

Wayne Allard

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For Release:
June 27, 2001

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ALLARD INTRODUCES BILL TO HELP PRESERVE COLORADO OPEN SPACE LEGISLATION WOULD UPHOLD WILL OF COLORADO VOTERS TO PROTECT 300,000 ACRES OF STATE LANDS FROM DEVELOPMENT

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) on Thursday introduced legislation that would allow the Colorado State Land Board to protect up to 300,000 acres of open space in Colorado. Allard’s legislation amends the existing federal law that prevents the State Land Board from putting up to 10% of its holdings into a Stewardship Trust for conservation purposes.

In 1996, Colorado voters overwhelmingly approved an amendment to the state constitution that allowed the State Land Board to establish a 300,000 acre Stewardship Trust for the protection of current open space and wildlife habitat that exists in the more than 3 million acres the land board manages. While the amendment has withstood court challenges, it still remains that the Stewardship Trust could cause a breach of the Enabling Act which Congress passed in 1875 to create the state of Colorado.

“This bill will uphold the will of Colorado voters who have overwhelmingly said they want to protect the crown jewels of the state trust lands and ensure that these lands receive special protection from development,” Allard said. “This bill simply makes sure that the Enabling Act and the State Constitution are consistent in order to avoid any future legal problems that might prevent these areas for receiving the protection they deserve.”

The bill has was immediately endorsed by Colorado Governor Bill Owens.

“In 1996, Coloradans voted to preserve some of the State’s crown jewel properties. But, due to a technicality in federal law, the State has been unable to give full effect to the will of the people. Senator Allard’s legislation will fix that problem and give Colorado the tools it needs to preserve some of our most precious open spaces, and we thank him for his leadership on this issue,” said Governor Owens.

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