

"What Do We Own?"

My Name is Jeff Wright. I live in Boise County. I am the author of "The Citizens Last Stand: Are YOU Ready?" I wish to thank the honorable members of this committee for their service and for a chance to provide the following testimony as a citizen of Idaho. I represent no special interest except the individual interest of my friends and neighbors in Boise County. As Preamble I'd like to repeat a couple quotes I'm rather fond of:

"Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it."

George Bernard Shaw

"Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not." Jeremiah 5:21

For 25 years I was a large-scale systems engineer by training and vocation. Engineers and technicians are required to design and build products and systems that work. Those that work follow the natural engineering laws and rules that govern that technology and system. If they don't work they have to be re-engineered and rebuilt until they work, otherwise the design or products are terminated.

We know from decades of example that, in legislation and law, systems can be designed and initiated that either don't or cannot work because they fail to follow the principles of natural law, the Constitution and human behavior. If I learned anything in that 25 years, I learned that large, centralized systems of any kind cannot grow beyond a certain size without suffering catastrophic failure such as we are seeing today virtually across the board in government. Systems and government must be properly and effectively distributed to be survivable.

However, in government, instead of terminating those systems and replacing them with distributed systems that work, new legislation is initiated which directs increasing the complexity of the systems to create an even larger catastrophe when the even

larger system fails. Then we double-down and increase the complexity, once again.

Even the National Forest Service and the BLM no longer credibly or strenuously argue that a century of their management has left our forest and range public lands in abysmal shape. Jerking helter-skelter from Administration to Administration, Congress to Congress, policy to policy in one-size-fits-all disaster after another. Then excuses are made and the next policy formulated.

As it seems with so many of the issues that confront us today, we observe many government officials, special interests and opponents of issues such as the Federal Lands Transfer proposal believe that if they demagogue it to death, it will go away and the status quo will be maintained.

The issue is for any person or state to be a free and independent as nature and Nature's God provides, they must actually own and control their property. This is not an abstract or theoretical. It is a concrete axiom of western civilization culminating 2000 years of philosophical development and concretely tested for over 200 years since John Locke, Adam Smith, Thomas Paine, Jefferson and Madison sheperded it into existence.

After 123 years, the final transfer of public lands, due and owing to the control of the people of Idaho is probably the 2nd most important action in our history after our Admission as a State. It will determine our ability to prosper, to fund the education of our children and allow them to build a future economy for their children. And it will vastly reduce the complexity while vastly improving the management of public lands in the state of Idaho. Another axiom is that the government that governs best governs least and closest to the people.

Or, we will remain largely dependents and serfs on a federal reservation carved from 2/3 of our own land. What choice will you make?

Reading through all the testimony, presentations, briefs and legal opinions handed out at prior meetings of this committee, it is easy to see how many minds simply fail to understand, try to ignore, or intentionally mis-construct the nature of the Republic that was set up.

The Deputy AGs slide presentation was most disappointing. He seems confused as to the entire premise of the issue. I would suggest he read William C. Hayward's book, How the West Was Lost," and, particularly, the 1911 SCOTUS decision in Coyle v Smith concerning the "equal footing" doctrine and disposition of land from the territories to the states. The Coyle decision, glaringly overlooked by Mr. Strack, discharges every one of the arguments against the land transfer in his presentation.

We seem to live in a time when the complete inversion of the original Republic is the accepted norm.

We look all around at the world and easily see the destruction that has been wrought over a century by nationalists. Yet it is still being pursued in the United States, by the endless drive toward centralization and nationalism, and many in this room apparently wish to continue down that self-evidently destructive path.

Some construct specious legalistic and philosophical arguments which attempt to deny and misdirect the fundamental truths of obligations and duties that are self-evident to those who see. Centralization of power and decision-making never works and has failed every time it is tried or imposed. Yet, it is still pursued.

For more than a century, many have tried to discard the Republic of free and independent people and states in favor of a single nationalist-progressive state. The people have been consistently gulled into such frauds which maintain and expand that Supra-National state.

Nationalists appear to “win” because they have convinced themselves and their followers that the centralization and control of everything from a single center is the best method to rule over all, no matter how contrary to our formation and organization.

However, as they “win,” liberty and freedom slowly die. Centralization works nowhere in nature. Too many men and women refuse to accept that it also doesn't work in human nature or its constructs.

