



The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich:

On behalf of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR), we express our strong support for the nomination of Governor Doug Burgum to be the next Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

Governor Burgum's history of support for outdoor recreation, the outdoor recreation economy, and the protection of public lands and waters makes his leadership critical for the Administration and the Department. We have appreciated working with the Governor and his staff, especially in his announcement last year to create a North Dakota Office of Outdoor Recreation. Governor Burgum has shown a commitment to supporting outdoor recreation as an economic driver and a meaningful way to connect communities. As an avid outdoorsman who hunts, snowmobiles, sails, skis, rides horses, side by sides and more, we are hopeful that the Governor's long-time admiration of Teddy Roosevelt, sophisticated understanding of business, and commitment to public-private partnerships will help support and grow the recreation economy, its adjacent sectors, and all who benefit from it in every corner of the country.

ORR is the nation's leading coalition of outdoor recreation associations representing the more than 110,000 outdoor businesses in the recreation economy and the full spectrum of outdoor-related activities. The most recent data from the U.S. Department of Commerce shows that outdoor recreation generated \$1.2 trillion and 5 million American jobs in 2023, comprising 2.3% of the nation's economy and 3.1% of all employees in the country.

The demands and impacts on our public lands and waters are growing, including increased visitation, infrastructure needs, maintenance backlogs, and the impact of extreme weather and natural disasters. Innovative solutions are needed to manage the many challenges facing our public lands and waters and Governor Burgum is positioned to help lead that effort alongside Congressional partners and ORR members.

We appreciate the longstanding tradition at the Department of the Interior to support recreation and the growth of more opportunities for everyone to access the outdoors and the many activities that make up our sector. Along with Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee members, our businesses and associations have strongly supported the Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act, which was recently signed into law. This law will create a pathway to modernizing the Department's policies around outdoor recreation access, infrastructure, permitting, and many other areas that intersect with outdoor recreation. We appreciate the Committee's leadership on this initiative and look forward to working with Governor Burgum and his team on implementing this historic law.

There are also significant policy issues on the horizon, which will ultimately be informed by the next Secretary of the Interior and considered by your Committee, including the reauthorization of the Legacy Restoration Fund. We have appreciated a strong bipartisan relationship with this Committee on legislative matters addressing outdoor recreation and we are confident the same will be true with the next Secretary of the Interior. Ensuring the right policies are in place will support our industry, that grows faster than the national economy and positively impacts local communities and people throughout the country.



The success of the \$1.2 trillion outdoor recreation economy relies on the Department of the Interior managing, safeguarding, and maintaining America's public lands and waters, infrastructure, and increasing access so we can pass on the lifelong benefits of time in nature to our children and all future generations. ORR will seek to work diligently with the next Administration to advance a sustainable and thriving outdoor recreation economy for the benefit of all Americans. We appreciate the opportunity to highlight our support for Governor Burgum's nomination and look forward to working with you and your staff in the 119th Congress.

Sincerely,

Jessica Wahl Turner, President, Outdoor Recreation Roundtable
American Bus Association
American Horse Council
American Prairie
American Sportfishing Association
Archery Trade Association
Association of Marina Industries
Boat U.S.
CHM Government Services
Diving Equipment & Marketing Association
Eddyline Kayaks
International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association
Marine Retailers Association of the Americas
Motorcycle Industry Council
National Forest Recreation Association
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Park Hospitality Association
National Ski Areas Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
Outdoor Hospitality Industry
Outdoor Industry Association
Paddlesports Trade Coalition
PeopleForBikes
Professional TrailBuilders Association
Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association
REI Co-op
RV Dealers Association
RV Industry Association
Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals
Specialty Equipment Market Association
Specialty Vehicle Institute of America
Sports & Fitness Industry Association
The Corps Network