

August 21, 2018

Honorable John Barrasso, Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Modernizing the Endangered Species Act

Dear Chairman Barrasso:

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) write to express our interest in modernizing and streamlining the Endangered Species Act (ESA). AASHTO is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing the State transportation departments in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. We represent all five transportation modes: air, highways, public transportation, rail, and water. Our primary goal is to foster the development, operation, and maintenance of an integrated national transportation system. Our members work closely with USDOT agencies to operate, maintain, and improve the nation's transportation system.

AASHTO believes that as part of the larger discussion currently taking place on how critical transportation infrastructure is funded and delivered, there exists a real opportunity to ensure improved environmental outcomes by modernizing and streamlining the processes within various substantive environmental statutes such as the ESA.

Specifically to the ESA, AASHTO has developed a [series of legislative and administrative recommendations](#) to modernize and streamline ESA processes, including requiring each species listing to include recovery goals and habitat objectives, establishing transparency in carrying out species conservation, and allowing states to receive credit for performing obligations under conservation agreements.

We welcome the opportunity to provide an overview of our recommendations to streamline and modernize ESA. Please don't hesitate to let Shannon Eggleston, AASHTO's Program Director for Environment, know if you have any questions. She can be reached at seggleston@aaashto.org or 202-624-3649.

Regards,



Bud Wright
Executive Director