

July 13, 2018

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The Honorable John Barrasso, MD
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Barrasso:

Oregon Business & Industry (OBI) is writing in support of our natural resource-based colleagues in Oregon to underscore the need for a balanced and collaborative approach to improving the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Our timber and ranching industries know firsthand the impact of poorly drafted laws and the devastating consequences they have on industry longevity, community livelihood, and overall health of a state's economy. For example, since 1990 and with the enactment of the Northern Spotted Owl decision, too many rural, timber communities across Oregon faced catastrophic losses from which they have never recovered. In other instances, ranchers relinquished their grazing permits because of burdensome, and oftentimes, poorly implemented ESA rules and decisions.

We are encouraged with the bipartisan approach currently underway and the positive steps the proposed ESA amendments are taking toward improving implementation of the ESA. We urge you to continue to engage local stakeholders and work collaboratively and transparently with industry leaders, state conservation agencies, and local governments to seek local solutions to local issues.

OBI and our industry colleagues recognize the importance of protecting our natural resources while balancing the needs of industry. When done right and responsibly, we can protect Oregon's abundant natural resources and ensure economic prosperity for all Oregon communities for generations to come.

Thank you for your leadership on the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018. We are optimistic that together we will find the right balance and path forward.

Sincerely,



Virginia W. Lang
Interim CEO and President