

Senate Joint Resolution No. 5—Committee on
Legislative Operations and Elections

FILE NUMBER.....

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION—Expressing support for the 2014 Nevada Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan developed by the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council and urging the United States Fish and Wildlife Service not to list the greater sage-grouse as an endangered or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

WHEREAS, The greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) is a species of bird that inhabits much of the sagebrush habitat in Nevada as well as other western states; and

WHEREAS, In 2010, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service determined that the greater sage-grouse warranted listing as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, 16 U.S.C. §§ 1531 et seq., largely due to what was determined to be a lack of regulatory mechanisms, and a decision on this listing is scheduled for September 2015; and

WHEREAS, The listing of the greater sage-grouse as an endangered or threatened species would have a devastatingly negative impact on Nevada’s land development, land use, water use, mining, recreational activities and local economies; and

WHEREAS, In 2011, the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service began a process to amend the agencies’ land use plans to incorporate greater sage-grouse conservation measures as regulatory mechanisms; and

WHEREAS, In 2011, the United States Secretary of the Interior invited those states impacted by the potential listing of the greater sage-grouse to develop state-specific regulatory mechanisms to conserve the species; and

WHEREAS, In 2012, Governor Brian Sandoval strengthened the State of Nevada’s commitment to sage-grouse conservation by issuing Executive Order 2012-09, establishing the Governor’s Greater Sage-grouse Advisory Committee, which led to Executive Order 2012-19, creating the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council; and

WHEREAS, In 2013, the Nevada Legislature enacted the provisions of Assembly Bill No. 461, which created the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council within the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and required the Council to establish and carry out strategies for managing the greater sage-grouse and sagebrush ecosystems in this State; and



WHEREAS, In 2014, the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council directed the preparation of and adopted the 2014 Nevada Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan, which combines the best available scientific information and stakeholder input into a conservation and management plan to ameliorate the primary threats to greater sage-grouse in the State of Nevada and which is intended to be the alternative for management of greater sage-grouse in Nevada by the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Forest Service and any other land management agency; and

WHEREAS, The Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service Land Use Plan Amendment outline measures under the agencies' preferred alternative that are not the provisions of the State's Conservation Plan and could prove as detrimental to Nevada's economy and way of life as an Endangered Species Act listing of the greater sage-grouse; and

WHEREAS, The State's Conservation Plan was not outlined as the alternative to be adopted by the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service for management of greater sage-grouse in Nevada; and

WHEREAS, Based on the State's Conservation Plan, the State of Nevada is poised and ready to implement the State's Conservation Plan and achieve landscape-scale conservation of greater sage-grouse and the sagebrush ecosystem; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the 78th Session of the Nevada Legislature express their confidence in and support of the 2014 Nevada Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan and the ability of the State of Nevada to conserve greater sage-grouse and the sagebrush ecosystem effectively; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the members of the 78th Session of the Nevada Legislature exhort and strongly request the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service to adopt the State's Conservation Plan as the management alternative for greater sage-grouse in Nevada; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the members of the 78th Session of the Nevada Legislature urge and strongly request the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to not list the greater sage-grouse as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and allow the State of Nevada to implement the State's Conservation Plan to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Plan as an adequate regulatory mechanism in conserving the greater sage-grouse; and be it further



RESOLVED, That if the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service choose not to follow the guidance and exhortations of this resolution, the members of the 78th Session of the Nevada Legislature urge and strongly request the United States Congress to intervene and enact federal legislation to provide an extension of time, for a period of 10 years through and including Fiscal Year 2025, before the United States Secretary of the Interior can consider, write or issue pursuant to Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 a finding or proposed federal endangered species regulation in order to allow the State's Conservation Plan to be implemented and demonstrate the effectiveness of the Plan as an adequate regulatory mechanism in conserving the greater sage-grouse; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and transmit a copy of this resolution to the Vice President of the United States as presiding officer of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, each member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation, the United States Secretary of the Interior, the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Governor of the State of Nevada; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon passage.

