



State of Utah
School & Institutional
Trust Lands Administration

675 East 500 South, Suite 500
Salt Lake City, UT 84102-2813
801-538-5100
801-355-0922 (Fax)
www.trustlands.utah.gov

Gary R. Herbert
Governor

Spencer J. Cox
Lieutenant Governor

David Ure
Director

July 14, 2016

Hon. Rob Bishop
U.S. House of Representatives
123 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515-4401

Hon. Jason Chaffetz
U.S. House of Representatives
2236 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515-4403

Re: Public Lands Initiative

Dear Representatives Bishop and Chaffetz;

On behalf of the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA), I am writing to express our support for the newly-introduced Public Lands Initiative, which includes provisions for the large scale land exchange of state school trust lands out of areas proposed for conservation designations, and into consolidated blocks of now-federal land that can be more readily used to generate revenue for Utah's school trust. We appreciate the work that the Utah congressional delegation has done to address public comments and concerns raised in connection with the earlier draft of the PLI legislation.

SITLA has a long and successful history of exchanging state trust lands out of federal conservation areas for less sensitive Bureau of Land Management lands that can support the goal of funding K-12 public schools. These past exchanges have added hundreds of millions of dollars to Utah's Permanent School Fund, a perpetual endowment supporting every K-12 public and charter school in Utah. This result could not have been achieved without the strong support of Utah's congressional delegation.

The Public Lands Initiative is another step in making Utah's public land management more rational, and supporting the long-term goals of Utah's school trust to provide significant additional funding for public education. It promotes the common-sense solution of trading sensitive lands with high natural values to the United States, while conveying less controversial lands to the state school trust, to provide future potential for generating income and local economic development.

The SITLA Board looks forward to working with the Department of the Interior and affected stakeholders, particularly the Ute Indian Tribe, to resolve specific concerns with the proposed exchange. We appreciate the efforts of your office to support these discussions, to allow the proposed legislation to be finalized and implemented.

Sincerely,

David Ure
Director