

the Capitol Building or the White House.

There were countless other unsung heroes that day across the country, who worked tirelessly, coordinating rescues, cleaning debris, serving meals, and more. And across the border to our north, Canadians opened their homes, schools, and churches to house and care for more than 30,000 stranded travelers from hundreds of flights that were diverted due to the closure of American airspace. Their hospitality, mobilization, and warmth were never in question and are fondly remembered today. Twenty-five years later, relations between the U.S. and Canada are strained due to the President's trade war, but we will never forget the generosity of our neighbors.

Ultimately, nearly 3,000 innocent victims were needlessly and cruelly killed that morning—leaving behind grieving spouses, children, parents, siblings, colleagues, and friends. More than 3,000 children lost a parent that day—parents who had left home that morning for work or the firefighter, police officer, and other first responder parents who were off duty but rushed to the scene to help.

The victims of 9/11 and their loved ones deserved justice decades ago. But a quarter of a century after 9/11, the trials of those accused of orchestrating the attacks have not even begun.

In the meantime, the children who lost parents on 9/11 have grown up. Countless family members of the victims have passed away. And many continue hoping and waiting for the closure of a trial that remains out of reach.

This injustice is the result of leaders discarding our Nation's highest values and the rule of law when we needed them most—turning instead to torture, indefinite detention, and makeshift military tribunals at Guantánamo. These fateful decisions tainted key evidence and led to years of avoidable litigation that continues to this day—with no end in sight.

We cannot turn back time. But we owe it to those who lost their lives on 9/11 and their loved ones to salvage what justice remains possible—not in another two and a half decades but now. At this time of division and turmoil, today's leaders should learn from these failures, not repeat them. It is upholding the rule of law and respecting universal rights that make a nation great.

CLARITY ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on another topic, the Senate may consider an initial procedural vote on the CLARITY Act as soon as tomorrow.

Crypto enthusiasts and the crypto industry claim the Senate needs to pass this bill soon in the name of "innovation," but I used to work for a fellow in politics who said, "For every political issue there's a good reason and a real reason."

And the real reason for this rush job is the crypto industry's willingness to spend millions against crypto-skeptic candidates and Trump's desire to continue to enrich himself and his allies.

Back in 2019, President Trump said that crypto is "based on thin air" and a "disaster waiting to happen." But when he found a way to profit from it, he suddenly changed his tune.

In just the first year of his second term, the President and his family made more than \$1.4 billion off cryptocurrency. And his allies, like Steve Witkoff and Todd Blanche, raked in hundreds of millions in crypto profits last year alone. President Trump has sold access to the White House through seedy schemes like his meme coin and pressured Federal banking regulators to grant his family's crypto firm—World Liberty Financial—a banking charter.

He even pardoned Changpeng Zhao, a convicted crypto criminal and founder of Binance, the same company that helped the Trump family's crypto firm launch its stablecoin.

However, my Republican colleagues want Senate Democrats to accept the CLARITY Act as written, even though it does not require President Trump to divest from his crypto fortune, which would allow the President to continue to profit off his crypto schemes.

My Republican colleagues' version of the bill also lacks meaningful consumer protections.

Although I am happy to see some provisions that regulate scandal-ridden crypto ATMs, the CLARITY Act does not do enough.

The FBI received nearly 13,500 complaints about crypto ATM scams in 2025, resulting in \$389 million in losses.

Federal financial regulators have warned consumers about these scams, and it is high time for Congress to act.

However, unlike my Preventing Crypto ATM Fraud Prevention Act, the CLARITY Act fails to require verbal confirmation from consumers before processing transactions and does not allow the Federal Government to impose civil penalties on fraudsters.

That is why legislators need to go back to the drawing board to create meaningful consumer protections.

Congress also must ban the Social Security Trust Fund from investing in crypto and ensure the crypto industry cannot get one dime from a government bailout if and when there is a crypto crash.

Americans' wallets are hurting, and they want real economic reform, not crypto regulation. Polling shows that just 1 percent of Americans rank crypto as a top priority for Congress.

Congress should not help the President get richer or grant the crypto industry their wish list of deregulation. There is no reason to rush a vote on the CLARITY Act; let's take our time and get this right.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 ATTACKS

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of myself, my fellow Senate cochairs—Senator COLLINS, Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator MURKOWSKI—and the entire Congressional Fire Services Caucus to recognize the 25th anniversary of September 11, 2001.

