

November 19, 2007

Pete Domenici
U.S. Senator, State of NM
New Mexico – District 2
400 Telshor Ste E
Las Cruces, NM 88001

Jeff Bingaman
U.S. Senator, State of NM
Loretto Town Centre
505 S. Main, St. 148
Las Cruces, NM 88001

Stevan Pearce
Member of Congress
New Mexico – District 2
400 Telshor, St. E
Las Cruces, NM 88001

RE: Dona Ana Wilderness; There is another side of the children debate

Gentlemen:

I am the wife of a Dona Ana County rancher. I have spent way to much time in the last six months waiting at home while he is off at the meetings attempting to head this thing off! I am also the grandmother of the little cowgirl in the Farm Bureau video and I have heard too much of the argument the other side has waged about why these lands must be saved for our children. I have one big reason why these lands need to managed by vested stewards and that is that same little cowgirl. If there is an opportunity for her to someday be part of the social fabric of these lands she will represent the seventh generation of a New Mexico family that has fought hard to be a little part of the heritage of these lands. Her understanding of the realities of ranching will have a much different view than those who stand on the other side of the debate. She is no less impressionable than any of her classmates or peers who hear the arguments with the exception that she is the only child in her class that has ties to the lands. That is a side of this argument in which you need to have some patience and empathy. She is part of a dwindling part of our society that has more influence on the positive side of land stewardship than any other segment. Her existence and her influence on our future are important. She is truly an endangered species!

I am led to believe that there will be legislation carried by one or more of you in the next month or so. When you authorize the drafting of the final version of what is to come, please recognize that, in the draft legislation by our rancher group, we are trying to keep our way of life alive. It is not simply word crafting that feels good or is politically correct. It is real world for us, and our children, too, deserve the consideration that they are important in the views and the insight of their leaders.

Sincerely,



Katherine Wilmeth

Ranch wife and grandmother