

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write in support of your Executive Order establishing a goal to conserve 30 percent of U.S. lands, freshwaters, and ocean areas by 2030 (30x30) to reverse the nature and climate crises. The rapid loss of nature is a dire threat to our nation's health and prosperity; to safeguard natural systems at risk of collapse and fight climate change, the United States must confront this threat without delay. We look forward to working with you to meet this bold and necessary goal.

As you know, collaboration with Tribes, States, local governments, private landowners, and the full range of stakeholders who use and enjoy our lands and waters is critical to ensuring that we can deliver on this bold vision.

Our public lands, including our National Parks, Forests, Wildlife Refuges, and Conservation Lands are American treasures built on decades of bipartisan support. Federal programs that encourage the conservation of private lands and waters are similarly important, including the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Conservation Reserve Program, and many others. The protection of public and private lands forms the foundation of America's conservation legacy; their continued preservation and restoration are critical to our Nation's future.

The climate and nature crises demand more than simply scaling up current efforts. To succeed, we need to use science and large-scale spatial planning to identify, conserve, and protect climate-resilient habitats and to mitigate and compensate for ecological disruption resulting from climate change, deforestation, land use conversion, overfishing, and other impacts. We must deploy robust conservation tools and enhanced funding streams to meet the scope of these dual threats – climate change and the loss of nature.

By marshaling the expertise of U.S. agencies and relying on local and indigenous knowledge and wisdom we can meet the scale of the challenges facing our natural systems. Tribal councils,

farmers, ranchers, fishermen, conservationists, recreationists, hunters, and local governments will all play critical roles. For many of these stakeholders, conserving our shared environment will have immediate and lasting impacts on their lives and livelihoods, which is why we urge you to pursue this ambitious goal through a transparent, stakeholder driven process.

If we don't act now, the problems and costs we face will only increase. Globally, one million species are at risk of extinction, many within only decades.¹ Here in the U.S., a football field's worth of land is lost to development every 30 seconds.² As a result, nearly one in every five plant and animal species in the U.S. are threatened with extinction.³

Furthermore, we know that taking action to protect and restore nature is an economic driver. Every \$1 million dollars invested into federal conservation programs helps generate more than 30 jobs and generates \$4 million in economic value from natural resource goods and services alone.⁴ We can help put Americans back to work protecting our lands, waters, and coasts, restoring treasured landscapes, supporting outdoor access and recreation, and stewarding our natural resources for future generations. These well-paying jobs can bolster communities across the country, promoting a just transition away from fossil fuels, while supporting rural economies for landowners who manage some of the most biodiverse lands and waters.

Your Administration can re-envision the next generation of American conservation, creating a more inclusive and equitable future for the protection of nature. This vision can create jobs in communities that need them, expand access to outdoor spaces and close-to-home recreation opportunities, and restore degraded lands and coastlines that have harmed the health and well-being of local communities.

30x30 also offers a historic opportunity to affirm tribal sovereignty and self-determination, while safeguarding culturally important lands and wildlife. Indigenous peoples in the United States have protected nature for millennia. By supporting tribal communities in fulfilling their vision and priorities for the stewardship of natural and cultural resources, your Administration can renew the incredibly important trust relationship with Tribal Nations.

¹ IPBES. (2019, May). Media Release: Nature's Dangerous Decline 'Unprecedented'; Species Extinction Rates 'Accelerating' [Press Release]. Retrieved from <https://ipbes.net/news/Media-Release-Global-Assessment>

² Lee-Ashley, M. (2019, August 6). How Much Nature Should America Keep?. *Center for American Progress*. Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/reports/2019/08/06/473242/much-nature-america-keep/>

³ Lee-Ashley, M. & Gentile, N. (2015, October). Confronting America's Wildlife Extinction Crisis. *Center for American Progress*. Retrieved from <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/09142515/WildlifeExtinction-report.pdf>

⁴ Lindholm, A., Argust, M., Cors, T., & Brengel, K. (2020). The Great American Outdoors Act: Economic Benefits [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved from <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58a60299ff7c508c3c05f2e1/t/5f12175d249a8858b401e215/1595021149131/GAO+Act-Economic+Benefits-6-18-20.pdf>

Please know that we, the undersigned, stand ready to support your 30x30 implementation efforts and help guarantee this bold policy vision delivers on its promise. Success will require a whole-of-government approach, coordination across Federal, Tribal, State, and local agencies, a commitment collaboration, a willingness to compromise, and good-faith conversations between all Americans.

