous  
26 authorities; and

27 WHEREAS, the purpose of the SRS has always been for the federal govern-  
28 ment and counties to advance alternative arrangements to the SRS transfers;  
29 and

30 WHEREAS, five Idaho counties, Shoshone, Boundary, Clearwater, Idaho  
31 and Valley, commendably have developed a pilot project or an alternative  
32 proposal for SRS funding called a Community Forest Trust ("Trust"); and

33 WHEREAS, the proposed Trust would provide that resources on certain  
34 designated federal lands be managed for the purposes of providing revenues  
35 to all Idaho counties currently receiving SRS funding; and

36 WHEREAS, the resources on the federal lands included in the proposed  
37 Trust would be managed by Idaho Department of Lands professionals under all  
38 laws, federal and state, as they apply to state lands in Idaho, and overseen  
39 by a Board of Idaho County Commissioners appointed by the Governor; and

40 WHEREAS, lands included in the proposed Trust would remain federal  
41 lands and available to all Americans for recreation and enjoyment; and

1           WHEREAS, the resources in the Trust would be required to be managed pru-  
2 dently and sustainably, and management activities would be monitored to en-  
3 sure environmental standards are met; and

4           WHEREAS, the Idaho counties have submitted a proposal to Congress to  
5 conduct a pilot of the Trust as part of the SRS reauthorization, and any rev-  
6 enues generated be deducted from approved SRS payments thereby helping both  
7 Idaho counties and the federal government meet deficit reduction goals; and

8           WHEREAS, the Trust pilot would be for a minimum of five years and include  
9 resources on 200,000 acres of federal forest land in Idaho; and

10          WHEREAS, the Idaho Association of Counties Board of Directors and the  
11 Idaho Association of Counties Public Lands Committee unanimously approved  
12 the Trust pilot in September 2011; and

13          WHEREAS, the Trust has been reviewed by the Idaho Land Board in August  
14 2011 and supported, in concept, with direction to the Idaho Department of  
15 Lands to work with the counties on how it would be implemented.

16          NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the Second Regular  
17 Session of the Sixty-first Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of  
18 Representatives concurring therein, that we urge the Congress of the United  
19 States to endorse and enact a Community Forest Trust pilot for Idaho, con-  
20 sistent with the proposal presented by Idaho counties to the U.S. House  
21 Natural Resources Committee as part of the July 14, 2011, hearing record on  
22 the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2008 reau-  
23 thorization.

24          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the Congress of the United States to  
25 reauthorize and extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determi-  
26 nation Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-343) for an additional ten-year period through  
27 federal fiscal year 2021, and that the Act be continued at federal fiscal  
28 year 2008 funding levels and be funded through mandatory, continuing appro-  
29 priations.

30          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate be, and she is  
31 hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of this Memorial to the  
32 President of the United States, the Secretary of Agriculture of the United  
33 States, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Repre-  
34 sentatives of Congress, and the congressional delegation representing the  
35 State of Idaho in the Congress of the United States.