



March 18, 2016

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
U.S. Senator
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cory Gardner
U.S. Senator
B40B Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Don Beyer
U.S. Representative
431 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
U.S. Representative
203 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dave Reichert
U.S. Representative
1127 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter Welch
U.S. Representative
2303 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Sens. Shaheen and Gardner & Reps. Beyer, McMorris Rodgers, Reichert and Welch:

Thank you for your sponsorship of Outdoor Recreation's Economic Contributions (REC) Act. As our nation celebrates the Centennial of our National Park Service this year, the conversation about public lands, outdoor recreation and the need to engage the next generation in healthy physical activity continues to grow. A crucial component to this dialogue is the economic impact of our expanding outdoor recreation industry. It is important for the U.S. Department of Commerce to start measuring the full economic benefits of our country's outdoor economy, and I strongly support this effort.

Last year Washington completed a detailed economic impact study of outdoor recreation activities in the Evergreen State. We believe this is the most detailed study of its kind in the nation. The report encompassed everything from hunting and fishing to boating, bird-watching and bicycling. The total economic impact in our state alone was measured at \$21.6 billion and almost 200,000 jobs – making it among the largest economic sectors in our state.

While we are very proud of our state's unique and varied outdoor recreation options, we are by no means alone. The Outdoor Industry Association has estimated that, nationwide, the outdoor industry generates \$646 billion and over 6 million jobs. The Americans employed in these positions, regardless of whether they are high-tech industrial designers or mom-and-pop bait and tackle shops, deserve to



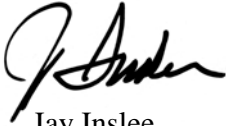
have their industry fairly and accurately counted by the federal government. Clear and reliable data will help policymakers at all levels of government make the best decisions.

To that end, tasking the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Census Bureau and appropriate natural resource agencies with reporting employment and economic activity related to the outdoor recreation industry would be a great step in the right direction. Doing so will create much-needed national data and will also allow states such as Washington to focus on creating more detailed state-specific information for an industry that has historically lacked extensive data.

Across the country, outdoor recreation economic activity is closely related to our beloved national parks and a wide variety of public lands. These assets are crucial for healthy outdoor lifestyles and a healthy outdoor economy, but they can only be properly supported if we begin to measure them accurately and comprehensively.

I appreciate your leadership on this important issue.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee".

Jay Inslee
Governor

cc: The Honorable Penny Pritzker, U.S. Secretary of Commerce
The Honorable Sally Jewell, U.S Secretary of the Interior