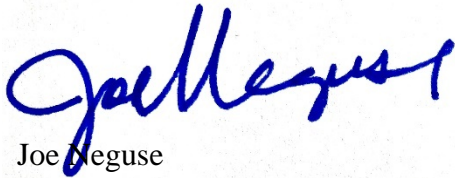
Sincerely,



Raúl M. Grijalva
Chair
House Committee on Natural Resources



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate



Joe Neguse
Chair
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests,
and Public Lands



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senate



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Vice Chair
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/s/Richard J. Durbin

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate



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Mazie K. Hirono

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Michael F. Bennet

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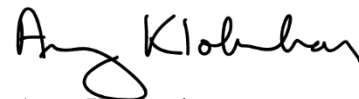
Christopher S. Murphy

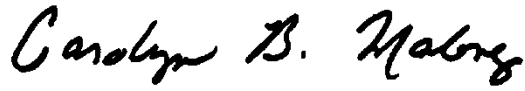
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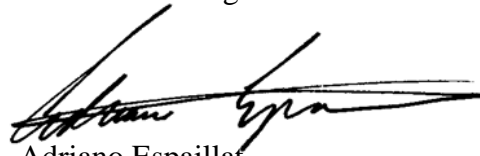

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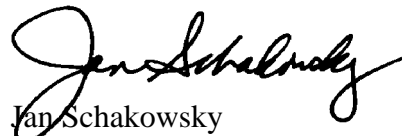

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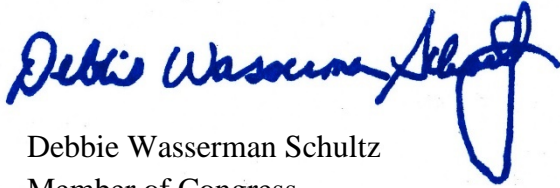
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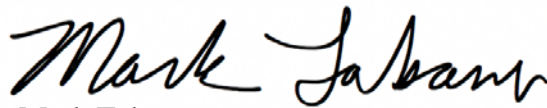
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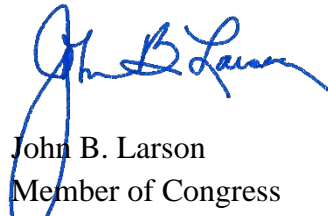
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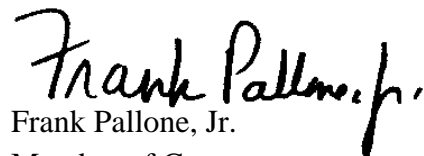
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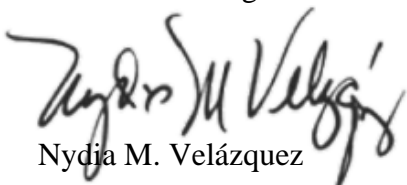
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Frank Pallone, Jr.
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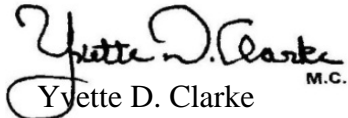
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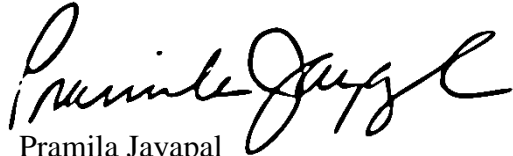



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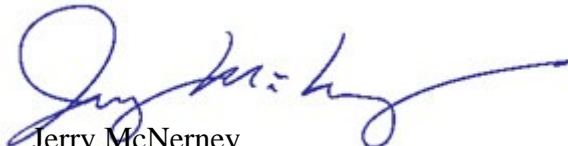

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/s/Brenda L. Lawrence

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