

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 29, 2017

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2007 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1016 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

As you begin work on the fiscal year (FY) 2018 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we urge you to retain language that would prevent the gray wolf (*Canis Lupus*) from being listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

On June 13, 2013, Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) published a proposed rule that would remove the Gray Wolf from the "List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife." This determination was made after the FWS "evaluated the classification status of gray wolves currently listed in the contiguous United States" and found the "best available scientific and commercial information indicates that the currently listed entity is not a valid species under the Act."

The statutory purpose of ESA is to recover species to the point where they are no longer considered "endangered" or "threatened." The Gray Wolf is currently found in nearly 50 countries around the world and has been placed in the classification of "least concern" globally for risk of extinction by the Species Survival Commission Wolf Specialist Group of the International Union for Conservation Nature (IUCN). This indication makes clear that this species is not endangered nor threatened with extinction.

Federal environmental and species management policies must be based on the best available science. In addition to scientific data showing significant increases to the number of wolves nationally, the proposed rule also recognized a number of significant changes in scientists' understanding of the taxonomy and historic habitat in the 37 years since the gray wolf was first listed as endangered.

The failure by the FWS to fully delist the gray wolf has also led to decreased "social tolerance" and has hurt the ability of many states to maintain this critically important facet of successful wolf recovery. This complex issue includes various considerations – from social to economic and political – and a state's ability to manage their gray wolf population relies on the input and buy-

in of a variety of stakeholders, who can be disenfranchised by the failure to remove problem wolves (lethally or through other means).

We believe that state governments are fully qualified to responsibly manage gray wolf populations and are better able to meet the needs of local communities, ranchers, livestock, and wildlife populations. Delisting the gray wolf under ESA will allow state wildlife officials to more effectively manage wolf populations – as we have seen is possible in states such as Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

On March 3, 2017, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the FWS reasonably found the gray wolf population to have recovered sufficiently, so as to merit a delisting in the State of Wyoming.

While we are pleased to see common sense prevail in this ruling, there could be subsequent legal proceedings that threaten the implementation of the ruling and delisting efforts in the State of Wyoming. Accordingly, Congress must take a clear position on the delisting of the gray wolf and prohibit the Department of the Interior and the FWS from using appropriated funds for any efforts to maintain the wolf as an endangered species.

Therefore, we ask that you include language similar to the following, which was included in the FY 2017 Interior Appropriations bill:

*SEC. \_\_\_\_. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of the Interior to treat any gray wolf in any of the 48 contiguous States or the District of Columbia as an endangered species or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).*

We thank you for your consideration of this request, and for your leadership on the committee.

Sincerely,



Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.  
Member of Congress



Tom McClintock  
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress



Tom Emmer  
Member of Congress



Scott Tipton  
Member of Congress