

Topic: Endangered Species Act

March 2, 2017

Representative [Your House Representative]

Re: Vote No on House Resolution 717, the Listing Reform Act

Dear Representative [Insert Name],

I am writing to urge you to vote no on House Resolution 717, the Listing Reform Act, to amend the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and all other efforts to weaken the ESA.

The bill purports to allow the agency to consider economic costs of listing a species for practical purposes, but the ESA already has mechanisms in place to consider economic costs, after a species has been listed.

In reality, the bill will result in additional delays, will prevent the listing of imperiled species, and will allow the agency to prioritize petitions to delist species. The bills will create delays in the process of listing a species as endangered by eliminating the 12-month deadline for deciding on petitions to list or remove species from the list. Delays in species protection already cause problems, and on average species wait 12 years before receiving protection. Because of this delay, more than 40 species have gone extinct while waiting for protection.

Allowing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to consider economic costs before listing a species is also a way to delay and undermine species protection. Considering economic costs in the listing process is unnecessarily duplicative because the expense of conservation is considered in the designation of a species' critical habitat, the section 7 consultations on land use, recovery planning, and habitat conservation under section 10.

The ESA is the nation's most effective conservation law that was passed with overwhelming bipartisan support. Most Americans support strong protections for endangered species[1] and this bill, along with others intended to weaken the ESA, is out of step with what Americans want.

As an Ohio resident. . . [write something personal about why you care about the Endangered Species Act]

For these reasons, I urge you to vote against House Resolution 717. Thank you for hearing my point of view on this resolution.

Sincerely,

House Bill 717/Listing Reform Act Talking Points:

- The bill takes away the agency's responsibility to respond to petitions to list or delist within 12-months, thus lifting the pressure to respond and further delaying the listing process.
- Allowing the agency to consider economic costs is unnecessarily duplicative because other parts of the Act already consider costs and the analysis at this stage results in added delay, which species cannot afford.
- Delaying protection of imperiled species will result in more extinctions, which contradicts the purpose of the Endangered Species Act, which was a bipartisan statute.
- [Personal connections to local species or personal reasons for opposing the amendment].
- Thank the senator for his time.

[1] In a survey conducted by Pew Research Center, 74% of survey participants responded in March of 2016 that the country should do whatever it takes to protect the environment.
assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/03/03-31-2016-Political-topline-for-release.pdf.
Tulchin Research conducted a scientific survey in 2015 and found based on a representative sample of 600 registered voters that 90% of voters support the Endangered Species Act.

Topic: Endangered Species Act

March 2, 2017

Senator Rob Portman
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

Re: Vote No on Senate Bill 375 to amend the ESA

Dear Senator Portman,

I am writing to urge you to vote no on Senate Bill 375 amending the Endangered Species Act and all other efforts to weaken the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The bill would reduce the power of the ESA by giving priority to private industry, which contradicts the intent of the ESA.

This bill would make it harder for citizens to ensure species are considered for protection in a timely fashion, while giving local governments, big oil, big agriculture and other industries the right to veto settlement agreements requiring the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to make decisions about the protection of endangered species. This bill allows industry and local politicians to needlessly delay protection of species, which inevitably leads to the extinction of our native plants and animals.

Delays in species protection already cause problems, and on average species wait 12 years before receiving protection.[1] Because of this delay, more than 40 species have gone extinct while waiting for protection. Citizen lawsuits are one important means of addressing this issue by focusing on highly imperiled species. The FWS needs more funding to do its job efficiently but, instead, this bill gives special rights to the oil and gas industry and diminishes the effectiveness of citizen suits.

The ESA is the nation's most effective conservation law that was passed with overwhelming bipartisan support. Most Americans support strong protections for endangered species and this bill, along with others intended to weaken the ESA, is out of step with what Americans want.

As an Ohio resident. . . [write something personal about why you care about the Endangered Species Act]

For these reasons, I urge you to vote against Senate Bill 375. Thank you for hearing my point of view on this bill.

Sincerely,

Senate Bill 375 Talking Points:

- The bill would give industry the right to veto settlement agreements that are important for the process of protecting endangered species.
 - Citizen suits are critical to putting pressure on the FWS to list some of the most imperiled species.
 - Allowing industry to veto settlement agreements would result in delays that further threaten species that are already vanishing.
 - Delaying protection of imperiled species will result in more extinctions, which contradicts the purpose of the Endangered Species Act, which was a bipartisan statute.
 - [Personal connections to local species or personal reasons for opposing the amendment].
 - Thank the senator for his time.
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Topic: Water

March 2, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

OR

Chairman, President, and CEO. c/o The Trump Organization
725 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10022
USA Phone: 212-832-2000 Fax: 212-935-0141
trump@trumporg.com

