

and he helped the Patriots claim three Super Bowl Championships in four seasons—2001, 2003, and 2004—kicking off one of the longest dynasties in NFL history. He had a long list of accomplishments during his run with the Patriots, and perhaps his most notable was kicking the NFL's first-ever Super Bowl winning field goal in Super Bowl XXXVI and returning to do it again in Super Bowl XXXVIII.

As a free agent in 2006, Adam signed with the Indianapolis Colts, where he went on to play for another 14 seasons, win Super Bowl XLI, and establish records for the franchise, including 44 consecutive field goals and 37 field goals made from 50 yards or beyond. Both of these records have yet to be broken.

Adam holds the NFL's record for career points, 2,673; career field goals, 599; postseason points, 238; consecutive field goals made, 44; most seasons with more than 100 points, 21; and overtime field goals made, 12. His four Super Bowl wins are the most of any NFL kicker. Additionally, he was a member of the NFL 100th Anniversary All-Time Team and the NFL All-Decade Team for the 2000s.

I congratulate Adam for his remarkable career as a professional athlete and applaud his well-deserved induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame. He represents the best of South Dakota's values: grit, determination, humility, and fortitude. He defined excellence in the game, overcoming unimaginable pressures and delivering record-breaking accomplishments. From his start as a Rapid City Central Cobler to helping two NFL franchises to Super Bowl victories, Adam's leadership and legacy will continue to inspire generations of South Dakotans to come.

NOMINATION OF LTG JOSHUA M. RUDD

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I oppose the nomination of Joshua Rudd to be Director of the NSA. His responses to questions posed to him at his confirmation hearing, as well as to written questions, reveal a lack of familiarity with basic constitutional rights that is incompatible with the position for which he has been nominated.

The NSA's surveillance authorities are vast and, if anything, underappreciated by the American people. The Agency plays a central role in executing the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, but also conducts extensive operations outside of FISA and pursuant only to Executive order. The potential for abuse is enormous, as we saw when the Agency secretly conducted an illegal, warrantless surveillance program that it hid not only from the public but from Congress.

Our country faces a dangerous moment in which constitutional rights are under attack. For example, we recently learned that the administration secretly decided that the government

doesn't need a judicial warrant to break into a private home. In other words, the administration is trying to invalidate the Fourth Amendment.

It was in that context that I asked General Rudd what he would do if directed to target people in the United States for surveillance without a judicial warrant. I offered him the opportunity to answer with a yes or a no. I didn't get an answer. I proposed that he offer general thoughts on the matter, but got nothing of substance. I did everything in my power to allow him to demonstrate some understanding of the basic guardrails of NSA's authorities and got nothing but vague assurances about following the law.

There were other topics on which General Rudd's responses were disappointing. He wouldn't associate himself with NSA's previous commitment not to buy and use Americans' location data. He also refused to say whether the government should be allowed to mandate backdoors into encryption used by Americans.

His responses related to transparency were also troubling. In addition to statutes and the Constitution, NSA is bound by numerous procedures and guardrails which are publicly available. So I asked General Rudd whether, if the NSA were to operate in violation of those procedures and guardrails, he would inform the American people. He refused to make that commitment. He even refused to promise to inform the Senate Intelligence Committee.

The Director of NSA has another job, that of Commander of U.S. Cyber Command. The demands of this job are mind-boggling. The cyber threat to the United States cannot be overstated. And, as SALT TYPHOON demonstrated, our adversaries have succeeded in inflicting serious damage to U.S. national security. The Commander of CYBERCOM needs to have a sophisticated understanding of this threat and how it has evolved over time. He or she needs to be able to see this threat in its geopolitical context and to fully grasp both the technical capabilities and the policy options that might help counter the threat. General Rudd, despite his service, does not have the background that would allow him to immediately step into this role. He is not qualified for this job. And, when it comes to the cybersecurity of this country, there is simply no time for on-the-job learning. The threat is just too urgent for that.

For these reasons, I oppose the nomination.

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 Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan

File: B-337705
January 15, 2026

DIGEST

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (Grand Staircase RMP). The Grand Staircase RMP designates BLM-administered lands within the decision area as available or unavailable for certain uses.

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 rule under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) but excludes certain categories of rules from coverage. We conclude that the Grand Staircase RMP meets APA's definition of a rule, and that no CRA exception applies. Therefore, the Grand Staircase 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) issued the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (Grand Staircase RMP). We received a request for a decision about whether the Grand Staircase RMP is a rule for purposes of the Congressional Review Act (CRA). As discussed below, we conclude that the Grand Staircase 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 September 18, 2025.

