

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 29, 2022

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth H.O.B
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Leader McCarthy:

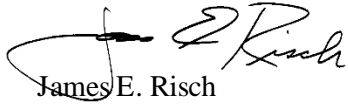
We write to ask for your support for continuing the Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing prohibition for the greater sage-grouse in any end-of-year spending packages. This provision has been included in annual spending bills since fiscal year 2015, to the benefit of wildlife populations and Western communities. Species conservation is deeply important in the West, and the greater sage-grouse stands as a prime example of these efforts. Eleven western states, spanning the entirety of sage-grouse habitat have each adopted their own collaborative, science-based conservation plans, tailored specifically to address localized landscape needs and recover the species. These plans were made with comprehensive contributions from diverse stakeholders including scientific experts, conservationists, federal officials, and local industry leaders.

However, despite this transparent and scientific approach, the greater sage-grouse has constantly been the subject of continuous litigation and baseless listing petitions for years. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has repeatedly and consistently found the existing combination of state-led strategies to be successful in preventing the need to list the species, even through three listing considerations within a ten-year period. The constant threat of litigation greatly undermines the collaborative process first started by the Obama Administration in 2011 and continued by bipartisan western governors and now the Biden Administration.

The listing prohibition has helped, not hindered, the commitment to conserving the greater sage-grouse. In fact, each year the listing prohibition has been in place, funding for sage-grouse conservation has continued to rise. This is due to the commitment and partnerships of federal, state, and local leaders who take ownership and responsibility in the achievement of their individual plans. In contrast, cyclical litigation diverts time and resources which could otherwise be used for real conservation efforts. Species conservation is a gradual process, and conservation plans need time to be implemented without disruption in order to show results. States and local communities have invested years in the development and application of sage-grouse conservation. Continuing to provide for their expertise and on-the-ground

decision-making is the best way to conserve the greater sage-grouse and rural communities alike. The continuation of the prohibition against ESA listing for the greater sage-grouse is vital not only for the preservation of local decision-making, but also for the long-term survival of the species. We greatly appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



James E. Risch
United States Senator



John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator



John Hoeven
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



Mike Crapo
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Mitt Romney
United States Senator



Cynthia M. Lummis
United States Senator



Mike Simpson
Member of Congress



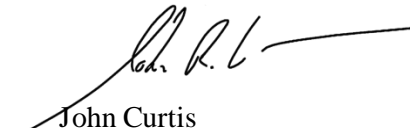
Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress



Russ Fulcher
Member of Congress



Mark Amodei
Member of Congress



John Curtis
Member of Congress



Chris Stewart
Member of Congress



Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress



Tom McClintock
Member of Congress



Michael S. Lee
United States Senator



Lauren Boebert
Member of Congress



Cliff Bentz
Member of Congress



Matthew Rosendale, Sr.
Member of Congress



Blake Moore
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress