

MONTANA WOOL GROWERS ASSOCIATION



EST. 1883

July 11, 2018

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

Dear Senator Barasso:

I write on behalf of the membership of the Montana Wool Growers Association (MWGA). The MWGA represents Montana's sheep and wool producers.

MWGA had advocated for many years for reforms to be made to the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Our producers have seen time and time again how it easy it is to put a species under the auspices of the ESA and how hard it is to get one off the endangered species act list. This is why MWGA's membership strongly supports the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018. The benefits of the ESA are being undermined by its procedural flaws.

ESA reform is critical for Montana's sheep producers. In the last 10 years, Montana's producers have had their ability to protect their livestock from predators hamstrung by the fact that both grizzly bears and wolves have been and are ESA protected. While conservation of these two species is a laudable goal, the inability to get these species delisted after recovery goals have been met due to the incessant filing of federal lawsuits is problem that must be addressed.

We join our national organization, the American Sheep Industry, in stating that ESA reform is a priority for agriculture producers and must be a priority for Congress as a result. In this vein, we applaud you for your work on bringing ESA reform to the forefront and for advancing the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2018.

Again, on behalf of the membership of the MWGA, I thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts and priorities on the need for endangered species act reform. We are available to speak with you directly about the issues raised above should you need more information or clarification on the matters discussed herein.

Sincerely,

/s/

James E. Brown

Public Relations Director

MWGA