



State of Utah

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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July 17, 2023

To: Chairman Tom Tiffany and Ranking Member Joe Neguse
Federal Lands Subcommittee of the House Natural Resources Committee
United States House of Representatives
1324 Longworth Federal Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

From: Lisa J. Wilson, P.E.
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Re: Written testimony of Lisa J. Wilson for the July 20, 2023, meeting of the Federal Lands Subcommittee in support of H.R. 2468, Mountain View Corridor Completion Act, sponsored by Representative Burgess Owens

Dear Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, Vice Chair Curtis, and distinguished members of the Federal Lands Subcommittee:

On behalf of the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), thank you for providing the opportunity to testify in support of H.R. 2468, Mountain View Corridor Completion Act. We also express gratitude to Representative Burgess Owens for sponsoring this important legislation.

The purpose of the bill is to authorize the Bureau of Land Management to transfer or sell three small parcels of federal land to Utah. These parcels are located within the boundaries of Camp Williams, Utah. The land will be used by UDOT to complete an important highway project that will benefit not just Utah citizens, but also members of the military who utilize Camp Williams.

Camp Williams is a large active military training installation created by an Executive Order of President Woodrow Wilson in 1914. That order withdrew over 18,000 acres of federal public land for use by the military. Today, the camp is used primarily by the Utah National Guard and is also the location of a large National Security Agency data center.

Camp Williams is located about 25 miles south of Salt Lake City, Utah and straddles the border between Salt Lake County and Utah County, which are Utah's two most populous counties.

From time to time over the last one-hundred years, Congress has authorized transfers of land between the federal government and Utah related to Camp Williams, and Camp Williams has grown to encompass approximately 20,000 acres of federal land and 4,000 acres of land owned by the State of Utah. [*See Ex. 1.*]

Representative Owens' bill would authorize Utah to purchase 36 acres of the federal 20,000 acres of Camp Williams land. These small parcels are needed to complete a critical Utah highway project, called the Mountain View Corridor.

According to the 2020 United States Census Bureau report, Utah's population is growing at the fastest rate of any state in the nation. That growth continues, particularly along the heavily populated Wasatch Front in Salt Lake County and Utah County where well over half of Utah citizens reside.

One impact of that growth is that Redwood Road, the only road that connects western Salt Lake County and western Utah County, and which operates over a right-of-way through Camp Williams, has experienced dramatic increases in traffic volume from both the general public and the military. This road has historically provided the only public access to the Utah National Guard Headquarters area as well as the NSA data center.

To address this growth, beginning fifteen years ago, UDOT began the planning and construction of what Utahns call the Mountain View Corridor—an important 35-mile highway between Salt Lake County and Utah County. [*See Ex. 2.*]

From the beginning of this project, UDOT has worked closely with the Utah National Guard as well as the Bureau of Land Management on securing the necessary land rights to accommodate the project's expansion alignment. Both entities have been very cooperative with UDOT, and the first two phases of the project have been completed. This needed project is already significantly increasing capacity and improving public safety for both the general public and the military.

However, Utah needs Congressional help to complete the last few southern miles of the Mountain View Corridor. [*See Ex. 3*] While most of the yet-to-be completed roadway will traverse state land, including some of the state-owned portion of Camp Williams, three triangular-shaped pieces of property that the highway would impact are irregular parcels of federal land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. While these parcels are located entirely within the boundaries of Camp Williams, neither the BLM nor the Utah National Guard actively use or manage these parcels. [*See Ex. 4.*]

Because of President Woodrow Wilson's Executive Order, the Bureau of Land Management considers these parcels to be under the indefinite active control and management of the military and will not transfer the parcels to Utah without Congressional authorization.

As mentioned, the Utah National Guard has been cooperative throughout this process and supports completing the Mountain View Corridor. We have included in the materials provided to this committee a copy of a letter of support from the Adjutant General of the Utah National Guard, Major General Taylor Michael Turley. We also understand that Major General Turley is sending the letter to all committee members. [See Ex. 5.]

UDOT is confident that completion of the final phase of the Mountain View Corridor is in the best interest of the public safety of both the military and the traveling public in this fast-growing part of Utah, and we respectfully urge timely passage of HR. 2468, the Mountain View Corridor Completion Act.

Thank you for your consideration. At any Member's request, UDOT is pleased to answer any questions or to provide any additional information to the subcommittee.