Re: Executive Orders for Dakota Access Pipeline and Keystone XL Pipeline

President Trump,

You recently claimed that the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) is uncontroversial due to the lack of communication you have received from citizens on the subject. Seeing as I believe it is a highly controversial subject, I decided it was necessary to write to you and urge you to rescind your executive order for DAPL and the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Pipelines stretch over 135,000 miles of the United States and, as such, they are a structure that is almost impossible to reasonably maintain to prevent breaks and leaks. In 2016 alone, there were over 220 significant pipeline spills in the United States, releasing hundreds of thousands of gallons onto our country's surface. This number does not include the amount leaked into the environment from the pipelines on a regular basis, as the technology to monitor leaks and potential weak points of the pipelines is notoriously unreliable. This spilled oil damages our land and leaks into waterways, contaminating our freshwater supplies.

As an Ohio resident near Lake Erie, I know the privilege of abundant freshwater. Unfortunately, this cannot be said of all of the citizens of this country and this world. Our freshwater sources are limited, and by running oil across this country in pipelines, we are ruining one of our most important resources. The value of water is recognized by the Dakota Access Pipeline protesters, whose main protest theme has been "Water is Sacred."

These structures are dangerous for the environment in and of themselves, but they also transport a substance that, when used, will continue to damage our environment with pollution. The days of oil are ending, and the United States needs to plan for a time when we cannot rely on these nonrenewable resources. Our country needs to be investing its

time and money into developing solar and wind technology that can support us reliably and sustainably.

Rather than building more pipelines, we need to reduce the environmental damage caused by the current pipelines and invest in renewable resources going forward. Please reconsider your support of the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Thank you for your time,

DAPL and KXLP Talking Points

- There have been over three thousand significant pipeline spill incidents in the United States since 2006, and more than 220 in 2016 alone, not accounting for the multitudes of continuous pipeline leaks.
- This oil contaminates our freshwater, which is one of our most important resources.
- Over half of our 135,000 mile network of pipelines in this country are over 45 years old, presenting a major hazard that needs to be addressed.
- We need to invest time and money in renewable energy and reduce the environmental damage caused by our current pipelines instead of creating more pipelines.

[1] 220 'Significant' Pipeline Spills Already This Year Exposes Troubling Safety Record.
<http://www.ecowatch.com/pipeline-spills-2061960029.html>

Topic: Climate Change/EPA

March 2, 2017

Environmental Protection Agency
Office of the Administrator 1101A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Phone number: 202-564-4700

Re: Anthropogenic Climate Change and the EPA

Dear Mr. Scott Pruitt,

I am writing to urge you to, as the new head of the Environmental Protection Agency, to take rapid and dramatic actions to address anthropogenic climate change and to use the EPA's powers to their fullest extent.

You stated during your Senate hearings that you are not convinced humans are the main cause of the climate change we are experiencing and predicting. Let me assure you, this highly accelerated climate change is anthropogenic, and we need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in order to protect our species.

In addition, you have made a recent claim that the desire of Trump and his administration to abolish the EPA is "justified," and the organization has abused its authority. I, and many people of this country, believe the opposite.

The work of the EPA has been a source of comfort for the average citizen who, alone, cannot stand up to corporations who seek to use and abuse our environment. Unfortunately, considering your past actions against the EPA, it seems you and this administration see the EPA as a business limitation, not as an organization devoted to protecting our country and our people from environmental degradation.

[Add a personal note about environmental protection and climate change as an Ohio resident]

Richard Nixon, founder of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, said in his 1970 State of the Union Address, "Restoring nature to its natural state is a cause beyond party and beyond factions." So lastly, as the new EPA Administrator, I urge you to ignore the current partisan nature of environmental protection and simply do what is right. Please take action to stop climate change and use the powers of the EPA to fulfill the environmental needs of humanity for generations to come instead of prioritizing the short-term desires of businesses.

Thank you for your time,

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt Talking Points:

- Climate change is anthropogenic and needs to be immediately addressed by the EPA.
- The powers of the EPA have not been abused, and it needs to use its authority to further protect our country's people for generations to come, not protect us less.
- Please reconsider your attitude towards the organization you now lead. Prioritize climate change and the wellbeing of this country instead of the short-term, environmentally damaging desires of businesses.

[1] Why We Need the EPA. <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/why-we-need-epa>

Topic: Climate Change

March 2, 2017

Senator Rob Portman
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

Re: Vote Against S.J.Res. 11 Overturning the BLM's Methane and Natural Gas Rule

Dear Senator Portman,

I am writing to urge you to vote against S.J.Res.11 to use the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to overturn the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) rule entitled "Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation." This critical rule results in cleaner air, less climate change-inducing methane pollution, and generates revenue.

