

**DARLENE HOOLEY**  
5th DISTRICT, OREGON

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ENTERPRISES



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, D.C. 20515-3705**

December 11, 2000

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The Honorable Norm Dicks  
Ranking Member  
House Interior Appropriations Committee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Dicks:

Following the final passage of the fiscal year 2001 Interior Appropriations bill, H.R. 4828, the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act, passed both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

This bill is the product of more than a year of negotiations between stakeholders, the Oregon congressional delegation, the Governor, and the Secretary of the Interior. The legislation came about after the Administration indicated that if the Congress did not enact additional protections for the federal lands on Steens Mountain, it would be declared a national monument. This Act represents Oregonians coming together to create a plan that will preserve both the environment and the rural economy of the area.

The President has now signed the bill, which is why I respectfully come to you with this request. Within this bill are a series of land exchanges that are integral to the implementation of the rest of the Act. As a component of these land exchanges, economic disbursements are to be made to five ranching families before the exchanges can be completed. These payments amount to **\$5,157,000** for severance damages, and are needed in order to implement this Act. These funds are needed now, because if these exchanges are not completed by next spring, some of these ranching operations could be negatively affected. These families negotiated these exchanges in good faith, and we need to fulfill the commitments made to them by Congress.

I appreciate your willingness to assist our delegation in securing this funding in these, the closing days of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress. I would appreciate your efforts on behalf of our rural constituents to secure funding with the following language:

**"Priority Land Exchanges: Steens Mountain.**

To carry out the provisions of Title VI of the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act (P.L. 106-399), \$5,157,000 for **severance damages**, to remain available until expended: Provided that, sums necessary to complete the

individual land exchanges identified under that title shall be available within thirty days of completion of each land exchange."

If you have any questions, please contact me or Chris Huckleberry of my staff at 225-5711. I appreciate your willingness to assist me in this matter.

Sincerely,

  
DARLENE HOOLEY  
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable David Obey