

Statement of Senator Harry Reid in Support of H.R. 2937,
an Act to Convey Land to Clark County, Nevada,
for Use as a Shooting Range
before the
the House Resources Committee
February 14, 2002

Room 1334, Longworth House Office Building

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell you about a bill that=s important to the people of Nevada and to me. This bill would transfer about 2,900 acres of public land to Clark County for use as a firearms training facility and recreational shooting range.

As you may be aware, Clark County has grown rapidly over the last few decades: in just the last 12 years, for example, the county=s population has almost doubled, from 770,000 to over 1.4 million. As more and more people have moved into the Las Vegas Valley, land that was once considered the Aback of beyond@ is now practically in people=s backyards. This population growth, in turn, has stressed the land by increasing the demand for traditional public-land uses like hunting, fishing, and recreational target shooting.

There are dozens C maybe hundreds C of makeshift shooting ranges scattered in and around the Las Vegas Valley. Shooting posed little risk when the ranges were located far from town, but as the Valley=s population has continued to surge, activity in these places now endangers nearby homes and increasingly busy roads.

My bill paves the way for a world-class shooting range, sports park, and firearms training facility by conveying 2,880 acres of public land to Clark County. This facility will **provide the public with opportunities for education and recreation and provide a location for competitive events and firearms training. Development has also encroached upon facilities operated by the Metropolitan Police Department and North Las Vegas Police Department. The proposed new facility could also accommodate law enforcement training for firearms qualification and certification.**

Given the growing demand for safe places to shoot, it=s important that the area be large enough to

provide for public safety, not to mention the safety of the shooters themselves. I feel that this parcel is sufficient to make sure that shooting can take place without endangering the surrounding communities or the participants. The most important way to ensure a high degree of safety is to provide a significant buffer on all sides of the range.

I strongly believe that a facility of this kind will provide significant public benefit. By establishing a world-class shooting range in the Las Vegas Valley, this bill will enhance public safety and provide economic incentives to the Las Vegas Valley in the form of jobs and support services. For these and other reasons, the following organizations and entities support my bill:

- \$ Clark County Board of Commissioners
- \$ Clark County Parks and Recreation Department
- \$ Clark County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- \$ City of Henderson City Council
- \$ Nevada State Senate Majority Leader
- \$ Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- \$ The National Bench Rest Shooters Association
- \$ International Benchrest Shooters
- \$ Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority
- \$ USA Shooting: National Governing Body for the Olympic Shooting Sports
- \$ Las Vegas Trap Shooting Park

- \$ The International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association
- \$ Single Action Shooting Society

As the above list shows, I've received many letters of support. One that I received from a Boy Scout is particularly compelling. He writes, AMy troop and I are looking forward to using the new shooting range. The range would provide our Troop and other Boy Scouts of America Troops with a safe area in which to earn our Shooting Merit Badges. Thank you for sponsoring this bill and good luck getting it passed.@ With your help today, I hope that we can get this shooting range established to help this Boy

Scout and the many other people in Las Vegas Valley who will benefit from it.

Once again, I want to thank you, **Mr. Chairman**, and the members of this Committee for holding a hearing on this important bill.