July 17, 2019

The Honorable Raul Grijalva
Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20003

The Honorable Rob Bishop
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
1329 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Chairman Grijalva and Ranking Member Bishop:

On behalf of the over 400-members of the National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA), I am writing to express our opposition to H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act, which would permanently withdraw over 1 million acres of Federal lands located in Arizona from public land, mining, mineral and geothermal leasing laws.

NSSGA is the leading voice and advocate for the aggregates industry, with member companies representing more than 90 percent of the crushed stone and 70 percent of the sand and gravel consumed annually in the United States. Our members are responsible for the essential raw materials found in every home, building, road, bridge and public works project, employing over 100,000 working men and women. Aggregate businesses can be found in every Congressional district and are a trusted resource for all issues related to the aggregate industry.

NSSGA strongly opposes H.R. 1373 as it would permanently ban aggregate production on millions of acres of land. Such a ban would severely diminish the ability for communities to access key resources that are necessary for building roads, bridges, schools, hospitals, homes and businesses. Allowing this ban to proceed would have a significant impact on the cost of public works projects due to the necessity for stone, sand and gravel required to develop and repair infrastructure and buildings to be imported into the area. These products are expensive to transport and would further strain the budgets of local communities and federal entities that are seeking to make infrastructure investments in Arizona including improvements to National Parks like the Grand Canyon.

Further, permanently banning aggregate operations on these federal lands would greatly impact the region and our nation’s energy development. Industrial sand is a key component in energy production. Under H.R. 1373, access to these essential materials would be limited, driving up production costs that would likely be passed along to customers – families and businesses. NSSGA opposes H.R. 1373, which would harm local economies and hinder public works projects from being economically feasible.

I greatly appreciate your consideration of our views and your important work on the Committee. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Michele Stanley, NSSGA Vice President of Government and Regulatory affairs at mstanley@nssga.org.
Sincerely,

Michael W. Johnson  
President and CEO  
National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association