

**Alaska Wilderness League ♦ American Bird Conservancy ♦ American Rivers
Association of Partners for Public Lands ♦ Center for Biological Diversity ♦ Clean Water Action
Friends of the Earth ♦ Defenders of Wildlife ♦ Earth Day Network
Endangered Species Coalition ♦ Global Green USA ♦ Kentucky Environmental Foundation
Klamath Forest Alliance ♦ League of Conservation Voters ♦ Los Padres Forest Watch
National Audubon Society ♦ National Parks Conservation Association
National Wildlife Refuge Association ♦ Natural Resources Defense Council ♦ Oceana
Sierra Club ♦ The Conservation Fund ♦ The Trust for Public Land
The Wilderness Society ♦ Tribal Environmental Policy Center**

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman, Committee on Appropriations
S-128 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
H-307 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
S-146A Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

November 19th, 2014

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski, Chairman Rogers, and Ranking Members Shelby and Lowey:

On behalf of a diverse community of environmental, conservation, recreation and historic preservation organizations, we encourage you to pass a spending bill for the remainder of fiscal year 2015 that is free of policy riders that put polluting interests ahead of our air, water, lands, wildlife, public health and climate. We also urge that the bill provides needed investments to promote a healthy environment, to support clean energy innovation, and to improve our health.

The past several budget cycles have been plagued by misguided attempts to insert dozens of major policy reversals that threaten the nation's health and environment. This has resulted in controversy and government closures. The public does not support this wholesale attack on bedrock environmental laws, nor does it serve the nation to risk further economic disruptions. We strongly urge you to reject this divisive approach.

We also strongly believe that the 302(b) Interior allocation has failed to keep pace with needs. Recent reductions including sequestration—in addition to agencies struggling to keep up with inflation and fixed costs—have meant damage to programs that the public strongly supports. These programs are critical to clean air and water, protection and management of public lands, wildlife, public health, historic preservation and clean energy.

We are particularly concerned about the threat of both wildfire suppression funding and the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program to the Interior and Environment's 302(b) allocation. We urge you to ensure that the challenges of both wildfire funding and the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program do not burden that allocation.

We hope to be able to support an omnibus spending bill for the remainder of FY15 that begins to restore funding to the widely-supported programs covered in the Interior Appropriations and other bills and is free of environmentally harmful policy riders.

Sincerely,

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Cc: Interior Subcommittee Chairmen Calvert and Reed and Ranking Members Moran and Murkowski