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## MANDATORY DISPOSAL OF BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT LAND AND NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LAND FOR HOUSING

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**Background:** There is a nationwide shortage of 4.5 million houses and a shortage of 7.1 million affordable and available homes. The Federal government owns nearly a third of the country with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) owning over 245 million acres and the Forest Service (FS) owning 193 million acres. Effectively, none of this land can be used for housing. In the West, this means that the federal government is depriving our communities of needed land for housing and inhibiting growth. President Trump recognized the connection between federal land ownership and the housing crisis, which is why he pledged to “open up portions of federal land for large-scale housing construction.” Also looking to tackle this problem, Secretaries Burgum and Turner created the Joint Task Force on Federal Land for Housing. This proposal allows a fraction of 1% of federal land to be used to build houses. In doing so, it will create thousands of jobs, allow millions of Americans to realize the American dream, and reduce the deficit and fund our public lands.

### Summary of Proposal:

- Requires BLM and FS to sell a minimum of 0.5% and a maximum of 0.75% of their estates for housing and associated community needs. This will increase the supply of housing and decrease costs for millions of Americans.
- Creates a process for interested parties, including States and units of local governments, to nominate land for disposal to meet housing and community needs. This process includes consultation with Governors and Indian Tribes and allows States or units of local government to have a right of first refusal to purchase land.
- Prohibits the sale of lands with special designations, such as National Parks, National Monuments, wilderness areas, or national recreation areas. Prohibits the sale of any land where there is a valid existing right, including mining claims, grazing permits, mineral leases, or rights of ways.
- Requires receipts from sales to go the Treasury, other than
  - 5% which will go to the unit of local government where the parcel is sold for essential infrastructure directly supporting housing development or other associated community needs; and
  - 5% which will go to deferred maintenance of BLM and FS lands in the state where the lands are sold.
  - Any funds that States are owed under existing law.
- Requires all conveyances to be completed within five years of enactment and appropriates \$5,000,000 to BLM and \$5,000,000 to FS to ensure that all sales and conveyances occur in a timely manner.

This proposal is estimated to generate \$5 to \$10 billion during the 2025-2034 period. This proposal is central to relieving the housing crisis, fulfilling President Trump’s housing and public lands agenda, and creating jobs and strong economic growth in the West.

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- What does this proposal do?
  - Requires Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Forest Service (FS) to identify lands to be sold and then, the agencies sell a minimum of 0.5% and a maximum of 0.75% of their estates for housing and associated community needs. This will increase the supply of housing and decrease housing costs for millions of American families.
- Why is it needed?
  - There is a nationwide shortage of approximately 4 million homes and a shortage of 7 million affordable homes. This extreme lack of supply and affordability, coupled with excessive federal land ownership in the West constrains economic growth and the opportunity for western communities to thrive. Unlocking federal land for housing will develop millions of single-family homes, resulting in greater housing supply and making housing more affordable.
- How does current policy prevent housing development?
  - The Federal government owns approximately 640 million acres of land in the United States, nearly a third of the country. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) owns over 245 million acres and the Forest Service (FS) owns 193 million acres. Current law effectively prevents any housing from being built on this land.
- Does this fulfill President Trump's agenda?
  - The American people elected President Trump with a historic mandate to spur economic growth and address the housing crisis. That's why he pledged to "open up portions of federal land for large-scale housing construction."
- Does this proposal sell National Parks or National Monuments?
  - No. The proposal excludes the sale of National Parks, National Monuments, National Recreation Areas, Wilderness areas, and nearly every other protected designations.
- So what sort of land are we actually talking about?
  - The Department of the Interior estimates that the BLM has about 1.2 million acres of land within 1 mile of a population center and another 800,000 acres within 1-5 miles of a population center. The Forest Service has over 1 million acres within 1 mile of a population center. Much of this land may qualify for disposal.
- Once the land is sold, can it be used for anything?
  - No. The party who buys the land must use it for housing or community development needs.

- Is this a massive sell-off of federal lands?
    - No. This proposal requires disposal of only 0.5%-0.75% of the BLM and FS estates. It leaves the remaining 99.25% untouched.
  - Does the federal government currently dispose of federal land?
    - Yes. Under a variety of statutes, the BLM sells thousands of acres of federal land every year. In fact, even the Clinton Administration identified over 3 million acres as suitable for disposal.
  - What types of lands will be prioritized for disposal?
    - The proposal prioritizes lands that are nominated by States or units of local governments; are adjacent to existing developed areas; have access to existing infrastructure; are suitable for residential housing; reduce checkerboard land patterns; or are isolated tracts that are inefficient to manage.
  - Where does the money from these sales go?
    - The proposal requires receipts from sales to fund the BLM and FS deferred maintenance backlog, states and municipalities, and the Treasury:
      - 5% which will go to the unit of local government where the parcel is sold for essential infrastructure directly supporting housing development or other associated community needs;
      - 5% which will go to deferred maintenance of BLM and FS lands in the state where the lands are sold;
      - Any funds that States are owed under existing law.
      - The rest of the receipts go to the Treasury to reduce the deficit.
  - Will this proposal upend existing land use practices?
    - No. Land with valid existing rights, like grazing permits, cannot be sold.
  - Do States, counties and Tribes have a seat at the table?
    - The proposal creates a process for interested parties, including States and units of local governments to nominate land for disposal to meet housing and community needs. It includes consultation with Governors, local governments, and Indian Tribes and allows States or units of local government to have a right of first refusal to purchase land.
  - Will this impact hunting and fishing opportunities on federal lands?
    - No. This proposal leaves 99.25% of BLM and FS lands untouched and prioritizes disposal of lands that are suitable for development. We expect nearly all of the land to be disposed of to be within 5 miles of a population center.
  - Does this proposal require careful analysis and a thorough process?
    - Yes. There is an extensive process for interested parties like States and local governments to nominate land for disposal to meet housing and community needs. This process includes consultation with Governors and Indian Tribes and preserves environmental and cultural reviews.
  - Will this proposal reduce the deficit?
    - Yes. CBO estimates that this would proposal generate between \$5 to \$10 billion in the 2025-2034 period. The proposal requires the land to be sold for fair market value which will produce revenue.
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