

Trump's budget draws fire from Nevada delegation

May 23, 2017

President Donald Trump's proposed budget drew sharp criticism on Tuesday not only from Democrats in the Nevada congressional delegation but Republicans Sen. Dean Heller and Gov. Brian Sandoval.

Heller said the budget is "anti Nevada."

He said it contains \$120 million to restart licensing for the Yucca Mountain waste dump while gutting the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act and deep cuts to Medicaid that could jeopardize health care coverage for several hundred thousand Nevadans.

Sandoval said he intends to protect Medicaid funding "at all cost." It was his decision to join the expanded Medicaid coverage contained in the Affordable Care Act, a decision that has since expanded the state's Medicaid enrollment by more than 300,000.

Despite Trump's campaign promises, Sandoval said it was no surprise the budget cuts Medicaid funding.

He, like Heller, said the state will continue its all-out efforts to make sure Yucca Mountain is dead and stays that way.

He said the goal is to "ensure Yucca will never become a reality."

They were joined by Democratic House members Dina Titus and Ruben Kihuen, both of Las Vegas. Titus said Trump's proposal on the southern Nevada lands act would "steal \$230 million from the state."

That act provides funding for environmental and conservation projects by selling federal land needed to expand southern Nevada and boost its economy. A significant amount of that money has gone into projects at Lake Tahoe.

"Money from land sales in Clark County should not be siphoned off to build a wall along the border," Titus said.

"These cuts show a blatant disregard for the wellbeing of Nevadans and do little to help rebuild our country's economy," said Kihuen.

In addition to the lands act and Yucca Mountain issues, he said cuts to the federal food stamp program, Medicaid and others "are indefensible and immoral."

He pointed out the Medicaid cuts would also impact some 18,000 Nevada veterans who rely on that program for health care coverage.