

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-7110

March 18, 2016

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 131
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 125
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murkowski and Senator Udall:

We are writing to express our support for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program. We appreciate your past support and hope that you will continue to back the program by providing the highest level of funding possible. The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program is a critical investment that is needed to sustain our nation's most vulnerable fish and wildlife. In FY 2016, \$60.6 million was appropriated for the program and the President has requested \$67 million for FY 2017. We ask that you provide the most robust funding possible for FY 2017.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program is the nation's core program to prevent fish and wildlife from becoming endangered. It has been successful in preventing endangered species listings like the New England cottontail and arctic grayling. The program funds monitoring and on-the-ground conservation such as invasive species control, habitat management, species reintroduction, and disease surveillance that directly address threats to declining species.

The State & Tribal Wildlife Grants program is the only federal grant program available to the states, territories, District of Columbia and tribes to conserve more than 12,000 fish and wildlife that are in greatest need of conservation. Without consistent funding, more species will be added to the endangered species list requiring costly and often controversial interventions. With the number of petitions for federal threatened and endangered species listing up by over 1,000% in the last decade, this funding is more important than ever to fulfill the shared federal-state and tribal responsibility for sustaining our nation's fish and wildlife.

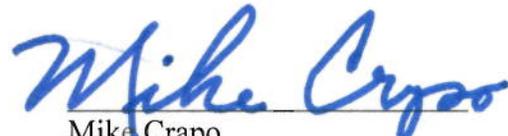
The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program supports implementation and revision of State Wildlife Action Plans. These plans were revised last year to incorporate the newest science and data. Thousands of our nation's leading scientists and conservationists helped revise the plans so they can effectively lead proactive fish and wildlife conservation. The program has the support of the Teaming With Wildlife coalition's 6,475 organizations, representing millions of birders, hikers, hunters, anglers and other outdoor enthusiasts.

We understand that the nation's debt and economic situation are an important concern. However, investment in the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program saves taxpayer's money by reducing the high cost of recovery when species are added to the federal threatened and endangered species list and reduces regulatory uncertainty to business.

We urge the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies to provide the most robust funding possible for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program in fiscal year 2017 so that these important wildlife conservation efforts can continue. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

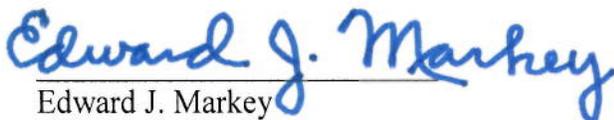
Sincerely,


Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator


Mike Crapo
United States Senator


Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

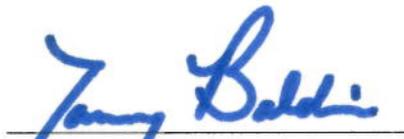

Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator


Edward J. Markey
United States Senator


James E. Risch
United States Senator


Brian Schatz
United States Senator


Chuck Grassley
United States Senator


Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator


Daniel Sullivan
United States Senator


Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator


Kelly Ayotte
United States Senator

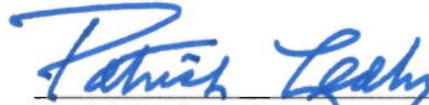

Robert P. Casey Jr.
United States Senator


Ron Wyden
United States Senator


Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator


Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator


Jack Reed
United States Senator


Patrick Leahy
United States Senator


Tim Kaine
United States Senator


Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator


Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

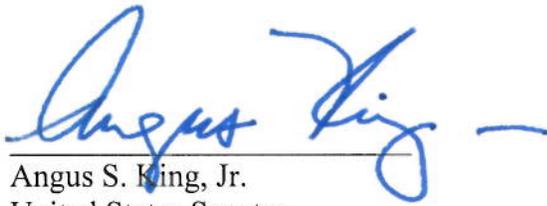

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

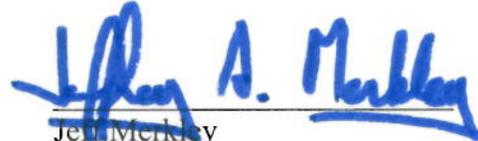

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator


Bernard Sanders
United States Senator


Cory A. Booker
United States Senator


Al Franken
United States Senator


Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator


Jeff Merkley
United States Senator


Joe Manchin III
United States Senator


Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator


Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator


Maria Cantwell
United States Senator


Robert Menendez
United States Senator


Martin Heinrich
United States Senator


Gary C. Peters
United States Senator


Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator


Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator


Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator


Jon Tester
United States Senator