The BLM rule is a common sense policy that requires the oil and gas industry to reduce venting, flaring, and leaks at industry operations on public and tribal lands by deploying methane mitigation technology. Currently, more than \$330 million worth of natural gas is wasted on public and tribal lands each year, meaning that taxpayers could lose out on \$800 million in royalties over the next decade due to venting and flaring of this gas. Repealing this rule would harm public health and reduce revenue to the federal government. The BLM estimates the rule's net benefits range from \$46 to \$204 million per year. And economic studies have found the technologies and practices included in this rule to be very cost effective since the gas captured can be sold to the benefit of industry and taxpayers. Leaked natural gas contains volatile organic compounds, an asthma irritant; benzene; and other hazardous air pollutants that are known carcinogens. After Colorado implemented a similar rule, natural gas production increased, and the standard has been popular.

Additionally, by essentially voiding the rulemaking process and mandating that substantially similar rules not be pursued in the future, the use of the CRA to overturn BLM's Methane Rule wastes taxpayer money and defies the public interest.

As an Ohio resident. . . [write something personal about why you care about the this issue].

For these reasons, I urge you to vote against S.J. Res.11 and its attack on common-sense standards that limited wasted resources and protect the American taxpayer, public health, and the environment. Thank you for hearing my point of view on this bill.

Sincerely,

Reject CRA overturn of BLM methane rule Talking Points:

- BLM methane rule creates a win-win situation by bringing in revenue and reducing air pollution
 - Without the rule, more than \$330 million worth of natural gas in tribal lands and public lands is wasted each year
 - Taxpayers would lose out on the royalties that could be brought in from industry
 - Methane mitigation technology to reduce venting, flaring, and leaks are cost effective and a market for these technologies and practices could be developed as a result, which spurs business innovations
 - The natural gas that leaks can cause health problems associated with air pollution
 - [Include your personal connection]
 - Thank the senator for his time
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Topic: Public Transit

March 2, 2017

Ohio State Senator

Re: Allocate Ohio Funds for Public Transit

Dear Senator _____,

The Ohio Department of Transportation conducted a Transit Needs Study that was released more than two years ago. As the Study illustrates, Ohio has a transportation spending problem. Nearly a third of our counties have no transit services, nearly a tenth of our residents don't have access to a car, and the transportation sector spews out approximately one quarter of our State's air pollution. And we sit near the bottom of a list of states ranked by transit expenditures. ODOT's Transit Needs Study identifies a gap of more than \$192 million in capital and \$96 million in operating funds that are needed annually just to meet existing demand for public transportation services. And we desperately need to improve the system. For example, in the Greater Cincinnati region, less than 22 percent of jobs are accessible by a commute of 90 minutes or less on public transportation.

Our elected officials can help the State of Ohio move forward into a cleaner, brighter and more prosperous future by reallocating no less than ten percent of the Transportation Budget away from new roadway construction and towards public transportation and Complete Streets that are accessible for people regardless of age or ability and regardless of whether they are walking, riding a bike, bus or train, or are driving. Since the Transportation Budget is borne on the backs of all taxpayers, expenditures should benefit all people and all modalities.

The American Public Transit Association estimates that every dollar invested in transit generates six dollars in economic returns and helps create nearly 20 percent more jobs than equal investments in new roadways. There is a great and growing demand for transit and other car-free transportation alternatives. Sensible transportation projects can and should benefit the environment, create opportunities for sustainable economic development, and provide equity and accessibility to all users, regardless of age, income or ability.

Please do all that you can in this Budget cycle to ensure that we achieve economic development, increase employment opportunities, reduce urban sprawl and congestion, and create more livable communities for all Ohioans.

The State of Ohio should invest in more transportation options to protect the environment, improve the economy and increase accessibility. Two years ago, the Transit Study found that: “Trends show there is a definite rise in the need for convenient, affordable public transportation to jobs, medical appointments, shopping and recreational activities. Our transit agencies are struggling to fund this existing service, let alone meet the increased demand.” Please reallocate no less than ten percent of the Transportation Budget away from new roadway construction and towards public transportation and Complete Streets.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ohio Public Transit Talking Points

- We need to address Ohio’s lack of public transportation to benefit our residents and reduce pollution.
- The path to fixing this problem could begin with allocating ten percent of the state’s Transportation Budget away from new road construction and towards public transportation and Complete Streets that are accessible for people regardless of age or ability and regardless of whether they are walking, riding a bike, bus or train, or are driving.
- The American Public Transit Association estimates that every dollar invested in transit generates six dollars in economic returns and helps create nearly 20 percent more jobs than equal investments in new roadways.
- The State of Ohio should invest in more transportation options to protect the environment, improve the economy and increase accessibility.

