

Senators Stamas, Patterson and Barcia offered the following concurrent resolution:

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 35.

A concurrent resolution to memorialize the Congress of the United States and the federal government to work with Michigan officials to align the ownership of mineral rights and surface rights on state and federal lands in Michigan and to express our intent to take actions to achieve this goal.

Whereas, State-owned land in Michigan amounts to approximately 12 percent of the acreage, and the federal government manages another 8 percent of Michigan's surface area. This large percentage of state and federal land ownership is especially significant in the situations in which ownership of mineral rights is not consistent with the ownership of the surface rights; and

Whereas, The degree to which the rights to minerals do not align with rights to the surface of the land is cause for considerable litigation and frustration in Michigan. This frustration is felt by citizen groups, energy companies, local units of government, and all consumers of gas and oil; and

Whereas, The state of Michigan has jurisdiction over both mineral and surface rights on 3.8 million acres of land and mineral rights alone on another 2.1 million acres. Maps showing ownership of property in Michigan reflect a crazy quilt of ownership. The common situation of surface land ownership differing from ownership of the mineral rights below presents many problems to our state. This nonalignment of ownership makes it difficult to protect land from development and difficult to develop to extract the energy that our society needs. Instead, expensive and minimally productive litigation can be the result; and

Whereas, It would be far more productive for the state and federal governments to work together to do all possible to minimize conflicts in ownership between surface rights and mineral rights; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representative concurring), That we memorialize the Congress of the United States, the Department of Interior, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Forest Service, and the Department of Energy to work with Michigan officials to exchange property to align the ownership of mineral rights and surface rights on state and federal lands in Michigan and to express our intent to take actions to achieve this goal; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, the Bureau of Land Management, the Department of Interior, the National Forest Service, and the Department of Energy.