



May 21, 2026

Dear Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the Yuma 50, I am writing to express our strong support for H.R. 8686, for the withdrawal and reservation of approximately 22,000 acres of federal land in the vicinity of U. S. Army Yuma Proving Ground. This legislation greatly impacts the objectives of Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) and its continued mission in Arizona and throughout our nation.

Yuma Proving Ground is one of the most important military installations in the country and serves as a major economic driver for Yuma County and the State of Arizona. YPG contributes over a billion dollars annually to the regional economy through military and civilian payroll, contracts, procurement, construction, and local business partnerships. The installation supports thousands of jobs and has a significant impact on housing, education, retail, healthcare, and tourism throughout our community.

For more than 75 years, YPG has played a vital role in supporting America's national defense mission. The installation conducts critical testing and evaluation of military equipment, weapons systems, vehicles, aviation technology, unmanned systems, communications equipment, and soldier gear in some of the most challenging environments in the world. The unique climate and terrain in Yuma make it an irreplaceable location for year-round military testing and training operations.

YPG's work directly supports the readiness and safety of our nation's military personnel by ensuring that equipment and technology perform effectively before deployment. Adding this land to the operations will allow YPG to continue testing the ever-evolving technology of GPS guided systems that continue to advance distance and accuracy. Support for this withdrawal and Yuma Proving Ground will strengthen national security, protect wildlife habitat, cultural resources, and public access in our desert region. This bill provides the framework to accomplish all these priorities.

The Yuma 50 proudly supports efforts that enhance the mission, infrastructure, and long-term success of Yuma Proving Ground. We respectfully encourage your support of H.R. 8686 and appreciate your continued commitment to Arizona's military communities.

Thank you for your consideration and leadership. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we may provide additional information or assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Engel".

Julie Engel
President, Yuma 50 Board