Topic: Public Lands

March 2, 2017

Representative [Insert Your Representative]

Senator Rob Portman
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

Re: Protect Federally Conserved Public Lands

Dear Senator Portman/Representative [Name of Representative],

I am writing to urge you to ensure the protection of the National Monuments and other public lands that have been specifically protected for future generations to enjoy. I am concerned by the confirmation of Rep. Zinke as new Secretary of the Department of the Interior. It is difficult to imagine that someone with strong connections to the fossil fuel industry and an anti-environmental congressional voting record will serve the public interest in his management of millions of acres of public land.

I want to see our public lands protected for future generations to enjoy, not plundered for the financial benefit of the few. I also believe our new Secretary of the Interior must stand behind our public lands and stand up for tribal sovereignty, not consider rolling back protections for places like Bears Ears National Monument.

For years, Tribal Nations with ancestral and spiritual ties to the 1.35 million acres that make up Bears Ears have fought to protect this place. The value of Bears Ears lies in its long history as a sacred place for the Navajo, Hopi, Ute Mountain Ute, Ute Indian, and Pueblo of Zuni.

Please pay attention to the actions of a Zinke-led Department of Interior and be prepared to protect our public lands for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Topic: EPA/General

March 2, 2017

Representative [Insert your Representative]

Re: Protect the EPA and Vote NO on H.R. 861

Dear Representative [Name of your Representative],

I am writing to urge you to vote no on the House Bill 861, which proposes to terminate the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This federal agency was created in 1970 by President Richard Nixon and is tasked with protecting human health and the environment, and ensuring that all Americans are protected from significant risks to their health and the environment where they live, learn and work.

Since its inception, EPA has had some laudable successes. From regulating auto emissions to banning the use of DDT; from cleaning up toxic stream waste to maintaining the ozone layer in order to limit UV radiation; from increasing recycling to revitalizing former contaminated industrial sites, EPA's achievements have resulted in cleaner air, purer water, and better protected land for all citizens. Much work remains.

Ohioans continue the battle against mining and industrial pollution, contaminating our air, land and streams, increasing rates of cancer, chronic disease and birth defects. An estimated 2,500 brownfields remain across the state. These are contaminated, unusable sites such as old gas stations, vacant factories and hospitals and meth labs, abandoned due to real or potential contamination. According to the Ohio EPA website, we have been awarded tens of millions in EPA grants to support Ohio projects such as air quality monitoring, improving drinking systems, natural habitats and cleaning up these brownfields.

The EPA awarded roughly \$1.4 billion worth of contracts and \$9.6 billion in grants in 2013, the latest year for which data was available, according to the government spending website InsideGov.com. grants These funds are used to support private, state and municipal level environmental testing, clean-up and innovative projects. States, especially Ohio with our current budget woes, cannot afford to lose these EPA funds.

Now there is a bill to abolish the agency.

Congressman Massie maintains that “the EPA makes rules that undermine the voice of the American people. . .” Perhaps the American people, particularly Ohioans, should raise their voices louder, demanding continued federal sponsorship in steps to a non-toxic neighborhood.

Eliminating the EPA, with its environmental standards and clean-up assistance, is a short sighted strategy that will denigrate the environment and lead to poor health outcomes across the country. For these reasons, I urge you to vote against H.R. 861 and vote to protect the health of Americans. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Topic: Water

Senator Rob Portman
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

March 14, 2017

Dear Senator Portman:

I am writing to urge you to reject any attempts to roll back the Clean Water Rule. The 2014 drinking water crisis in Toledo shows that now is the time to continue to strengthen environmental protections and regulations, not weaken them. The Clean Water Rule also provides needed clarity that can assist in making jurisdictional determinations, making it easier for landowners to know whether they are subject to the Clean Water Act or not.

President Trump's statements regarding the rule have been patently false, and I hope you will consider the facts and determine that the Clean Water Rule should not be rolled back. Whereas Trump said the rule seeks to regulate "every ditch," the rule expressly excludes from regulation several forms of man-made waters, including a variety of ditches.

Trump also seems to think that the rule has had a huge impact on jobs, particularly farmers and ranchers, and that it has been a disaster. In fact, the rule has not yet been implemented due to stay because of judicial review of the rule, so Trump has no basis for saying that the rule has had any effect on jobs. Further, there is no evidence that the rule, if implemented, would decrease jobs or have a detrimental effect on farmers and ranchers. To top it off, the rule maintains exemptions for normal farming operations and agricultural runoff, so farmers are unlikely to be impacted negatively on the whole.

I want stronger, not weaker clean water protections so that an entire city or more does not have to lose access to drinking water in Ohio again. That's why I'm calling on you to defend the waters Americans love, and pledge to block any and all legislation to roll back protections to our clean water.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue.

Sincerely,