

HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 1

By COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

February 3

1 On page 1 of the printed joint memorial, delete lines 6 through 30 and insert:

2 “Whereas the National Forest System, managed by the Forest Service of the United States De-
3 partment of Agriculture, was established in 1907 and has grown to include approximately 192,000,000
4 acres of federal lands, of which more than 15,000,000 acres are in Oregon; and

5 “Whereas the revested Oregon and California Railroad (‘O & C’) grant lands and the reconveyed
6 Coos Bay Wagon Road grant lands, which are managed predominantly by the Bureau of Land
7 Management, were once in private ownership but were returned to federal ownership in 1916 and
8 1919 and now comprise approximately 2,600,000 acres of federal lands, all of which are in Oregon;
9 and

10 “Whereas Congress recognized that, by its decision to secure these lands in federal ownership,
11 the counties across the United States where these lands are situated, of which 33 counties are lo-
12 cated in Oregon, would be deprived of opportunities for economic development and of tax revenues
13 they would otherwise receive if the lands were held in private ownership; and

14 “Whereas these same counties have expended public funds year after year to provide services
15 such as road construction and maintenance, search and rescue, law enforcement, waste removal and
16 fire protection that directly benefit these federal lands and the people who use these lands; and

17 “Whereas to accord a measure of compensation to these affected counties for the critical ser-
18 vices they provide to county residents and to visitors to these federal lands and for the lost eco-
19 nomic opportunities stemming from federal ownership as compared to private ownership, Congress
20 determined that the federal government should share with these counties a portion of the revenues
21 the United States receives from these federal lands; and

22 “Whereas Congress enacted in 1908 and subsequently amended a law that requires that 25 per-
23 cent of the revenues derived from the National Forest System lands be paid to the states for use
24 by counties where the lands are situated for the benefit of public schools and roads; and

25 “Whereas Congress enacted in 1937 and subsequently amended the O & C Act (50 Stat. 874; 43
26 U.S.C. 1181 et seq.) that requires that revenues derived from the O & C grant lands and the Coos
27 Bay Road grant lands be shared with the counties in which those lands are situated and be used for
28 a broad range of essential public services as other county funds are used; and

29 “Whereas Oregon counties dependent on and supportive of these federal lands received and re-
30 lied on shared revenues from these lands for many decades to provide essential funding for schools,
31 road maintenance and other critical public services; and

32 “Whereas in recent years, the principal source of these revenues, federal timber sales, has been
33 sharply curtailed, and as the volume of timber sold annually from the federal lands in Oregon has
34 decreased substantially, so too have the revenues shared with the affected counties, adversely af-
35 fecting funding for education, road maintenance and other public programs and services; and

1 “Whereas in the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, Congress
2 recognized this trend and temporarily mitigated the adverse consequences by providing annual
3 safety-net payments through 2006 to counties across the United States, including all counties in
4 Oregon that traditionally shared in timber receipts from national forest lands, O & C grant lands
5 and Coos Bay Wagon Road grant lands; and

6 “Whereas the authority for these safety-net payments will expire in 2006, and, if that occurs and
7 thereafter revenue sharing is based on actual federal timber receipts, Oregon will experience a net
8 loss of more than \$230 million per year in payments for schools and counties under Titles I and III
9 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, with associated losses
10 of essential programs and services and thousands of jobs in both the government and private sectors,
11 and will lose an additional \$26 million per year that is currently spent by counties on special
12 projects under Title II of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000,
13 for a total loss of more than \$512 million per biennium, most of which is currently spent on pro-
14 grams and services that the state would have no ability to replace; and

15 “Whereas there is a need to maintain funding for education, road maintenance and other public
16 services through predictable payments to the affected counties, as well as job creation in those
17 counties and other opportunities associated with restoration, maintenance and stewardship of fed-
18 eral lands available under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000;
19 now, therefore,”

20 On page 2, delete lines 1 through 14.

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