



Kris Jordan
State Senator

Senate Building, Rm. 39
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-466-8086

Committees

Finance General Government Subcommittee - Chair
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Senate Concurrent Resolution 13 Sponsor Testimony
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Chairman Coley and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on Senate Concurrent Resolution 13.

SCR 13 encourages the federal government to begin working with the western states to continue its original policy of turning land over to the states for use or sale.

Prior to the 1900's, land acquired by the federal government was disposed of to people interested in settling in, and developing the area or for the formation of new states. In the early 1900s, the federal government began to change this long standing policy and instead, choose to keep as much as possible. This shift resulted in approximately 50% of land in the western states, and an estimated \$150 Trillion in untapped natural resources, under federal control. For context, around 4% of land in eastern states, and only 1.2% in Ohio, is owned by the feds. Western states like Nevada have found themselves in a position where the majority of the land in their borders was unavailable for development. With 84.9% of their land out of reach, residents have found it difficult to grow their economy.

Western states have opposed this policy change for decades and in 2012, Utah, with more than 60% of their territory owned by the federal government, passed legislation that would position the state to actively pursue a change in federal procedure. A part of this effort called upon their eastern neighbors, where less than 5% of land is owned by the feds, to join their efforts.

This resolution would encourage our fellow states to become more educated on the issue and would add Ohio's voice to those of South Carolina and Utah in calling for the federal government to untie the hands of our western neighbors and work with them to begin the process of transferring public land to state control.

Thank you Mr. Chairman for allowing me to provide testimony on SCR 13 and I am willing to answer any questions.