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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

July 30, 2015

The Honorable Rob Bishop
Chairman
House Natural Resources Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

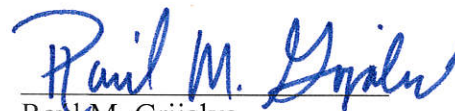
Dear Chairman Bishop:

I write to respectfully request a hearing on H.R. 2697, the Rare Cats and Canids Act of 2015, to be held as soon as the House reconvenes in September. Populations of big cats like leopards, cheetahs, and African lions are declining rapidly, and we must put in place additional mechanisms to ensure their conservation. In the wake of the tragic and reprehensible killing of Cecil the Lion in Zimbabwe earlier this month, the time for action is now.

As you know, Cecil, an iconic African lion known and loved by locals and tourists alike, was illegally lured out of Hwange National Park and killed by a trophy hunter from the United States who had paid more than \$50,000 to shoot a lion. This kind of behavior from our citizens is unacceptable, particularly at a time when we are trying to assert ourselves as world leaders in the fight against global wildlife poaching and trafficking. H.R. 2697 would enhance U.S. financial support for international conservation efforts that would protect lions like Cecil, as well as other rare cats and wild dogs with dwindling populations.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to your response. Should you have any questions, contact Matt Strickler of the House Natural Resources Committee Democratic staff at 202-225-6065.

Sincerely,



Raúl M. Grijalva
Ranking Member
Natural Resources Committee