



Congressional Western Caucus

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Friday, March 16, 2012

Good morning.

It's an HONOR to be here -- and, I want to thank [Representative Pearce](#) as CHAIRMAN of this Committee for allowing me to share my perspective on the impact that federal OVER-REGULATION is having on the state of Arizona.

As we celebrate the Centennial Anniversary of Arizona's statehood, you're all probably aware that Arizona's entry into the union was delayed

when President William Taft VETOED our statehood resolution because he objected to the proposed state constitutional provision allowing for the recall of judges.

To appease President Taft, the people of Arizona voted to ELIMINATE that provision on December 12, 1911 -- and Arizona was then admitted as a state on February 14, 1912.

But, using their new-found state sovereignty, Arizonans quickly re-inserted that same provision in the state Constitution on November 5, 1912 – much to President Taft’s chagrin.

And, to top it off, less than 13 percent of Arizonans voted for Taft in the 1912 presidential election. He received the fewest votes of the four major candidates.

I tell you this to remind you that Arizona has a history of taking on Presidents ...

And WINNING!

As I mentioned in my STATE OF THE STATE address this past January, I take a back seat to NO ONE when it comes to taking on Washington – when it comes to standing up for Arizona.

But, I think it's important to recall that there was a time when we COULD forge the RIGHT partnership with Washington.

We have so many monuments in Arizona that remind us of how things are SUPPOSED to work -- in partnership with the federal government.

-- The Theodore Roosevelt Dam, the great monument that triggered the development of the Salt River Valley and the greater Phoenix metropolitan area by providing an assured water supply.

-- The Central Arizona Project – bringing life-sustaining water to cities, and farms and Native American communities.

The common bond here is that Arizona is a state founded on the use of its abundant natural resources.

Our economy was built upon the land.

Generations of Arizonans made a living in our copper mines -- as loggers in our vast forests -- or by tending to cattle on the range. These were

rugged, self-reliant people – and that independent spirit lives on today.

While our economy looks very little like it did at our founding a century ago -- we still have plenty of miners, loggers and ranchers – as well as other Arizonans who make a living off the land. Unfortunately, over the last four years these jobs and others like them are at risk.

They're at risk because of the red tape and regulations being handed down by the Obama Administration and its army of bureaucrats in Washington.

These are regulations that threaten livelihoods and – yes -- the VERY SURVIVAL of communities in rural Arizona.

We saw this last summer as the federal government's drive to limit logging actually placed forests all across the West at risk.

Devastating forests burned more than 1 million acres statewide. The Wallow Fire alone burned more than a half-million acres across the White Mountains, becoming our state's largest fire on record.

These fires proved -- once again -- that federal land management policies have left our public lands overgrown and vulnerable to the kinds of massive blazes we saw last year.

We need a return to responsible thinning of federal lands – the kind of active management that can create jobs AND protect the health of our forests.

The Navajo Generating Station is another example of how federal regulations – in this case EPA regulations – threaten livelihoods and the Arizona economy. Closure of this plant would have a devastating impact on the economies of both the Hopi Tribe and the Navajo Nation, and would cost the state an estimated \$18 billion in total economic impact.

In addition, closure of the Navajo Generating Station could have significant ramifications on the Central Arizona Project, which delivers water from the Colorado River to Phoenix and Tucson.

The CAP depends on energy from the Navajo Generating Station. Without this power source, costs would inevitably go up – and be passed on to consumers across our state.

I'm also talking about the U.S. Department of Interior and its recent decision to ban uranium mining on more than 1 million acres of federal land near the Grand Canyon.

This is considered some of the prime territory for uranium mining in the country. Smart use of this resource could benefit both our local economy and our nation's push for energy independence. Unfortunately, in making this decision, the federal government disregarded both Arizona's experience with safe uranium mining, as well as the findings of both the Arizona Geological Survey and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality that uranium mining could be conducted with minimal risk to the Grand Canyon and Colorado River.

A federal decision like this has REAL impacts.

The 20-year ban comes at the expense of hundreds of high-paying jobs in a rural area of our state that needs them, as well as approximately \$10 billion worth of activity for the Arizona economy.

Look, we all love Arizona.

We all treasure the Grand Canyon.

We all support clean water and clear skies.

But Westerners need a federal government that will work WITH us to achieve our shared goals of a strong economy AND a sound environment.

I believe that environmental protection and economic growth are not mutually exclusive. We can -- and SHOULD -- have both.

Arizona is doing its part to protect jobs and the environment. The Obama Administration should get back to common sense -- and start addressing the REAL problems we're facing on a daily basis out here in the West.

I have continuously raised these issues with the administration. If we're going to be successful in making the state a better place – I need your help.

Let me suggest several issues where you can be helpful.

First – the Four Forests Restoration Initiative (4FRI). We, in Arizona, have gone through an

extensive collaborative process to create the 4FRI project that will thin the forests in Arizona.

It has been recognized and chosen by the Council on Environmental Quality as a pilot project that can be used in other states to more expeditiously restore their forests.

Unfortunately, the Forest Service has dragged its feet for more than 18 months on naming a contractor to begin restoration.

I could use your help in urging the Forest Service to just PICK A CONTRACTOR!

Second -- Extension of Forest Service Stewardship Contracting Authority. This authority is set to expire in 2013. It needs to be extended. The USFS has successfully treated

thousands of forested acres in central eastern Arizona under the White Mountain Stewardship Contract. In addition, the extension of the authority will be required for the success of the 4FRI project.

Lastly -- the Good Neighbor Policy.

This is a program started in Colorado that allows the state to go onto federal lands and restore the forests. Currently, S375 has been introduced and would allow other states to go onto federal lands. You need to get behind S375 to see that it's passed.

I applaud your efforts to keep the Federal Government accountable to the people, and I'm grateful that you've taken the time to hold this forum to provide further insights to these challenges.

With your help, we can work toward solutions that benefit all of us – helping ensure Arizona continues to thrive in its SECOND CENTURY.

Thank you.