On that tragic morning, nearly 3,000 innocent lives—including 343 members of the fire and emergency services—were taken in acts of terrorism that shook our country to its core. As cochairs of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, we stand today, 25 years later, to remember every individual loss, every family forever changed by unimaginable tragedy, and every community that continues to carry the weight of that day.

As we reflect on the events of September 11, we pay special tribute to America's first responders. In a time of fear, confusion, and turmoil, members of the fire and emergency services rushed toward danger with unwavering resolve. They did not hesitate. They answered the call knowing the risks, guided by a profound commitment to protecting lives.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, on 9/11, hundreds of firefighters and EMS providers made the ultimate sacrifice while carrying out their duty. Their courage became a defining symbol of American heroism, reminding us that the measure of service is found not in words, but in selfless action. The courage displayed by these first responders inspired millions and reminded us that hope is strongest when we stand together. In those moments of profound uncertainty, neighbors helped neighbors, communities rallied together, and Americans from every walk of life stood united in compassion and resilience.

We also honor the thousands of first responders who labored tirelessly in the days, weeks, and months that followed. Amid smoke, debris, and uncertainty, they searched for survivors, recovered the fallen, comforted grieving families, and helped a wounded nation begin the long process of healing. Many have since faced life-threatening illnesses and chronic health conditions resulting from their service. Their sacrifices did not end when the recovery efforts concluded, and our Nation's obligation to care for them remains as enduring as their commitment to us.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, in the years since September 11, that obligation has taken many forms. The Congressional Fire Services Caucus has worked to ensure that the needs of America's first responders remain a priority in Washington, DC—advocating for the resources, protections, benefits, and support they need to serve their communities and return home safely. The work of the Fire Services Caucus reflects a responsibility that extends far beyond any single anniversary: to understand the needs and challenges of our local fire

and EMS personnel, to stand with those who stand ready to protect us, and to ensure that our Nation does not forget the sacrifices made every day in service to others.

Across our cities, towns, and rural communities, first responders answer emergency calls regardless of what awaits them at the scene. They respond to fires, medical emergencies, hazardous material incidents, natural disasters, and much more with the same dedication and sense of duty that defined those who responded on September 11. The work of the fire and emergency services is indispensable to the safety and well-being of every American.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, to the younger generations who know September 11 only through history, we must preserve not only the memory of that day, but also the guiding example set by those who responded. The legacy of September 11 is one of courage over fear, service over self, and unity over division.

Today, we honor the individuals whose lives were cut short, the families who continue to bear their loss, and the first responders whose bravery became a lasting testament to the best of America. May we never forget their sacrifice. May we continue to support those who wear the uniform of the fire and emergency services. And may we strive each day to keep building a nation worthy of the courage they displayed on one of our country's darkest days.

U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE DECISION

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following decision from the Government Accountability Office be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DECISION

Matter of: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management—Applicability of the Congressional Review Act to the Bears Ears National Monument Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan.

File: B-338306.

Date: August 17, 2026.

DIGEST

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued the Bears Ears National Monument Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (Bears Ears RMP). The Bears Ears RMP designates BLM-administered lands within the decision area as available or unavailable for certain uses while ensuring the protection and restoration of Monument objects, as well as the historical, cultural, natural, scientific, and paleontological resources.

The Congressional Review Act (CRA) requires that before a rule can take effect, an agency must submit the rule to both the House of Representatives and the Senate, as well as the Comptroller General. CRA adopts the definition of a rule under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) but excludes

certain categories of rules from coverage. We conclude that the Bears Ears RMP meets APA's definition of a rule and that no CRA exception applies. Therefore, the Bears Ears RMP is a rule subject to CRA's submission requirements.

DECISION

On January 13, 2025, the U.S. Department of the Interior (Interior), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Bears Ears National Monument Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (Bears Ears RMP). We received a request for a decision about whether the Bears Ears RMP is a rule for purposes of the Congressional Review Act (CRA). As discussed below, we conclude that the Bears Ears RMP is a rule for purposes of CRA.

Our practice when issuing decisions is to obtain the legal views of the relevant agency on the subject of the request. Accordingly, we reached out to Interior to obtain the agency's views. We received Interior's response on June 10, 2026.

