

# Linebery Policy Center for Natural Resource Management

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May 8, 2013

The Honorable Rob Bishop, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: HR 995 Organ Mountains National Monument Establishment Act

Dear Chairman Bishop:

My name is John Fowler, and I hold the Tom Linebery Distinguished Chair in the Tom and Evelyn Linebery Policy Center for Natural Resource Management at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico. One of the center's functions is to provide a capability for response to the impacts of major land actions with timely, procedural and technical information. HR 995 is a major land action affecting farming and ranching industry in Dona Ana County and the surrounding Chihuahua Desert.

The Chihuahua Desert has been utilized by domestic livestock since the late 1500's and occupied by farmers and hunters for many centuries prior. It is important to note that even with the continued use for many centuries, the lands that are proposed to be protected are still worthy of being designated as a National Monument. The love and care of the land is evident and we have an obligation to preserve and protect the labor of previous generations.

When lands are proposed for protection under a Federal Land designation, a concern of the policy center is: will agriculture be adequately protected and preserved for future continued use? HR 995 proposes to withdraw approximately 55,000 acres from disposal, trade, development or sale of the federal land. Currently, livestock grazing is permitted by the Bureau of Land Management and the withdrawal will provide the livestock community with a sense of stability of land ownership by the federal government.

The legislation gives equality in the purposes section to livestock. This is a very important aspect of the legislation for continued grazing by livestock. It recognizes the equal value of livestock in the many purposes that are listed as resources of the monument to be protected, conserved and enhanced for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. As noted earlier, livestock have been an important component of the community for many centuries and rightfully should be protected along with the wildlife, scenic, natural and other resources of the Dona Ana Mountains.

The Linebery Policy Center for Natural Resource Management is supportive of HR 995 in its effort to protect the land and its inherent ranching industries.

Sincerely,

John Fowler, Distinguished Chair  
Linebery Policy Center for Natural Resource Management