



# FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

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THE VOICE OF AGRICULTURE

July 30, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Barrasso:

We appreciate your leadership in the development of the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018. Long overdue, these amendments will help to satisfy the need for state agencies to have more input in wildlife management while maintaining federal oversight to achieve the goals of the Act.

Florida's unique and expansive environment is home to nearly ninety endangered species and forty threatened species. Whether it is the Atlantic Sturgeon, the American Crocodile, the Everglade Snail Kite or the Florida Panther, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission is actively monitoring populations and habitat to insure that the species not only survive, but thrive in the state.

The Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus Polyphemus*) is a state-designated threatened species that is a perfect example of a success story for recovery. Though Florida's development industry is thriving as people move to escape the winter climate, there is not a developer that is unaware of the Gopher Tortoise and the mitigation process required to protect the species.

Similar programs are in place for the other listed species and now even the Florida Panther (*Puma [=Felis] concolor cory*) has expanded in number and range to have a breeding population north of the Caloosahatchee River. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission works closely with agriculture and other landowners to educate and develop programs to promote symbiotic land management practices that help our threatened and endangered species to thrive on the landscape.

We agree that the Endangered Species Act should focus on species recovery and habitat conservation objectives that also respect the rights of landowners. The increased coordination with state wildlife agencies, in the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works' amendments to the Endangered Species Act, leverage private, incentive-based efforts to achieve long-term conservation goals for all species.

We support the 2018 Amendments to the Endangered Species Act.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John L. Hoblick".

John L. Hoblick  
President

Cc: The Honorable Bill Nelson  
The Honorable Marco Rubio