In the late 20th and early 21st Centuries the inversion of the Republic has evolved into the concept of economic nationalism and hyper-regulatory democracy. Regardless of truth or evidence, it all has the same end. It now continues in a seemingly benign but ultimately destructive paternalistic oligarchy.

Ownership and control of the land and property determines a state's destiny the same as it does any individual. I find it tragic that so many Americans, Idahoans and our fellow states have given over their freedoms, happiness and economic determination to a nationalist government that has become foreign to our jurisdiction.

It is telling that when the nation-states of Europe joined the EU, they did not turn over any of their own national parks and public lands to the EU. Following the suggestion of some in this room, they should have done so. Why would any state in the US do such a thing when even our European brothers didn't do so in their own Federation? Even in the new Russian Confederation, the new states of the Republic have much more control over their land and parks than do the Western States of America.

After more than a century of delay, interference, usurpation, degradation and environmental destruction it's time to complete the final disposal and extinguishment of title as directed in the original obligation.

Send out the message that Idaho was created for Idahoans and not as the economic and political plaything of environmentalist groups, bureaucrats and elected officials in Washington DC. Doesn't it bother everybody here that New York state with virtually NO federally-controlled lands has 7 times more say in Congress about what happens with Idaho's Lands than Idaho does. The same is true of almost every other state.

I respectfully request that this committee produce a final report that strongly recommends proceeding to ACT, as Utah has acted, and with special teeth, to finally take sovereign control of our state and our destiny.

Thank you for your time.

Let's take the basic misinformation that we've heard handed out by opponents, one at a time:

1. "The federal government spends almost \$400 million annually to 'manage' our public lands, Idaho can't afford that."

If any enterprise in America accepted the federal cost structure for doing anything, every business in America would go bankrupt tomorrow. The current Obama and OtterCare fiasco should make that plain.

2. "Various Supreme Court decisions state that the "equal footing doctrine" doesn't apply to economics"

To say that the economic freedom and self-determination of being a "free and independent state" doesn't apply to federal control of the land is probably one of the worst and most ludicrous doctrines, ever. It's right up there with Dred Scott, Wickard vs Filburn, Kelo, Citizens United and, most recently, the Roberts decision in NFIB V Sebelius (ObamaCare decision) among many, many others. No state can have 2/3 of their state held hostage by the a black-robed oligarchy while denied by the

Enabling and Admission Acts, state Constitution and the 9th and 10th amendments to the US Constitution.

"Idaho's Founders never intended to keep any of those lands and 'forever disclaimed' them."

Does anyone in this room actually believe that Idaho's Founders thought they and all the future citizens of Idaho were giving up 2/3 of Idaho to perpetual federal control when 37 existing states didn't even give up 5%? Of course, not. Did they have the authority even if they did? No. Why did no state east of the Rockies do the same?

"According to The Treaty of Guadalupe and Louisiana Purchase set different legal criteria in disposal of the lands."

This ridiculous view stands at complete odds with the language of the Enabling Acts, Admission Act and State Constitution. Or, that fact that these lands cost the federal government nothing under the Treaty of Oregon but cost the people plenty of blood, sweat and tears to pioneer and develop our state.

"The state cannot possibly manage those lands."

The Idaho Department of Lands has put forward a pretty convincing case that they're doing much better with the 6 million acres they now manage and protect than the federal government does with the 34 million they currently control in Idaho.

"There'll be no more hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation in Idaho."

This one is probably the most ludicrous positions being espoused by the Outdoor lobby and others. If no state east of the Rockies has more than 5% of their state lands under federal control, how does that explain the tens of millions of hunters, fishermen and recreationists that hit the field in those states every year? I did 2/3 of my hunting and a lot of fishing on private land in eastern

Colorado when I lived there. Much of that hunting and fishing was better than on any of the federal land.

“All the land will be sold off to private owners and Idahoans will no longer have access to their public lands.”

This is a statement made by those who do not understand economics. This proposal does not effect already designated wilderness, monuments, parks and certain reserves. Much of the lands has no other economic value other than the ones it was supposed to be used for before closed off by the Feds. It will simply be held by the state for those same purposes. Some percentage should be sold off to better economic use because Idaho should be able to develop its economy like every other state. But then, that does not preclude, as terms of the sale, that traditional outdoor and other access issues be maintained, as well. Neither the Founders of the US or of Idaho would have ever conceived of all land being closed off for all economic development. Never.

Thank you for the time.