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; resource conditions, goals, and objectives; program constraints and general management practices; areas to be covered by more specific plans; and other related information.

BLM may amend an RMP to account for, among other things, new data, new or revised policy, or a change in circumstances. Amendments are to be made through an environmental assessment of the proposed change or an environmental impact statement, if needed, and must involve public involvement and interagency coordination.

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 self-executing and do not require further action by Congress. Both Congress and the President have designated monuments to be overseen by federal land agencies including, for example, the National Park Service and BLM.

Grand Staircase-Escalante Resource Management Plan

BLM issued the Grand Staircase RMP to establish a management plan consistent with Presidential Proclamation 10286 (Proclamation 10286). Proclamation 10286 restored the boundaries of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) to its pre-December 4, 2017, boundaries. Proclamation 10286 also directed BLM to manage the lands for the specific purpose of protecting and restoring objects identified in Proclamation 10286 and Proclamation No. 6920, 61 Fed. Reg. 50419 (Sept. 26, 1996) (Proclamation 6920). Proclamation 10286 incorporated Proclamation 6920 by reference. Proclamations 6920 and 10286 (collectively, Proclamations) provide that BLM shall develop a management plan for the GSENM in accordance with the Proclamations, FLPMA, and other applicable laws.

BLM initiated development of the Grand Staircase RMP in July of 2022 and completed the process with the issuance of the Grand Staircase RMP on January 13, 2025. The Grand Staircase RMP encompasses 1.87 million acres of public land managed by BLM. It delineates goals, objectives, and management direction intended to ensure consistency with the protection of monument objects and the direction provided in the Proclamations.

For example, the Grand Staircase RMP establishes a zonal system that assigns different levels of protection and access, including for example more than 1.2 million acres of “primitive area” closed to off-highway vehicle use. The RMP also designates areas for particular uses, limits camping to a set number of days, identifies specific pastures as unavailable for grazing or open only for trailing, distinguishes recreational shooting from game hunting, adds explicit protections for old-growth trees, and institutes protection measures for migratory birds. To protect sensitive resources, the Grand Staircase RMP creates new Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

Some measures within the Grand Staircase RMP are directly mandated by Proclamation 10286. For instance, the RMP implements the withdrawal of all federal lands within the decision area from mineral and geothermal leasing, as directed by Proclamation 10286. Additionally, the RMP reflects Proclamation 10286’s instruction that lands covered by voluntarily relinquished grazing permits or leases will be retired from livestock grazing. And it preserves tribal members access to sites and resources for customary usage. Finally, the Grand Staircase RMP affirms that management actions based on Proclamation 10286 are subject to valid existing rights and that all actions within the GSENM will be consistent with the protection of GSENM objects.

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 particular applicability; (2) rules relating to agency management or personnel; and (3) rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice that do not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties.

Interior did not submit a CRA report to Congress or The Comptroller general on the Grand Staircase RMP. In its response to us, Interior provided additional information about RMP procedures related to the release of the Grand Staircase RMP. Interior noted that it followed the notice and public comment procedures for RMPs in accordance with FLPMA and its regulations. However, Interior did not state a position as to whether the Grand Staircase RMP is a rule under CRA.

DISCUSSION

At issue here is whether the Grand Staircase RMP meets CRA’s definition of a rule, which adopts APA’s definition of a rule, with three exceptions. As explained below, we conclude that it does and that no exceptions apply. Consequently, the Grand Staircase RMP is subject to review under CRA.

The Grand Staircase RMP is a Rule under APA

Applying APA’s definition of a rule, the Grand Staircase RMP meets all of the required elements. First, the Grand Staircase RMP is an agency statement as it was issued by BLM, a federal agency. However, because the RMP was issued in response to a presidential proclamation under the Antiquities Act of 1906, we must assess whether the RMP represents an agency statement or a presidential action. The President is not an agency for purposes of APA, accordingly presidential actions are not rules under APA. Thus, we have distinguished between an agency acting under its own statutory authority, which would constitute an agency statement, and an agency acting under authority delegated by the President, which constitutes a presidential action.

