

September 8, 2020

Vince Malta
2020 President

Bob Goldberg
Chief Executive Officer

ADVOCACY GROUP

William E. Malkasian
Chief Advocacy Officer / SVP

Shannon McGahn
SVP Government Affairs

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

Re: "Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2020"

Dear Chairman Barrasso:

On behalf of the 1.4 million members of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), thank you for introducing the "Endangered Species Act (ESA) Amendments of 2020." This is an important first step at reforming the ESA and reauthorizing the law for the first time in over 30 years. NAR looks forward to working with you to recognize and strengthen the role of private landowners and the regulated community to conserve and recover species.

The "ESA Amendments of 2020" would make several important updates to the law. First, the bill provides for better cooperation between the federal agencies and state and local governments on species conservation measures. NAR is committed to ensuring that private landowners and the regulated community can engage state and local officials to protect and recover species.

Next, NAR commends efforts to revise the recovery planning process under the law. Establishing meaningful recovery goals promotes the downlisting and delisting of species when recovery is achieved. Recovery planning should be a streamlined process that fully considers the important perspectives and input provided by private landowners and the regulated community.

Additionally, NAR supports the language to improve transparency for decisions made under the law. We believe that the ESA process for listings, critical habitat designations and other decisions must be informed by publicly available data and allow for full public participation, better data collection and quality, and transparency.

Finally, the legislation calls for reauthorizing the ESA for the first time since 1988. As you are aware, the ESA was first enacted in 1973, and has remained unauthorized since October of 1992. It is essential that Congress fulfill its duty to review, revise and reauthorize statutes to ensure that they remain effective and continue to fulfill their intended purpose.



Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue. NAR and its members are committed to promoting effective and balanced improvements to the ESA that support the protection of fish, wildlife, and plant populations as well as responsible land, water, and resource management.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vince Malta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "V" and a long, sweeping tail.

Vince Malta
2020 President, National Association of REALTORS®