BACKGROUND

BLM Public Land Management

Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended (FLPMA), BLM is responsible for developing, maintaining, and, when appropriate, revising "land-use plans which provide by tracts or areas for the use of the public lands." BLM land-use plans, referred to as "resource management plans" (RMPs), establish goals and objectives to guide future land and resource management actions implemented by BLM. Pursuant to FLPMA, BLM established procedures for the development, revision, and amendment of RMPs.

The objective of resource management planning is to maximize resource values for the public through a rational, consistently applied set of regulations and procedures which promote the concept of multiple use management. An RMP generally establishes land-use designations; allowable resource uses, conditions, goals, and objectives; program constraints and general management practices; areas to be covered by more specific plans; and other related information.

The Antiquities Act of 1906

The Antiquities Act of 1906 grants the President authority to designate national monuments on federal lands that contain historic landmarks, structures, or other objects of historic or scientific interest. The President may also reserve parcels of land as part of the national monuments, but the statute mandates that such reservations be confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the protected objects. Proclamations under the Act are generally self-executing and do not require further action by Congress.

The President has designated monuments to be overseen by federal land agencies including, for example, BLM and the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service. While the Antiquities Act empowers the President to create and shape national monuments, Congress retains its own constitutional authority over federal property and has acted on that authority in several ways, for example, converting certain presidentially designated monuments into national parks administered by the National Park Service or abolishing monuments and assigning BLM to manage the public land.

Bears Ears RMP

The Bears Ears RMP aims to provide a framework to guide the management of the Bears Ears National Monument (Bears Ears Monument or Monument) consistent with the protection of Bears Ears objects and other applicable laws, regulations, and poli-

cies. BLM prepared the Bears Ears RMP in response to Proclamation 10285, which restored conditions and boundaries of the Bears Ears Monument to its original configuration established under Proclamation 9558 and retained approximately 11,200 acres added by Proclamation 9681, resulting in a Monument reservation of roughly 1.36 million acres of land administered by the federal government. Among other things, Proclamation 10285 also withdrew all federal lands within the Monument from disposition under all laws relating to mineral and geothermal leasing, subject to valid existing rights.

BLM initiated development of the Bears Ears RMP in August of 2022 and completed the process with the issuance of the Bears Ears RMP on January 13, 2025. In developing the Bears Ears RMP, BLM created and analyzed six management alternatives, Alternatives A-E and the Proposed Plan, addressing land and resource use and other measures for the protection of the Bears Ears Monument. BLM adopted the Proposed Plan as the Bears Ears RMP, incorporating modifications and clarifications made following internal reviews, protests submitted during the protest period, and recommendations provided during the Governor's Consistency Review.

According to BLM, the Bears Ears RMP represents final decisions that establish a comprehensive framework for the allocation of resources and management of lands within the Bears Ears Monument. The Bears Ears RMP provides for a variety of activities within the Monument while ensuring the protection and restoration of Monument objects and its historical, cultural, natural, scientific, and paleontological resources. For example, the Bears Ears RMP designates 591,185 acres as closed to off-highway vehicle use and 483,917 acres as limited to off-highway vehicle use on BLM-administered lands, and requires permits in certain areas. It allocates an additional 27,208 acres as unavailable to livestock grazing and 11,130 acres as limited to trailing only. The RMP prohibits rock stacking, entering the interior structures of archaeological sites, and certain aerial recreation to protect cultural resources and viewsheds. It also closes campgrounds, developed recreation sites, rock writing sites, and structural cultural sites to recreational shooting.

Taken together, these measures establish the Bears Ears RMP as BLM's final decision governing how the Monument will be managed and how public use will be regulated to protect Monument objects and achieve other management goals and objectives.

Congressional Review Act

CRA, enacted in 1996 to strengthen congressional oversight of agency rulemaking, requires federal agencies to submit a report on each new rule to both houses of Congress and to the Comptroller General for review before a rule can take effect. The report must contain a copy of the rule, "a concise general statement relating to the rule," and the rule's proposed effective date. CRA allows Congress to review and disapprove rules issued by federal agencies for a period of 60 days using special procedures. If a resolution of disapproval is enacted, then the new rule has no force or effect.

CRA adopts the definition of a rule under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), which states that a rule is "the whole or a part of an agency statement of general or particular applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or describing the organization, procedure, or practice requirements of an agency." However, CRA excludes three categories of rules from coverage: (1) rules of