For example, in B-333725, Mar. 17, 2022, we considered whether guidance issued by a presidential task force and approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) constituted a rule under CRA. Pertinent here, we examined whether OMB’s approval of the guidance was taken under the President’s sole authority or the authority vested in the agency. There, the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act (the Property Act) vested the President, not any agency, with the authority to prescribe the policies and directives the President considered necessary to carry out the statute’s purposes. The President subsequently delegated this authority to OMB. OMB’s involvement therefore existed solely by virtue of that presidential delegation. Because the President is not an “agency” under the APA, we concluded that when an agency acts solely

pursuant to authority vested exclusively in the President—effectively standing in the President’s shoes—the resulting action is attributable to the President rather than to the agency.

By contrast, in B-336512, Aug. 29, 2024, we concluded that an OMB Controller Alert suggesting that agencies identify projects funded by statutes enacted pursuant to initiatives of the Biden Administration constituted an agency statement because it was issued pursuant to OMB’s statutory authority to issue such guidance, rather than under authority delegated by the President.

The crux of our analysis here lies in whether BLM was merely a conduit for the President’s Antiquities Act authority or whether it exercised its own independent authority under FLPMA. As explained further below, we conclude that the Grand Staircase RMP operates as a hybrid regulatory instrument, reflecting both the implementation of the Proclamations directives and BLM’s independent exercise of its discretion and authority under FLPMA.

The Antiquities Act vests the President with the authority to declare certain landmarks, structures, and objects as national monuments and to reserve parcels of land as part of the national monuments. In certain respects, the Grand Staircase RMP affirms the Proclamations’ directives and implements measures to protect the GSENM. The Grand Staircase RMP provisions that acknowledge GSENM and specify its boundaries simply reflect the legal status of the land as established by the President under the Antiquities Act. Some directives of the Proclamations also include the administration’s policy for the protection of the GSENM and other policy interest. For example, the withdrawal of GSENM from disposition under mineral and geothermal leasing laws, recognition of valid existing rights, the provision of access to tribal members for customary uses, and adoption of a mandatory policy on grazing permit relinquishment.

However, BLM’s implementation of the Proclamations’ policy directives and other discretionary provisions were developed under BLM’s independent authority to manage public lands and resources under FLPMA. More specifically, BLM prepared the Grand Staircase RMP pursuant to Interior’s land-use planning regulations implementing FLPMA, codified at 43 C.F.R. part 1600. In developing the Grand Staircase RMP, BLM proposed five alternatives, Alternatives A-E, for the protection of the GSENM and the management of federal land and resources within the decision area. The development of management alternatives, and the selection of an alternative, is the hallmark of BLM’s discretion under FLPMA. BLM selected its Proposed RMP, Alternate E, which builds on Alternative C and incorporates its assessment of the best available scientific information, public comments, cooperating-agency input, government-to-government consultation, and elements of other alternatives. Accordingly, BLM exercised its independent authority and discretion in choosing Alternative E, as the best alternative to manage land use and resources within the decision area.

As noted above, the Antiquities Act grants the President authority to identify objects of historic or scientific interest and to reserve the smallest area of land necessary for their protection. By its plain terms this authority, while exclusive to the President, is narrow in scope. It does not encompass the development of land-use plans, or the allocation of resources on public land. Congress assigned those responsibilities to the Secretary of the Interior and BLM under FLPMA. The Grand Staircase RMP explains that Alternative E

designates management areas primarily as a tool for managing visitation and allowable uses, while also ensuring protection of GSENM objects. Whereas the President through Proclamations was empowered to establish the GSENM and its boundaries under the Antiquities Act. Because the Grand Staircase RMP relies on a separate statutory grant of authority, FLPMA, rather than delegation of the President's statutory authority under the Antiquities Act, BLM was not "standing in the President's shoes" when it developed a land use plan for the GSENM. Although the proclamation directs the Secretary and BLM to provide for the care and management of the monument, such directives do not expand the President's statutory authority under the Antiquities Act or displace BLM's obligations under FLPMA. Unlike the case in B-33725, where OMB acted solely under the authority delegated by the President under the Property Act, the legal authority to manage federal land and resources is vested in BLM.

The Grand Staircase RMP's affirmation of the GSENM's legal status, and its initiation pursuant to the Proclamations, does not render the RMP a presidential action. To conclude otherwise would create a loophole for "hybrid" actions by insulating significant regulatory actions from legislative oversight under CRA. The Grand Staircase RMP reflects the agency's determination of how it will exercise its independent authority and discretion under its statutory mandate to develop land use plans for public lands and the government's mineral estate. Because the GSENM's legal status exists independently of the Grand Staircase RMP, provisions that affirm the Proclamations do not change the RMP's fundamental character—an agency level administrative action. Accordingly, the Grand Staircase RMP constitutes an agency statement for purposes of the APA.

