

Good Afternoon. My name is Jake Tyner, and I am here on behalf of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. On behalf of the business community, I would like to thank Chairman Gosar for the opportunity to join today's roundtable discussion regarding the Western Caucus' legislative package to reform the Endangered Species Act.

The Chamber recognizes the need to protect species that are threatened with extinction, but in doing so it is important to avoid unnecessary impediments to land and natural resources development. Efforts to protect endangered species should be carried out in a reasonable and science-based manner that considers the impact of the methods of protection for endangered species.

We applaud the Western Caucus for prioritizing the reformation of the Endangered Species Act. While we fully support the recently regulatory reforms undertaken by U.S. Department of Interior and U.S. Department of Commerce. Congress, too, must step in to make the requisite changes needed to increase species conservation.

Indeed, it is estimated that only three percent of species have recovered under ESA, which indicates that the law isn't working and improvements need to be made. There is the potential to reform ESA in a way that that will maximize the conservation of our nation's most vulnerable species and provide the regulatory certainty and clarity needed by businesses across all sectors of the economy for their day-to-day operations.

The package of bills discussed today would help further this goal. They provide common-sense modifications that improve the ESA and benefit species, businesses, and the federal agencies enforcing the law. We support these bills and look forward to working with you as the legislative process continues.