

**JOINT RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO
FEDERAL RESTORING OUR AMERICAN MUSTANGS ACT**

2011 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: David P. Hinkins

House Sponsor: _____

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This joint resolution of the Legislature expresses opposition to the federal Restoring Our American Mustangs Act.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ expresses opposition to the passage of H.R.1018 and S. 1579, Restoring Our American Mustangs (ROAM) Act; and
- ▶ expresses support for efforts to keep herds on western rangelands at a sustainable level by reducing the number of wild horses and burros on overcrowded habitat, to reduce the population growth rates through fertility control and management of sex ratios, and to ensure that populations of wild horses and burros are maintained at the appropriate management level set by the Bureau of Land Management in consultation with state wildlife agencies.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

WHEREAS, H.R. 1018 and S. 1579, the Restoring Our American Mustangs (ROAM) Act, will have a devastating impact on the long-term sustainability of the public's wildlife



28 resources and habitats throughout the West;

29 WHEREAS, wild horse and burro populations on public lands can double in four to
30 five years and will quickly exceed the carrying capacity of the range if animals are not regularly
31 removed;

32 WHEREAS, the current Wild Horse and Burro Program is underfunded and much of
33 the range is now overpopulated;

34 WHEREAS, overpopulation of wild horses and burros results in significant damage to
35 vegetation, soils, and watersheds, and these impacts have deleterious effects on native wildlife
36 species;

37 WHEREAS, the ROAM Act would lift the restriction to manage wild horse and burro
38 herds to areas where they were found when the original Wild Horse and Burro Act was passed,
39 potentially opening up all public lands to the impacts of wild horses and burros;

40 WHEREAS, with insufficient and irregular funding, the present program cannot keep
41 up with management of these animals in their current restricted distribution;

42 WHEREAS, if their distribution was allowed to expand, wild horse and burro
43 populations, costs, and resource damage would quickly spiral out of control and this would
44 lead to catastrophic impacts to native species and their habitats;

45 WHEREAS, the ROAM Act directs that the Bureau of Land Management and the
46 United States Forest Service exhaust all practicable options before capturing and removing
47 wild horses and burros from the range;

48 WHEREAS, this would delay necessary removal operations, slowing down an already
49 cumbersome removal approving process;

50 WHEREAS, with a population growth rate of 20% per year, delaying removals is a
51 dangerous proposition for the health of the country's dry, fragile western habitats and the native
52 species that occupy them;

53 WHEREAS, even though adoption demand for wild horses and burros is far less than
54 the population growth rate, the ROAM Act requires that an adoption demand exist prior to
55 capturing wild horses and burros;

56 WHEREAS, the ROAM Act also requires that new rangelands and sanctuaries, or
57 "exclusive use areas," be established on public lands for wild horses and burros, which would
58 elevate the importance that one introduced exotic species has over the variety of native species

59 that occupy public lands and that severely impact the ability of state wildlife agencies to
60 manage native wildlife populations;

61 WHEREAS, it is inconsistent with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of
62 1976 that directs multiple use management on public lands;

63 WHEREAS, the ROAM Act would lead to an ever-increasing wild horse and burro
64 distribution, population size, and associated resource damage that would have drastic negative
65 implications for vegetation, watersheds, and native wildlife species;

66 WHEREAS, efforts to keep herds on western rangelands at a sustainable level by
67 reducing the number of wild horses and burros on overcrowded habitat, and by reducing the
68 population growth rates through fertility control and management of sex ratios, and efforts that
69 ensure populations of wild horses and burros are maintained at the appropriate management
70 level set by the Bureau of Land Management in consultation with state wildlife agencies should
71 be supported; and

72 WHEREAS, any revision to the management of wild horses and burros should include
73 funding to ensure roundups are conducted at regularly scheduled intervals and to reconcile
74 habitat damage that has occurred due to overpopulation of these animals:

75 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
76 opposes the passage of H.R. 1018 and S. 1579, Restoring Our American Mustangs (ROAM)
77 Act.

78 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature expresses its support for efforts to
79 keep herds on western rangelands at a sustainable level by reducing numbers of wild horses
80 and burros on overcrowded habitat, to reduce the population growth rates through fertility
81 control and management of sex ratios, and to ensure that populations of wild horses and burros
82 are maintained at the appropriate management level set by the Bureau of Land Management in
83 consultation with state wildlife agencies.

84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Majority
85 Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives,
86 the United States Secretary of the Interior, and to the members of Utah's congressional
87 delegation.

Legislative Review Note
as of 2-1-11 8:08 AM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

FISCAL NOTE

S.J.R. 11

SHORT TITLE: **Joint Resolution Expressing Opposition to Federal Restoring Our American Mustangs Act**

SPONSOR: **Hinkins, D.**

2011 GENERAL SESSION, STATE OF UTAH

STATE GOVERNMENT (UCA 36-12-13(2)(b))

Enactment of this resolution likely will not materially impact the state budget.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (UCA 36-12-13(2)(c))

Enactment of this resolution likely will not result in direct, measurable costs and/or benefits for local governments.

DIRECT EXPENDITURES BY UTAH RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES (UCA 36-12-13(2)(d))

Enactment of this resolution likely will not result in direct, measurable expenditures by Utah residents or businesses.