Second, returning to the three elements of the definition, the Grand Staircase RMP is a rule of future effect because it is designed to apply prospectively to guide all subsequent management decisions and it implements and directs the long-term allocation of public land for certain uses, establishes permissible resource uses, and defines the conditions and constraints necessary to achieve the specific goals and objectives outlined within the RMP. The management decisions made in the Grand Staircase RMP became effective January 6, 2025, when the Record of Decision was signed. As of that date, the Grand Staircase RMP establishes a framework upon which further decisions will be made. Therefore, the Grand Staircase RMP has future effect.

Finally, the Grand Staircase RMP implements, interprets, or prescribes law or policy, because it implements a management plan as directed by and in accordance with the Proclamations. We have recognized that "a statement by an agency that simply restates an established interpretation 'tread[s] no new ground' and 'le[aves] the world just as it found it, and thus cannot be fairly described as implementing, interpreting, or prescribing law or policy.'" However, while the RMP restates certain provisions in Proclamation 10286, it also establishes management policies pursuant to BLM's authority under FLPMA that were not included in the Proclamation. Additionally, the RMP establishes conditions on land use, allocates resources for specific purposes, and prohibits certain activities pursuant to BLM's authority under FLPMA.

Our conclusion here is consistent with our previous decisions finding similar land use plans and RMPs implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy. Accordingly, the Grand Staircase RMP satisfies the third ele-

ment of the APA definition of "rule." Having met all required elements, the Grand Staircase RMP constitutes a rule under APA.

CRA Exceptions

We must next determine whether any of CRA's three exceptions apply. CRA provides for three types of rules that are not subject to its requirements: (1) rules of particular applicability; (2) rules relating to agency management or personnel; and (3) rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice that do not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties.

(1) Rule of Particular Applicability

Consistent with our previous decisions, the Grand Staircase RMP is a rule of general applicability, rather than particular applicability. For example, in B-337163, June 25, 2025, BLM issued the Miles City Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) that established land use designations to govern all coal mining activities by any person or entity within the planning area of its Miles City Field Office. Because the Miles City RMPA governed all coal mining activities by any person within its purview, we concluded that the Miles City RMPA was a rule of general applicability. Similarly, the Grand Staircase RMP establishes land use designations, forecloses certain activities, allocates resources, and imposes conditions upon land use that are applicable to any person or entity within the GSENM, making it a rule of general applicability.

(2) Rule of Agency Management or Personnel

The Grand Staircase RMP is not a rule of agency management or personnel. We have previously found that rules that fall into this category relate to purely internal agency matters. Because the Grand Staircase RMP primarily focuses on how the public may use resources and public land rather than BLM's internal management or its personnel, the RMP does not meet CRA's second exception.

(3) Rule of Agency Organization, Procedure, or Practice That Does Not Substantially Affect Non-Agency Parties

Lastly, the Grand Staircase RMP is not a rule of agency organization, procedure, or practice that does not substantially affect the rights or obligations of non-agency parties.

We have previously explained that this exception was modeled on the APA exception to notice-and-comment rulemaking requirements for "rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice." The purpose of the APA exception is to ensure "that agencies retain latitude in organizing their internal operations," so long as such rules do not have a substantial impact on non-agency parties.

Following this principle in the CRA context, we have only applied CRA's third exception to rules that primarily focus on the internal operations of an agency. For instance, in B-329926, Sept. 10, 2018, we found that updates to a Social Security Administration (SSA) hearing manual governing SSA adjudicators' use of information from the internet qualified as a rule of agency organization, procedure, or practice. There, the manual outlined procedures for SSA employees to follow in processing and adjudicating benefits claims. Because the manual was directed to and binding only on SSA officials without imposing new burdens on claimants, we concluded that the manual met CRA's third exception.

In contrast, rules that are directed at and primarily concerned with the behavior of non-agency parties do not fall within this category. Thus, in B-337163, June 25, 2025, we declined to apply CRA's third exception to BLM's Miles City RMPA, because it was

not limited to changes in BLM's internal operations. Instead, the Miles City RMPA was directed at non-agency parties as it foreclosed these parties from leasing coal within designated areas of the decision area. Similarly, in B-337200, June 25, 2025, we declined to apply CRA's third exception to the Central Yukon RMP because the plan primarily regulated the conduct of non-agency parties by foreclosing certain actions through the establishment of land use designations and the delineation of the activities that may be undertaken in the decision area.

