



February 1, 2021

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Boozman:

On behalf of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR), we would like to express our support for the nomination of Tom Vilsack to be the next Secretary of Agriculture. We are hopeful that the Senate will confirm Secretary Vilsack in a timely manner to ensure the Department of Agriculture can move forward with strong leadership early in the new administration.

ORR is the nation's leading coalition of outdoor recreation trade associations – made up of 33 national trade associations — as well as other nonprofit organizations and business entities — serving more than 110,000 businesses. According to the most recent data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis released last year, the recreation industry generated \$788 billion in output, accounted for 2.1 percent of GDP, supported 5.2 million jobs and was growing faster than the economy as a whole in every indicator.

The Department of Agriculture will play an important role in strengthening outdoor recreation opportunities for all Americans, especially through national forests managed by the U.S. Forest Service. In the months ahead, Secretary Vilsack and his team will help guide the implementation of the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), which was landmark legislation strongly supported by our industry. Programs like GAOA, as well as the U.S. Forest Service Shared Stewardship Strategy, will help engage partners and make needed investments in our national forests to create more quality outdoor recreation opportunities.

Additionally, we are hopeful that Secretary Vilsack's commitment to rural development will include policies that help grow the outdoor recreation economy in rural communities. To help facilitate this growth, ORR has partnered with The VF Foundation to provide public-private partnership dollars to five communities among those selected by the U.S. Forest Service, USDA Rural Development and Northern Border Regional Commission to help rebuild their main streets around outdoor recreation.

ORR is encouraged by the Biden Administration's goal to combat climate change through the 30 by 30 initiative. We look forward to working with Congress to make sure that through this

initiative, Americans continue to have access to the public lands and waters that make outdoor recreation possible and that help to fuel so much of the nation's economy.

As the nomination process continues, we appreciate you considering ORR's support for Secretary Vilsack and hope that questions regarding outdoor recreation and its critical role in the wellbeing of America's families and economy are incorporated in the upcoming hearing. We look forward to working with the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry in the 117th Congress on important issues for outdoor recreation that will help grow our industry and the nation's economy as a whole.

Sincerely,

America Outdoors Association
American Horse Council
American Mountain Guides Association
Archery Trade Association
Association of Marina Industries
Boat Owners Association of the United States
CHM Government Services
Diving Equipment and Market Association
International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association
Marine Retailers Association of the Americas
National Forest Recreation Association
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Park Hospitality Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
Outdoor Industry Association
PeopleForBikes
Professional TrailBuilders Association
RV Dealers Association
RV Industry Association
Snowsports Industries America
Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals
Specialty Equipment Manufacturers Association
Sports & Fitness Industry Association
The Corps Network