

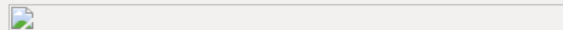
News Releases March 26, 2019 by Jayson O'Neill

Group Launches Six-Figure Ad Buys Calling on Gardner & McSally to Oppose Bernhardt Nomination

Montana-based conservation watchdog group Western Values Project (WVP) Action announced a multi-platform ad campaign in Arizona and Colorado targeting Senators Cory Gardner and Martha McSally, calling on them to oppose David Bernhardt's nomination to serve as Secretary of Interior. Bernhardt's confirmation hearing, in front of Gardner and McSally's Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, is scheduled for [Thursday](#).

Ahead of the hearing, WVP Action launched "Tapped" in Arizona and "Pockets" in Colorado which will run on television and digitally starting tomorrow, Wednesday, March 27th and will run into next week.

Watch Arizona's McSally Ad "Tapped" [HERE](#)



Watch Colorado's Gardner Ad "Pockets" [HERE](#)

“Senator Gardner and McSally’s constituents need a Department of Interior that will fight for our public lands and preserve our Western way of life,” **said Jayson O’Neill, Deputy Director of the Western Values Project Action.** “David Bernhardt has spent much of his career working as a mega-lobbyist before working on behalf of special interests in senior government posts. Time and again, Bernhardt has sold out the West by helping his former clients and other special interests that have had negative impacts on Western states. We need Senators Gardner and McSally to stand up for their constituents and oppose Bernhardt’s nomination.”

The advertisements note how past lobbying ties and policies pushed by Bernhardt have had direct impacts on each state.

In Arizona:

- Four national monuments in Arizona, covering almost 2 million acres, were **reviewed** and threatened with reductions by the Interior Department under the President’s executive order, including Ironwood Forest National Monument.
- A 20-year uranium mining ban around the Grand Canyon could be **removed** by the Trump Administration and Interior. The Interior Department **included** uranium on a critical minerals list and Bernhardt previously lobbied for a uranium corporation, Ur-Energy, which “engages in uranium exploration, development, and mining,” from 2009 to 2012.
- David Bernhardt **lobbied** for the Rosemont Copper Company and its Canadian owner, Hudbay Minerals, from 2012 to 2015 and worked on Rosemont’s behalf as a **consultant** until late 2016. The administration just approved a **final permit** for the controversial open-pit mine.

In Colorado:

- Senator Gardner is the top recipient of campaign cash from Bernhardt’s former oil and gas lobby firm, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck. Gardner has received some \$47,800 in donations from the firm since 2009 (CQ Political Moneyline).
- Under the direction of Bernhardt, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) finalized **revisions** to the greater sage-grouse management plans in the West, including a Colorado plan that would open about 350 square miles to oil and gas leasing that’s now off limits.

- BLM is exploring new developments in at least five counties across Colorado ([La Plata](#), Gunnison (Montrose Daily Press, 10/10/17), [San Miguel](#), Delta (Montrose Daily Press, 12/16/17), and [Fremont](#))—in some cases against the wishes of residents: Residents of La Plata County Colorado [say](#) the BLM neglected to notify them of a possible oil and gas development next to their homes. San Miguel County [sued](#) the BLM over oil and gas leases they had granted in the county, arguing that the agency failed to properly consider the impacts of drilling activity.

The ads come a week after WVP released polling from [Colorado](#) and [Arizona](#) which found that voters' strong opposition to Senators Gardner and McSally voting to confirm Bernhardt as the next Interior Secretary.

Specifically, the polls found:

- After hearing a series of messages against Bernhardt's confirmation, Coloradans [oppose](#) Bernhardt's confirmation by nearly two-to-one (29% support/57% oppose); and
- By wide margins, Arizonans [disapprove](#) of the policies Interior has pursued under Bernhardt, such as weakening protections for threatened species and changes to the Endangered Species Act (66% disapprove, 54% strongly), shrinking national monument protections for industrial oil and gas and mining development (68% disapprove, 52% strongly), and expediting approval and permitting of oil and gas drilling in previously protected wildlife habitat (64% disapprove, 49% strongly).

Previously, Western Values Project launched, www.DavidBernhardt.org, a comprehensive resource of primary source materials and background on Bernhardt's work as a mega-lobbyist and how he used his position to help special interests.

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