Here, the Grand Staircase RMP includes some procedural changes, such as the new requirement for personnel to utilize a revised drought index when determining whether to implement grazing reductions. However, like the Miles City RMPA and the Central Yukon RMP, the Grand Staircase RMP is not primarily focused on making changes to internal agency operations. Instead, the Grand Staircase RMP is directed at, and concerns itself primarily with the preservation of the GSENM by delineating the use of public land and resources by non-agency parties within the decision area. Therefore, the Grand Staircase RMP does not qualify as a rule of agency organization, procedure, or practice.

We must also consider whether the Grand Staircase RMP substantially affects the rights or obligations of non-agency parties. When analyzing this aspect of CRA's third exception, "the critical question is whether the agency action alters the rights or interests of the regulated entities." Along similar lines, courts have determined that "[a]n agency rule that modifies substantive rights and interests can only be nominally procedural, and the exemption for such rules of agency procedure cannot apply." In previous decisions, we have concluded that where an RMP designates use by non-agency parties in the areas it governs, it has a substantial effect. For instance, in B-337163, June 25, 2025, we explained that the Miles City RMPA altered substantive rights and obligations of non-agency parties by excluding 1,745,040 acres of BLM-administered land from coal leasing, effectively precluding these parties from pursuing coal leases within the Miles City planning area. Similarly, in B-337200, June 25, 2025, we concluded that the Central Yukon RMP substantially affected non-agency parties by imposing, among other things, land use restrictions, such as designating areas of critical environmental concern and closing certain tracts of land for mineral extraction and recreational use.

Consistent with our prior decisions concerning other RMPs, the Grand Staircase RMP has a substantial effect on non-agency parties. The Grand Staircase RMP substantially affects the rights and obligations of non-agency parties by, for example, designating specific grazing pastures, e.g., Circle Cliffs, Upper Paria, as "unavailable" or "trailing-only", and closing approximately 1.2 million acres (classified as a Primitive Zone) to off-highway vehicle use. Furthermore, the RMP imposes time limitations for camping, restricts or closes areas to recreational shooting, and provides direction regarding access for mineral exploration and timber harvesting. Accordingly, the Grand Staircase RMP fails to meet CRA's third exception.

CONCLUSION

The Grand Staircase RMP is a rule for purposes of CRA because it meets the definition of a rule under APA and no CRA exception applies. Therefore, the Grand Staircase RMP is subject to CRA's requirement that it be submitted to Congress and the Comptroller General before it can take effect.

EDDA EMMANUELLI PEREZ,
General Counsel.

TRIBUTE TO MARK SIEGEL

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, Mark Siegel was born in 1946 in Brooklyn, NY, and has spent more than five decades as one of the Democratic Party's most versatile and enduring figures, serving at various points as a strategist, speechwriter, academic, and international democracy advocate.

Siegel attended public schools in Brooklyn before earning his undergraduate degree from Brooklyn College in 1967. He went on to Northwestern University, where he completed both a master's degree in 1968 and a Ph.D. in political science in 1972, focusing on elections, party reform, and the Presidential nominating process.

His entry into national politics came during the reform-minded era of the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the Democratic Party was undergoing profound organizational and ideological change. Siegel served as a legislative assistant to Senator Hubert Humphrey from 1971 to 1972 and was chief strategist for Humphrey's 1972 Presidential campaign. He later served as political director of the 1976 Democratic National Convention and coordinated the "Draft Ted Kennedy" movement in 1980, roles that placed him squarely at the center of the party's most consequential internal battles of the era. He also served as an elected at-large member of the Democratic National Committee, DNC, for more than a decade and participated in the commissions that shaped Presidential nominating rules, leaving a durable mark on the party's institutional structure. At one point, he served as executive director of the DNC itself.

As a speechwriter and political adviser, Siegel worked with some of the most prominent figures in American public life, drafting speeches for President Jimmy Carter, Vice Presidents Walter Mondale and Al Gore, Senator Ted Kennedy, and Senator Bill Bradley.

During his tenure in the Carter White House, Siegel served as the administration's liaison to the American Jewish community. Remarkably, he was the first to propose a national memorial to the Holocaust, an idea that led directly to the creation of the President's Commission on the Holocaust and, 15 years later, the Holocaust Memorial Museum on the National Mall in Washington. Siegel continues to serve on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, which acts as the governing board of trustees of the museum.

