

United States Senate

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November 18, 2014

The Honorable Jack Reed
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Dirksen 131
United States Senate

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Hart 125
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Reed and Ranking Member Murkowski:

Today, I am reintroducing The Soledad Canyon Settlement Act with changes that will result in a zero score from the Congressional Budget Office. The expected cost was a crucial impediment against moving forward with this legislation. However, with this issue now resolved, I kindly request for my legislation to be included in the Fiscal Year 2015 Omnibus Appropriations bill, should it move this Congress.


In 1990, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued two consecutive, ten-year contracts for the extraction of 56 million tons of sand and gravel, which are now held by CEMEX USA. Soledad Canyon's surface is owned by the City of Santa Clarita, California with the underlying mineral estate owned by the BLM.

The placement of this proposed mining operation is no longer appropriate for their community, whose population has almost doubled from 110,000 two decades ago to today's 210,000 people. This mine would negatively impact traffic congestion, air quality, and the area's fragile natural resources. Soledad Canyon is located in an area identified by several federal land use studies as important for wildlife habitat connectivity between the two segments of the Angeles National Forest. If action is not taken soon, securing this key link will be lost forever.

This provision, which has the support of both the City of Santa Clarita and CEMEX, cancels the mining contracts and fairly compensates CEMEX for the value of their valid contracts - all at no cost to the federal government. I believe this provision fairly resolves this problem to the community's and the company's satisfaction, and I would appreciate your help resolving this difficult and long standing issue of great importance to my constituents. Enclosed, please find a copy of the revised legislation.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



BARBARA BOXER
United States Senator

Enclosure

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Congressman Buck McKeon
Congressman-Elect Steve Knight