

LA PAZ COUNTY SOLAR ENERGY AND
JOB CREATION ACT

JULY 2, 2025.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of
the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. WESTERMAN, from the Committee on Natural Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1043]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1043) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land in Arizona to La Paz County, Arizona, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION

The purpose of H.R. 1043 is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land in Arizona to La Paz County, Arizona, and for other purposes.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Approximately 95 percent of the land in La Paz County, Arizona, is under federal, state, or Tribal management, with only five percent of the land available for private ownership.¹ The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is the largest single land manager in this rural county, controlling roughly 58 percent of the total land mass.² The county's economy is primarily dependent on tourism and agriculture.³ Like many other Western communities with large federal land footprints, La Paz County faces significant challenges in meeting the economic needs of its residents.

¹Arizona Commerce Authority, “County Profile for La Paz County”, <https://www.azcommerce.com/a/profiles/ViewProfile/8/La+Paz+County/#:-:text=The%20U.S.%20Bureau%20of%20Land,owned%20privately%20or%20by%20corporations>.

²*Id.*

³Information provided by the Office of Congressman Gosar and available on the Committee's website; https://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/the_la_paz_county_solar_energy_and_job_creation_act_-_one_page.pdf.

In an effort economically diversify and create additional employment opportunities, the County worked with Representative Gosar (R–AZ–09) to pursue a legislative conveyance of 5,935 acres of BLM land for the development of a large-scale solar farm. That legislation, the “La Paz County Land Conveyance Act,” was signed into law in 2019 as part of the “John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act.”⁴ After the bill’s passage, La Paz County executed development grants with 174 Power Global, a renewable energy company, and the solar project is currently underway.⁵ The project, one of the largest in the United States, is expected to produce 1,000 megawatts of solar power, as well as hundreds of megawatts of battery storage.⁶

H.R. 1043 seeks to build on the success of this project by conveying an additional 3,400 acres of BLM land adjacent to the initial project site to the County. This acreage was part of Representative Gosar’s initial legislation but was ultimately removed in the final version of the bill that became law in 2019. While BLM has analyzed most of the proposed acres for renewable energy development, the County believes this additional land will provide important economic benefits and much-needed revenues to support its residents.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 1043 was introduced on February 6, 2025, by Representative Paul Gosar (R–AZ). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources. On April 9, 2025, the Committee on Natural Resources met to consider the bill. The bill was then ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

HEARINGS

For the purposes of clause 3(c)(6) of House rule XIII, the following hearing was used to develop or consider this measure: hearing in the 118th Congress by the Subcommittee on Federal Lands held on November 19, 2024.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

Section 1 names the bill the “La Paz County Solar Energy and Job Creation Act.”

Section 2. Definitions

Section 2 defines important terms in the bill and references the map for the conveyance authorized by the bill as the map entitled “BLM Arizona—La Paz County Land Conveyance Map” dated June 29, 2023.

Section 3. Conveyance to La Paz County, Arizona

Section 3 directs the BLM, upon receiving a request from La Paz County, Arizona, to convey approximately 3,400 acres of land to the County at fair market value, subject to valid existing rights and ex-

⁴Public Law 116–099.

⁵*Id.*

⁶*Id.*

cluding lands with significant cultural, environmental, wildlife, or recreational resources. Section 3 stipulates that La Paz County, or any subsequent owner of the conveyed land, must make good faith efforts to avoid disturbing Tribal artifacts, minimize impacts if Tribal artifacts are disturbed, coordinate with the Colorado River Indian Tribes Tribal Historic Preservation Office to identify culturally significant items, and permit Tribal representatives to rebury unearthened artifacts at or near their original location. Section 3 also allows the Secretary and County to mutually agree to make minor boundary adjustments or to correct clerical errors in the acreage estimate or legal description. Section 3 makes the map of the conveyed land available for public inspection in the appropriate BLM offices and withdraws the conveyed land from operation under mining and mineral leasing laws. Finally, Section 3 requires the County to cover the administrative costs of the conveyance and pay the appraised value of the land, with all proceeds deposited in the Federal Land Disposal Account established under the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act.⁷

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII AND CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT

1. *Cost of Legislation and the Congressional Budget Act.* Pursuant to clause 3(c)(2) of House rule XIII and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, and pursuant to clause 3(c)(3) of House rule XIII and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has requested but not received from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office a budgetary analysis and a cost estimate of this bill.

2. *General Performance Goals and Objectives.* As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land in Arizona to La Paz County, Arizona, and for other purposes.

EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT STATEMENT

An estimate of federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act was not made available to the Committee in time for the filing of this report. The Chair of the Committee shall cause such estimate to be printed in the Congressional

⁷ 43 U.S.C. 2305(a).

Record upon its receipt by the Committee, if such estimate is not publicly available on the Congressional Budget Office website.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

Directed Rule Making. This bill does not contain any directed rule makings.

Duplication of Existing Programs. This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program. Such program was not included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139 or identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95–220, as amended by Public Law 98–169) as relating to other programs.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

Any preemptive effect of this bill over state, local, or tribal law is intended to be consistent with the bill’s purposes and text and the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

As ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources, H.R. 1043 would make no changes in existing law.

