

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Representative _____,

I strongly encourage you to support and co-sponsor H.R. 4647, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. This legislation directs that \$1.3 billion annually of the existing royalties collected from oil, gas, and mineral production on federal lands and waters be used to fund the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program. Monies from the Program would be allocated to each state based on population and geographic sizes. Texas' share would be more than \$60 million per year.

H.R. 4647 is based on recommendations from national business and conservation leaders, including senior officials with Shell Americas, Toyota, and Bass Pro Shops. H.R. 4647 presents an historic opportunity to invest in preventive measures that keep species *off* the Endangered Species list. It does this *without* creating new taxes, using funds that are not currently dedicated to a specific use.

Preventing the decline of species avoids the stricter protections of the Endangered Species Act, allowing businesses to operate with less cost and more regulatory certainty. Oil and gas officials have referred to this approach as "preventive maintenance". It is good for fish and wildlife, good for taxpayers, and good for business and industry.

Hunters, anglers, birders, hikers, campers, and backyard wildlife watchers have created a fast-growing outdoor consumer base that depends on healthy fish and wildlife populations. Today, the Texas outdoor economy generates \$28.7 billion annually in consumer spending, creates 277,000 direct jobs with \$8.9 billion in salary and wages, and generates \$1.9 billion in state and local tax revenue. But emerging diseases, invasive species, and habitat loss are leading to rapid decline of many of the fish and wildlife populations on which the tourism industry depends. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act gives us the opportunity to protect this critical economic engine.

Please co-sponsor H.R. 4647, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, to keep at-risk species from becoming endangered and benefit business, industry, agriculture, conservation, and outdoor recreation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,