I am writing to urge you to support the Red Rock Wilderness Act.

America’s Red Rock Wilderness Act would protect some of the most stunning, yet fragile lands of the American West by designating them as wilderness under the criteria set forth in the 1964 Wilderness Act. First introduced by Utah Congressman Wayne Owens in 1989, the legislation would protect more than eight million acres of Bureau of Land Management lands in Utah. These lands are rich in cultural resources and provide unique habitat for many rare plant and animal species. These landscapes are also the access point for many national parks and offer unparalleled research, educational, and recreational opportunities for scientists, educators, outdoor enthusiasts, and American families. The lands in this legislation were selected through meticulous inventories conducted by a passionate group of volunteers with the Utah Wilderness Coalition. The Bureau of Land Management, which oversees these lands for all Americans, confirmed the vast majority of the lands covered by the bill meet the qualifications for wilderness designation, and in October 2021, the Navajo Nation unanimously passed a resolution in support of America’s Red Rock Wilderness Act, acknowledging the cultural, historical, and ecological importance of these lands. However, as long as Congress fails to formally protect these fragile and precious ecosystems, these incredible places remain threatened by oil, gas, and tar sands development, as well as offroad vehicle use activities. Designating these lands as wilderness would protect Native American cultural sites and wildlife, help mitigate the impacts of climate change, and accommodate future generations of hunters, anglers, hikers, boaters, and outdoor enthusiasts. Our public lands are under increasing pressure, both from development encroachment and attempts to sell them to the highest bidder. This bill is our opportunity to meet our federal trust and treaty obligations to Tribes and ensure that this irreplaceable wilderness is protected.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.