



May 15, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman
 Committee on Energy and Natural Resources United States Senate
 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510
 VIA FAX 202-224-6163

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

The Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable (ORIR) supports the President’s nomination of David Longly Bernhardt to serve as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, an appointment of great importance to the outdoor recreation industry. As the steward of more than 25% of the nation’s land-base – including prime recreation sites on public lands and waters drawing more than a billion visits annually – the Department is of vital importance to our industry and its customers.

Many of us have known David Bernhardt for years through his prior public service at the Department. We have found him responsive, intelligent and committed to cooperation among government agencies at all levels and the recreation community’s private sector. He understands that we manufacture, sell and service equipment ranging from RVs to boats, skis to fishing equipment and much more that make being outdoors fun. He understands that our industry has designed, built and now operates ski areas and lodging, campgrounds and marinas on public lands, and provides outfitter and guide services – again, helping Americans enjoy and benefit from the shared legacy of our national parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges, vast BLM-managed assets, the waters overseen by the Bureau of Reclamation and more.

David grew up with an appreciation of the outdoors in and around Rifle, Colorado, and those experiences have shaped his priorities and outlook. We worked with him in his role as Interior’s Director of Congressional Affairs on numerous issues, including the crafting of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, and later during his service as the department’s Deputy Chief of Staff and Solicitor.

The Department needs leadership from those aware of the complexities of balancing recreation, conservation and commodity purposes – and a person who understands that there are usually solutions to even very difficult matters if time is invested in understanding the full range of alternatives and then gaining broad buy-in by the range of interests involved in Interior topics.

Those leading the Department of the Interior will play a central role in determining whether the outdoor recreation industry, now estimated to generate \$887 billion in annual spending

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and supporting some 7.6 million jobs, will continue to grow and generate economic and health benefits and support long term community sustainability in areas with major public lands. We are convinced that Mr. Bernhardt will respond to these challenges and assist Secretary Zinke in very positive ways. We respectfully request that this letter and its message of support be included in the record of the May 18, 2017, confirmation hearing by your committee on this nomination.

The Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable is comprised of America's leading outdoor recreation trade associations, representing thousands of U.S. businesses that produce and provide equipment, gear, apparel, vehicles and services for some 150 million Americans who enjoy our nation's public lands, waterways, and byways. Spanning outdoor recreational activities such as boating, fishing, hunting, camping, snow sports and powersports, and including recreational vehicles, outdoor equipment and clothing used to pursue these activities, the Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable is dedicated to growing diverse outdoor participation, expanding recreational access for Americans and promoting conservation. More information on ORIR is attached.

We look forward to working with Mr. Bernhardt and the team at the Department of Interior to advance the outdoor recreation sector, grow jobs in the U.S., and ensure robust public access and treasured experiences in the outdoors that also boost our nation's physical and mental well-being.

Sincerely,

American Recreation Coalition
Archery Trade Association
BoatU.S.
International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association
Marine Retailers Association of America
Motorcycle Industry Council
National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (ARVC)
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Park Hospitality Association
National Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc.
Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association
Recreation Vehicle Industry Association
Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association
Specialty Equipment Market Association
Specialty Vehicle Institute of America

cc: Members, Energy and Natural Resources Committee, United States Senate