

**U.S. House of Representatives
Natural Resources Committee
Full Committee Markup**

Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. ET
1324 Longworth House Office Building

Rep. Susie Lee (NV-03)
Statement for the Record on
Inclusion of H.R. 6070 in Unanimous Consent Package

Mr. Chairman, the U.S. Air Force has referred to the Nevada Test and Training Range, or NTTR, as “the crown jewel for tactics, training, and operational testing for the Department of Defense.”

That’s why I am pleased to join Reps. Amodei and Horsford in offering H.R. 6070, a bill included in today’s UC package that would facilitate the placement of cutting-edge equipment at NTTR to provide our pilots with the most realistic and up-to-date training environment possible — preparing them to successfully engage threats encountered in a potential conflict with a near-peer adversary, such as the People’s Republic of China.

This NTTR modernization proposal is one of the Air Force’s top five legislative priorities for the current fiscal year. For the sake of our national security — and the safety of our men and women in uniform — it is vital that we continue to work together in a bipartisan, bicameral manner to move this proposal forward.

I believe it is also vital that, in doing so, we simultaneously protect and uplift another important resource that has long coexisted alongside NTTR in the heart of the Silver State: the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. This site, created in 1936, is a storied sanctuary for Nevada’s state animal, the bighorn sheep, as well as hundreds of additional species of plants and animals across seven different life zones.

Much as NTTR is a crown jewel for the Department of Defense, the Desert National Wildlife Refuge is truly a crown jewel for the Department of the Interior, and the largest refuge of its kind outside of Alaska.

Five of the six members of Nevada's bicameral congressional delegation, myself included, recently introduced a concurrent measure — designated H.R. 6216 in the House — that would augment the Air Force proposal in H.R. 6070 for the benefit of NTTR and the refuge alike.

Our legislation, backed by organizations ranging from the Friends of Nevada Wilderness to the Vet Voice Foundation, would enable the same modernization of NTTR as the bill we're advancing today while actively conserving — and protecting public access to — the neighboring Desert National Wildlife Refuge by designating key acreage as wilderness.

Let me be very brief but very clear: NTTR and the Desert National Wildlife Refuge are both national treasures, of which Nevadans are proud stewards, and they both need and deserve Congress's support to continue to thrive.

The majority of the Nevada delegation stands united in emphasizing that the ultimate text of a bipartisan, bicameral National Defense Authorization Act can and should ensure that our state's iconic public lands and wildlife are preserved for posterity at the same time that it equips our military, at NTTR and beyond, to meet and deter the global threats of today and tomorrow.

This is an objective fully in keeping with Congress's tradition of pairing military site enhancements with corresponding public lands protections in Nevada — and a conversation that the Nevada delegation looks forward to continuing as this year's NDAA takes its final form.

Thank you.