



AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION®

600 Maryland Ave. SW | Suite 1000W | Washington, DC 20024

ph. 202.406.3600

f. 202.406.3606

www.fb.org

March 26, 2014

The Honorable Doc Hastings  
Chairman  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
United States House of Representatives  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Hastings:

This week, the House of representatives is scheduled to take up for consideration H.R. 1459, the *Ensuring Public Involvement in the Creation of National Monuments Act*. American Farm Bureau strongly opposes abuse of the Antiquities Act by the Executive branch by designating national monuments without local input or consultation. We support the enactment of legislation such as H.R. 1459, which improves accountability and transparency in the designation of any proposed national monument by requiring an open public process to include consideration by landowners and local governments affected by the decision.

The designation of lands as national monuments or similar designation without input from communities impacted by the decision can lead, and in fact has led, to devastating reductions in economic activity and the loss of jobs in resource-dependent communities. Under current law, the president could use the Antiquities Act to designate millions of acres of land without first notifying impacted communities, states or even Congress. Moreover, there is no requirement to determine what the impact of the designation would be on communities and the local economy.

A key policy rationale for passage of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was to ensure that the public had the ability to consider, analyze and evaluate proposals that sought to develop or otherwise use large tracts of land and to afford the public appropriate input on any such proposals. It is entirely appropriate that such a policy be applied to large land tracts being proposed presidentially for National Monument designation. Recent use of the Antiquities Act for large tract designation has not provided reasonable notice to the public, and has gone well beyond Congress' original intent to designate the smallest portion of land needed to represent certain objects of historic and scientific interest.

H.R. 1459 is an important bill that protects farmers and ranchers from executive overreach of the Antiquities Act, by requiring proper input from the people and communities that are directly impacted by monuments designations. We urge all members to vote in favor of H.R. 1459 and oppose any weakening amendments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Stallman'.

Bob Stallman  
President



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March 26, 2014

The Honorable Rob Bishop  
United States House of Representatives  
123 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Rep. Bishop:

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