

## Dave Freudenthal Wyoming Governor 2003-2011

July 17, 2017

The Honorable John Barrasso, MD  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Carper  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works  
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

Subject: HELP for Wildlife Act

Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments on the HELP for Wildlife Act. In general, this Act represents a very positive bi-partisan step forward in many areas. I am encouraged by the increased recognition of the role of the States and giving better definition to programs such as the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation which have, from the outside, seemed to be "insider ball".

I would offer specific comments in 3 areas.

### **1. Target Practice Ranges on Public Lands**

This is a surprisingly important sportsperson and public safety issue. Whatever one's position on the Second Amendment, everyone would support the idea that those of us who possess firearms should have a properly designed and safe place to utilize them. My experience as Governor and in the private practice of law has convinced me that many of the best locations for firearm and bow practice ranges are on public lands. This is not surprising given the settlement patterns of public lands. Early settlers to an area sought ownership under various federal laws of those areas with water, favorable soil and location advantages. The broad, open spaces largely remained in federal ownership. These are the exact areas most suitable for target ranges. Such uses are consistent with the multiple use management concepts for public lands. Unfortunately, the current regulatory system makes it nearly impossible to authorize target ranges, even when properly located and constructed

in a safe and rational manner. The changes authorized by this legislation are in the best interest of the sporting community and the public at large. It is important to have properly authorized ranges because the current alternative tends to be individuals self-selecting public land areas to target practice or sight in their weapons.

**2. The provisions related to cementing the decisions to de-list the wolf populations are essential.**

It is unfortunate that the evolution of the ESA litigation and administrative actions have created an environment in which the ESA process never ends. The Committee is well aware of the tortured path of administrative action and litigation that has brought us to the point where legislative action is necessary. I would simply offer two comments. First, there is a clear preponderance of scientific evidence demonstrating the objectives of the ESA have been met with regard to the wolf populations in question. Second, the regulatory mechanisms established by the States are more than adequate to maintain the necessary wolf populations. Unfortunately, the administrative and legal system surrounding the ESA is rife with opportunities to create and litigate issues intended to extend and complicate the ESA process. In the absence of ESA reform, fully informed Congressional action, on a case by case basis, is required.

**3. The provisions protecting the use of lead tackle from the threat of nationwide restrictions under laws not intended for such purposes are logical and necessary.**

The sporting community has recognized, supported and accepted the requirement of non-lead ammunition in waterfowl hunting. This came about because of the solid, scientific information interpreted in the context of wildlife management. No such information supports the current discussion of regulation of lead tackle. Your proposed legislation will prevent the regulatory community from overrunning their headlights. Thereby doing more damage than good.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.

Sincerely,



David D. Freudenthal