



February 23, 2026

Sen. Mike Lee
Chairman
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

Sen. Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

As a coalition of trade associations that represent the hardworking men and women who collectively produce approximately 80% of our nation's oil and natural gas, we strongly support Steve Pearce's nomination by President Donald Trump to be the next director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and we urge the U.S. Senate to quickly approve his confirmation.

While we celebrate America 250 and remember our nation's founding, we also reflect upon the vast expansion beyond the original 13 states that came following the fight for independence. The legacy of which is overseen by BLM, the nation's largest public lands management agency. Often referred to as the Nation's Largest Landlord, BLM is responsible for managing 245 million acres of multiple-use public lands and 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate. BLM's public lands are predominantly within 12 western states, but it also oversees parcels and minerals across all 50 states. Altogether, these vital lands are set aside for the good of the American public, and they contribute to the food, fiber, fuel, and fun that sustain our nation.

Mr. Pearce hails from a state dominated by public lands. New Mexico is 47% public lands, including 17% that are managed by BLM. Growing up, he witnessed the beautiful and rugged landscapes that provide tremendous value to our nation. If confirmed, Mr. Pearce would oversee public lands that generate \$245.4 billion in total economic output each year, including \$74 billion from oil and natural gas production, \$8.6 billion from outdoor recreation, and more than \$500 million invested in conservation.

Before entering public service, Mr. Pearce built and managed a small oilfield services company he and his wife co-owned in Hobbs, New Mexico. Under his leadership, the company grew from a local start-up into a successful enterprise serving operators across the Permian Basin, now the nation's largest oil-producing region. At the time, the Basin was still considered a frontier for exploration, the land of wildcatters where success depended on ingenuity and perseverance. As a small business owner, he experienced firsthand the challenges of navigating federal regulations. This perspective gives him a practical understanding of how BLM policies directly affect job creation, affordability, economic growth, and responsible operations on public lands.

During his 14 years representing New Mexico's 2nd District, Mr. Pearce consistently advanced policies to increase access to federal lands for energy development, grazing, and recreation while ensuring

responsible stewardship. He co-sponsored legislation to streamline BLM permitting for oil and natural gas projects, advocated for mineral leasing reforms to improve transparency and timeliness, and supported measures to ensure local and tribal input in land-use planning. Mr. Pearce also worked across party lines on wildfire management and habitat restoration initiatives that balanced conservation goals with community needs. His legislative record reflects a belief that economic opportunity and environmental protection can—and must—coexist across multiple uses of public lands.

Elected by his peers to chair the esteemed Congressional Western Caucus, Mr. Pearce unified a broad coalition of lawmakers to advocate for balanced federal land policies. He helped lead efforts to modernize endangered species and land management plans, promote responsible energy production, and expand access to outdoor recreation. Under his leadership, the Caucus introduced and supported measures reinforcing the principle of multiple-use and sustained yield—core tenets of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act that guide BLM’s mission.

Mr. Pearce also recognizes the importance of protecting treasured landscapes and has a record of legislatively supporting wilderness areas while fostering community, stakeholder, and public collaboration. In 2012, he introduced a bill to designate 55,000 acres in the Organ Mountains of New Mexico as wilderness—permanently prohibiting mineral development while maintaining access for outdoor recreation. That balanced approach reflects his philosophy of responsible stewardship that is core to President Trump’s Make America Beautiful Again agenda during America 250: conservation and development can work hand in hand.

Mr. Pearce values the role of public input in land management decisions and increasing access for recreation. While serving in Congress in 2013, for example, he advocated for BLM to extend a public comment period on a Draft Tri-County Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement so that more citizens could be heard. In doing so, he urged BLM not to restrict access to public lands but rather to increase access, in particular for senior citizens and people with disabilities. These are valuable traits that will serve him well as director of BLM, if confirmed.

Mr. Pearce is exceptionally qualified to lead BLM and to carry out the president’s priorities of unleashing energy, expanding access to recreation, and incentivizing conservation on public lands—each a pillar of the president’s agendas to unleash American energy and Making America Beautiful Again. His deep understanding of the western landscape and decades of experience bridging local, state, and federal interests make him uniquely prepared to guide the BLM’s mission of multiple use and sustained yield.

We urge the Senate to confirm Steve Pearce as director of BLM so that America’s public lands can continue to serve as a foundation for energy security, recreation, and conservation for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Western Energy Alliance
Energy Workforce & Technology Council
Independent Petroleum Association of America
International Association of Drilling Contractors
U.S. Oil & Gas Association