



To: Members, Nevada Senate Legislative Operations and Elections

From: Vinny Spotleson, Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter

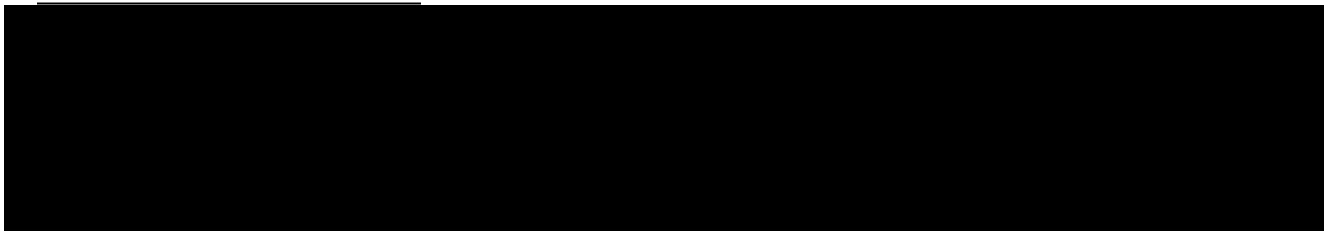
RE: AJR 10 Urges the Federal Government to release federally managed land (BDR R-1097) **OPPOSE**

Dear Member of the Nevada Senate Legislative Operations and Elections,

We are writing in strong opposition to Assembly Joint Resolution 10, which urges the federal government to privatize federally managed land in Nevada for housing, supporting the federal Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act. Sprawl is deeply unpopular in Nevada with 75% of Nevadans opposing selling public lands for housing in a recent poll by Colorado College¹, and a 2024 Rasmussen poll.² An overwhelming majority of Nevadans are concerned about water availability as a result of sprawl. The Trump Administration is working across the country to privatize public lands for developers.

We believe the process surrounding this bill and the federal bill it supports has left community input out time and time again. From not having a hearing for AJR10 in the Assembly, to scheduling this hearing at the very last minute, we believe that the public has not been given adequate ability to engage. Similarly, the public has not been given an opportunity to provide input on the Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation act.

We do not want Nevada to be seen as a pro-sprawl, pro-public land sell off state. Sprawl is inherently problematic and an environmental injustice, **disproportionately impacting communities of color and low income communities.** The **Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act** (also known as SNEDCA or the Clark County Lands Bill) has been introduced each Congress since 2021. **Several existential threats to Southern Nevada's water security, tourism, and public health remain in the bill.** Additionally, this legislation would undermine attempts to promote infill and transit-oriented development, **undermining efforts to create actual affordable housing** solutions that are needed in the Las Vegas Valley.



For these reasons and more, we are counting on your opposition to AJR 10. Thank you for your commitment to Nevadans.

Sincerely,

Vinny Spotleson, Chair, Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter

More information below about our concerns pertaining to SNEDCA:

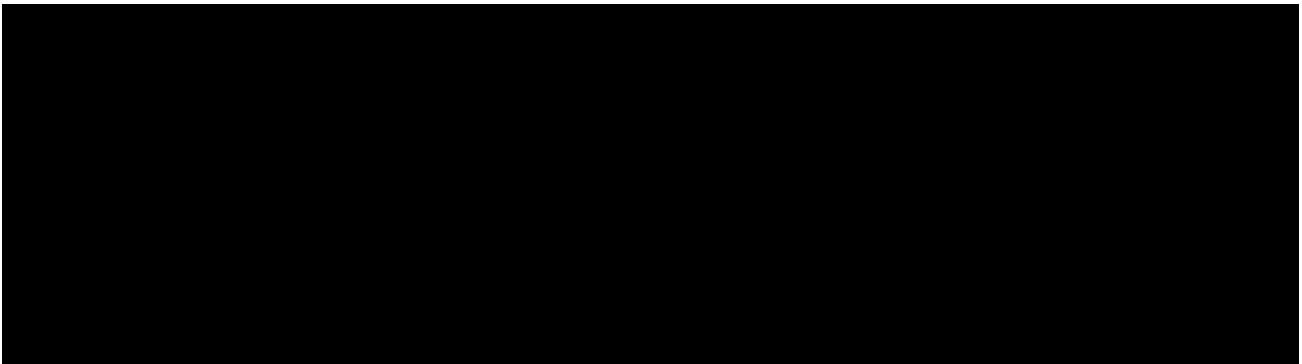
Threats to Water Security

According to a study jointly commissioned by Clark County and the City of Henderson, the urban sprawl caused by this bill would increase the demand for water by 49 million gallons per day.³ This is 18% of Nevada's total allocation from the Colorado River. More than half of this water would not be recycled or reclaimed.⁴

Colorado River projections are still dire, and the most recent actions by the Bureau of Reclamation cut Nevada's water allocation from the river by 7%.⁵ This is the first of several more projected cuts. One of the main goals of the proposal is to open land for manufacturing, which is known for its high consumptive use of water. Water availability as a potential constraint for attracting manufacturing has not been studied in the Governor's economic plans.

Threats to Tourism

The sprawl that supporters are seeking to induce in this bill is mostly concentrated south along the I-15 between Sloan Canyon and Jean. This would include 76,100 residents that would not be served by RTC and thus commuting on the main road used by tourists from Southern California.⁶ In addition, there are plans for a logistics and cargo shipping hub to be constructed in Jean, with a goal of increasing truck traffic along the stretch of the I-15 between Primm, Jean, and Las Vegas. The impacts of this increased congestion have not been studied.



Threats to Public Health

This sprawl would exacerbate the poor air quality in the Las Vegas Valley due to the large increase in commute time and distance. **These impacts would be concentrated in the inner city where most of the region's jobs are still available.** In addition to increasing harmful ozone and VOX pollution, it would increase greenhouse gas emissions, and expand the urban heat island effect, which would also be felt the most in economically depressed areas inside the inner city.

The Ivanpah Airport and Water Development

The Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) needs north of a billion dollars to bring a pipeline from Lake Mead to Primm to deliver water resources. This is a separate project that would plug into the Horizon Lateral pipeline. A large component of SNWA's plan to fund this pipeline would be mostly dependent on development fees associated with the sprawl that would be enabled by SNEDCA.

Clark County's bonding and taxing authority would be stretched to the limit to accommodate an airport estimated to cost more than \$12 billion⁷ without accounting for the billions in water costs. These public funds would be put to better use creating a regional rail system for the Las Vegas Valley that would break our community's reliance on oil, help our tourists reach their desired destinations, and improve our air quality while not increasing our use of water.

Alternatives to Sprawl

The RTC recently conducted a study that found nearly 80,000 acres of vacant and underutilized land within the current SNPLMA boundary.⁸ This is more acreage than the entire City of Henderson, and enough land to accommodate several million more people.

City planners and transit officials have expressed in confidence they are worried that SNEDCA would pull resources away from their ability to create the transit-oriented development built with numerous affordable housing projects to make these infill projects vibrant and sustainable. The sprawl would use government resources to build and extend roads, pipelines, and other services, far outside the RTC's current operational boundaries, utilizing transportation funds that could be allocated towards improving bus and other transit services.

