



February 23, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Madam Speaker:

The Independent Petroleum Association of America (IPAA) is opposed to H.R. 803, the “Protecting America’s Wilderness and Public Lands Act.” This bill creates nearly 1.5 million acres of new wilderness and permanently withdraws 1.2 million acres from mineral production. It is in direct opposition to the multiple use mandate given to the Department of the Interior to manage the federal estate. Many of the local communities impacted by this measure, including Garfield County in Colorado which has existing mineral leases and planned for further development, have raised significant concerns due to the elimination of multiple use of the land and the overall threat to local economies and rural jobs.

Further, many of the lands under consideration in H.R. 803 do not meet the basic characteristics for consideration as wilderness. Instead, the legislation arbitrarily designates areas as wilderness and wild and scenic rivers despite official testimony provided by the relevant land management agencies to previous Congresses that many of these designations are inappropriate and not recommended. To declare areas that do not possess these characteristics undermines the integrity of the Wilderness Act and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The process by which H.R. 803 is coming to the House floor is also concerning. The bill did not go through regular order, receiving no hearings or mark-ups in the 117th Congress. In fact, the bill was scheduled for floor consideration before the Natural Resources Committee had even organized. Local input, especially with regards to managing active mineral leases which affect jobs, should have been solicited in an effort to allow the House to better understand the broad impacts of the bill.

For these reasons, IPAA is strongly opposed to H.R. 803.

Sincerely,

Dan Naatz
Senior Vice President of Government Relations and Political Affairs
Independent Producers Association of America