

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 18, 2026

Tom Heinlein
Acting Colorado State Director
Bureau of Land Management
Denver Federal Center, Building 40
Lakewood, CO 80215

Kemba Anderson
Acting Colorado Deputy State Director
Bureau of Land Management
Denver Federal Center, Building 40
Lakewood, CO 80215

Dear Acting State Director Heinlein and Acting Deputy State Director Anderson:

We write regarding the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) proposed December 2026 Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe's concerns about the nine proposed lease parcels located within the Southern Ute Indian Reservation.

The Tribe has formally expressed its opposition to leasing these parcels, explaining that they are located within an environmentally and culturally significant portion of the Reservation where it has long sought to minimize surface disturbance. The Tribe has also requested meaningful government-to-government consultation before any leasing decisions affecting these lands move forward.

We urge BLM to give careful consideration to the Tribe's concerns and to continue robust consultation throughout this process. As a sovereign Tribal Nation with deep cultural, environmental, and economic interests in these lands, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe's perspective should play a central role in BLM's decision-making.

The Tribe has raised practical questions regarding access to several proposed parcels, including that development may require rights-of-way across Tribal lands that are subject to the Tribe's approval. We encourage BLM to work closely with the Tribe to fully understand and address these issues before making any final leasing decisions.

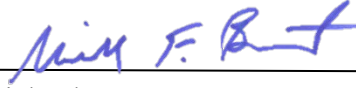
Government-to-government consultation must be given the full time necessary to address the Southern Ute Indian Tribe's concerns, and the BLM should take all measures to ensure robust consultation, including withdrawal or deferral of the lease sale if needed. We urge the BLM to ensure its final decisions fully reflect the federal government's trust responsibility and commitment to meaningful government-to-government consultation with the Southern Ute Indian Tribe.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John Hickenlooper
U.S. Senator



Michael F. Bennet
U.S. Senator