



July 23, 2018

The Honorable John Barrasso  
United States Senate  
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Barrasso:

I am writing on behalf of Leading Builders of America (LBA), which represents the top 20 home builders in the United States which collectively build over one-third of all new homes in the United States, to thank you for crafting legislation to improve the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The provisions of this legislation will begin an important ESA dialogue that will benefit species, landowners and the state and federal agencies charged with enforcing the law.

We're pleased that the draft will shift more ESA implementation responsibility to state and local governments where appropriate. It would require the Secretary of the Interior to consult with the states when listing a species and provide clear recovery goals and objectives that, if met, would lead to the delisting of a species. It will also reduce ESA administrative and regulatory burdens while making the regulatory process more transparent and accountable. We'd note that private sector stakeholders are often in a position to offer valuable expertise and input through the process but often don't have a formal opportunity to do so. Significantly it requires the use of sound science in the regulatory process encourages more private sector engagement to protect species and preserve habitat.

It is time for Congress to make improvements to the ESA, and LBA commends you for starting this important conversation.

LBA stands ready to work with you to on further improvements to the draft to promote balanced, locally supported solutions to species conservation challenges that protect property rights and encourage responsible development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth Gear", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Kenneth Gear  
CEO

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