The combination of Siegel's working-class roots, his faith, and his unrelenting commitment to human dignity meant that his focus was never constrained by the geographic borders of our country. Indeed, his reach extended far beyond them, as he served as a trusted confidant and writer for leading international figures, including Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan.

Siegel's international profile also includes his long association with the

National Democratic Institute, NDI, the nonprofit organization that promotes democratic governance around the world. He served on the NDI board for 15 years and chaired programs focused on political party development and election monitoring, with particular emphasis on Asia.

Throughout his career, Siegel maintained a parallel life in academia. He taught political science and political management at American University, George Washington University, Loyola University Chicago, and New York University, bringing his practical experience in campaigns and party organization directly into the classroom.

A committed advocate for civil liberties and electoral reform, Siegel has remained an active commentator and strategist within Democratic circles across decades of American political life. He contributed public analysis during major political moments, including the contested 2000 Presidential election recount.

Across roles spanning government, academia, and international affairs, Mark Siegel represents a rare continuity of engagement with Democratic politics from the reform era through the modern day. He has dedicated his life to the promise of America, striving every day to make it kinder, fairer, and stronger. Our Nation is better for the life and service of Mark Siegel—a proud resident of Delaware—and we are grateful for him.

TRIBUTE TO TEAM USA'S JAKE SANDERSON, KONNOR RALPH, AND KATIE VERDERBER

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I have the honor to recognize Jake Sanderson, Konnor Ralph, and Katie Verderber as Montanans of the Month.

These three Montanans representing the United States at the 2026 Winter Olympics and Paralympics have shown exemplary dedication to their sports. They are some of the best that the Treasure State has to offer.

Jake Sanderson, a native of Whitefish, MT, is a defenseman on Team USA's men's hockey team. Growing up, Sanderson competed for the Glacier Avalanche of the Glacier Hockey Association alongside his brothers. In 2026, he was named to Team USA's roster for the 2026 Winter Olympics. Sanderson helped Team USA go 6-0 at the Milan Cortina games and win its first Olympic gold medal since the "Miracle on Ice" in 1980.

Konnor Ralph is an American freestyle skier from Helena, MT. Ralph represented the United States at the 2026 Winter Olympics in the slopestyle and big air events. Ralph placed ninth overall in slopestyle and fifth overall in men's big air.

Katie Verderber is scheduled to compete at the 2026 Paralympic Winter Games for Team USA's wheelchair curling squad. Raised in Valier, MT, Verderber received her undergraduate degree from the University of Montana.

It is my distinct honor to recognize Jake Sanderson, Konnor Ralph, and Katie Verderber as Montanans of the Month for their hard work, dedication to their country and teams, and their representation of Montana on the international playing field.

RECOGNIZING VERMONT OLYMPIANS AND MEDAL WINNERS

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, I join with Vermonters in celebrating the exceptional Vermont athletes who represented the United States at the 2026 Winter Olympic Games. Our State's athletes competed with great distinction, earning seven medals. The State of Vermont has a proud tradition of producing world-class athletes, and the 2026 Games were a powerful testament to that legacy.

Athletes with Vermont roots and connections won seven medals at the games, representing more than 20 percent of all medals earned by Team USA. Vermont's contribution to American Olympic success this year was historic by any measure.

Across alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, and freestyle disciplines, Vermont athletes competed at the highest level and delivered performances that will be remembered for years to come. These achievements did not happen overnight. They are the result of years of rigorous training, personal sacrifice, and an unrelenting commitment to excellence—supported by the world-class coaches and ski schools and training programs that Vermont has long been proud to call its own.

I congratulate Ben Ogden, Ryan Cochran-Siegle, Mac Forehand, Jessie Diggins, Paula Moltzan, and Mikaela Shiffrin for medaling. I also applaud Julia Kern, Jess Perlmutter, Jack Young, Sean Doherty, Margie Freed, Maxime Germain, Olivia Giaccio, Deedra Irwin, Lauren Jortberg, and Nina O'Brien for competing and making Vermont proud.

The Winter Games are a reminder of why our winter sports and outdoor recreation communities are so vital to the identity and economy of our State. Vermont's ski areas, trails, and training programs are not only excellent athletic institutions, but they are also the reason generations of young Vermonters have grown up with a love of the outdoors.

We are deeply proud of all our Vermont athletes have achieved, and we wish them continued success as they pursue the next chapters of their athletic careers and beyond. Their accomplishments will inspire young skiers and outdoor enthusiasts across Vermont for generations to come and serve as a lasting reminder of what is possible when talent and the spirit of the Green Mountains come together on the world's greatest stage.