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

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June 16, 2015

The Honorable Rob Bishop
Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop:

On April 22, 2015, the subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade within the House Committee on Foreign Affairs held an oversight hearing entitled: "Poaching and Terrorism: A National Security Challenge." Late last month, Chairman Ed Royce, introduced a bill, H.R. 2494, the "Global Anti-Poaching Act," which strengthens the capacity of the United States and partner countries to counter wildlife poaching and trafficking. H.R. 2494 received a sequential referral to the Natural Resources Committee.

Wildlife trafficking is a global crisis that threatens our economy and security. Today, wildlife trafficking is the "purview of international criminal cartels that are well structured, highly organized, and capable of illegally moving large commercial volumes of wildlife and wildlife products."¹ It is no longer a crime of opportunity. In fact, the Fish and Wildlife Service, through their law enforcement investigations, have seen direct links between wildlife trafficking and organized crime.

While H.R. 2494 offers some potential solutions, the bill could be improved through review by the Natural Resources Committee. For example, we should examine the proposal in the bill to make the Secretary of State – rather than the Secretary of the Interior – responsible for identifying countries involved in wildlife trafficking. As you know, the Interior Department heads the U.S. delegation to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Further, we should strongly consider strengthening the Pelly Amendment through a process such as the one required by another bill currently pending before our Committee: the TUSKER Act (H.R. 1945).

¹ April 22, 2015. Testimony of Robert Dreher, Associate Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Before the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade on Poaching and Terrorism: A National Security Challenge. Available online: <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA18/20150422/103355/HHRG-114-FA18-Wstate-DreherR-20150422.pdf>.

I believe a hearing on H.R. 2494 and H.R. 1945 would be helpful in determining the best way to stem the tide of illegal wildlife poaching and trafficking. I hope you will agree with me that our Committee should exercise its authority and formally review the legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raúl M. Grijalva". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Raúl M. Grijalva
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources