

Dear (Members of the House)

On behalf of the multi-sector membership of the Western Business Roundtable, I am writing to express our support of “*The Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act of 2011*” (H.R. 1904), which we understand will be coming before the full House for consideration this week.

This legislation – which involves a series of land exchanges – presents a “win-win” opportunity for federal land managers, Arizona’s economy and the American taxpayers. The Roundtable views the legislation as an outstanding example of how, with a bit of ingenuity, the public and private sectors can work together to advance the goals of domestic minerals development and environmental conservation.

H.R 1904 would authorize a federal land exchange in which mining company Resolution Copper would get about 2,400 acres in the Oak Flat area of the Tonto National Forest in return for giving the federal government more than 5,300 acres of environmentally sensitive land throughout Arizona.

H.R. 1904 is truly a “jobs” bill. It will promote significant job and other economic opportunities in a part of the State of Arizona that has a long history of mining, but is currently experiencing high unemployment rates and economic difficulties. Consider the statistics:

- 1400 direct jobs and 2300 indirect jobs (3700 total jobs) throughout the 40-year mine life;
- 3000 construction jobs during the construction phase of the project;
- \$220 million in annual wages;
- \$61 billion in economic impact to the state of Arizona;
- \$19 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues, with \$14 billion allocated to federal tax.

At the same time, the federal government will gain ownership of 5,344 acres of land currently owned by Resolution Copper. Acquisition of those lands will allow the federal government to add to the acreages of the Las Cienegas and San Pedro National Conservation Areas, and to the Tonto and Coconino National Forest. The lands involved have been identified as having significant fish and wildlife, recreational, scenic, water, riparian, cultural, and other public values.

Finally, it is important to note that the bill contains language to protect the American taxpayers. Under H.R. 1904, Resolution Copper will be required to give up more land in the exchange, if it is determined that the land it receives is worth more than the land it gives up.

The Roundtable has long been concerned regarding the United States' increasing dependency on foreign nations for a whole array of strategic minerals. The lack of a coherent federal minerals policy is putting the nation at an economic disadvantage. It is also a glaring national security concern.

We find legislation like H.R. 1904 encouraging. It shows that, with cooperation, minerals development can be achieved in a way that advances all the nation's goals: environmental, economic and strategic.

Please give H.R. 1904 your support.



Holly Propst
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Western Business Roundtable

ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE:

The Roundtable is a non-profit business trade association comprised of organizations doing business in the Western United States. Our members are engaged in a wide array of enterprises, including: electric power generation and transmission; energy resource exploration, development, transportation and distribution; energy services; engineering; manufacturing; and mining.

The Roundtable works to defend the interests of the West and support policies that encourage economic growth and opportunity, freedom of enterprise and a common-sense, balanced approach to conservation and environmental stewardship.