

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 59th Legislature (2024)

SENATE  
RESOLUTION 25

By: Jett

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution opposing President Biden's 30x30 program and affirming support for private land ownership in the State of Oklahoma; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, the State of Oklahoma is a sovereign entity with authority to act on behalf of its citizens vested in the Oklahoma State Senate; and

WHEREAS, the well-being, health, safety, welfare, economic condition, and culture of Oklahoma, its businesses, and its citizens depend on private land ownership and the use of these resources; and

WHEREAS, many of Oklahoma's businesses and its citizens are involved in or otherwise depend on industries that utilize private lands and their resources, including livestock grazing, crop production, water ownership and usage, oil and gas exploration and production, recreational industries, hunting and fishing, and other outdoor recreation; and

1           WHEREAS, these industries are important components of the  
2 Oklahoma economy and are major contributors to the economic and  
3 social well-being of the state and its citizens; and

4           WHEREAS, on January 27, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.,  
5 issued Executive Order 14008, entitled "Tackling the Climate Crisis  
6 at Home and Abroad" (Federal Register, Vol. 86, p. 7,619); and

7           WHEREAS, in Section 216 of Executive Order 14008, President  
8 Biden directed the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with  
9 the Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary of Commerce, Chair of the  
10 Council of Environmental Quality, and other senior officials, to  
11 develop a program to conserve at least thirty percent (30%) of the  
12 lands and waters in the United States by 2030, which is called the  
13 "30x30" program; and

14           WHEREAS, under the 30x30 program, an estimated 700 million acres  
15 of our nation's lands would be set aside and permanently preserved  
16 in their natural state by 2030, preventing the productive use of  
17 these lands and their resources; and

18           WHEREAS, there is no constitutional or statutory authority for  
19 the President, the Department of the Interior, the Department of  
20 Agriculture, or any other federal agency to set aside and  
21 permanently preserve thirty percent (30%) of all land and water in  
22 the United States, and no such authority is referenced in Executive  
23 Order 14008, which makes it null and void; and

1           WHEREAS, the goal of conserving at least thirty percent (30%) of  
2 the land and water in the United States is a public purpose, not  
3 voted on or consented to by the people, Congress, or the Oklahoma  
4 Legislature; and

5           WHEREAS, the 30x30 program seeks to replace the decision-making  
6 of independent landowners who have been caring for their private  
7 property for generations without federal mandates and restrictions;  
8 and

9           WHEREAS, the Biden administration has stated it will be using  
10 all the tools in existing law to reach its thirty percent (30%)  
11 target by 2030, including conservation easements in perpetuity, the  
12 use of Waters of the United States (WOTUS), federal conservation  
13 programs, National Heritage Areas, wildlife corridors, Endangered  
14 Species listings, critical habitat designations, and all other  
15 similar programs; and

16           WHEREAS, placing private lands into permanent conservation  
17 status will cause dramatic and irreversible harm to Oklahoma's  
18 economy and the state itself, whose citizens depend on private lands  
19 for their security and prosperity; and

20           WHEREAS, lands placed under permanent conservation easements  
21 reduce the value of each such parcel of land while increasing the  
22 tax burden on other private landowners and industries to make up the  
23 property valuation difference; and

1           WHEREAS, federal conservation programs artificially drive up the  
2 cost of, and directly compete with, the working landowners who  
3 depend on the ability to lease or purchase those lands for the  
4 production of food, fiber, energy, and minerals that they, our  
5 communities, counties, state, and our nation require.

6           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION  
7 OF THE 59TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

8           THAT the Oklahoma State Senate opposes the 30x30 program,  
9 including its objective of permanently preserving at least thirty  
10 percent (30%) of the nation's lands and waters in their natural  
11 state by 2030, or any similar program that will set aside and  
12 prevent the productive use of lands within the state's jurisdiction.

13           THAT the Oklahoma State Senate further opposes the designation  
14 and use of lands in Oklahoma to be included as a part of the 30x30  
15 program, whether such inclusion be through easements, National  
16 Heritage Areas, wildlife preserves, wildlife corridors, open space,  
17 or other federal designations preventing the development and  
18 productive use of the resources on or within such lands.

19           THAT the Oklahoma State Senate supports the continued private  
20 ownership of land in the state, recognizing the nation's need for  
21 domestic sources of minerals, energy, timber, food, and fiber.

22           THAT the Oklahoma State Senate recognizes and supports the State  
23 of Oklahoma's laws governing water rights and water use and opposes  
24 any federal designation of waters and watercourses within the state

1 that would impair or restrict water diversions and uses authorized  
2 under Oklahoma law.

3 THAT the Oklahoma State Senate opposes and disagrees with using  
4 any public purpose, including global climate change, to set aside  
5 large tracts of land as preserves or open space to fulfill the 30x30  
6 program's objectives.

7 THAT the Oklahoma State Senate also maintains that any lands or  
8 other rights that are acquired to fulfill the 30x30 program's  
9 objectives should be acquired only from willing sellers or  
10 landowners and for the payment of full and fair market value for all  
11 rights and interests acquired, and not through regulatory  
12 compulsion, and only after analyzing and considering the impacts of  
13 such land acquisitions on the well-being, health, safety, welfare,  
14 economy, and culture of the state, its businesses, and its citizens.

15 THAT the Oklahoma State Senate requires that any transfer of  
16 conservation easements from land trusts to the federal government  
17 within their jurisdiction must have the consent of the Senate.

18 THAT the Oklahoma State Senate shall send a copy of this  
19 Resolution to the U.S. Department of the Interior and Department of  
20 Agriculture; the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and  
21 Forestry; the Oklahoma Attorney General; Governor Stitt; and all  
22 other relevant federal and state agencies.

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