

Open Letter of Support for David Bernhardt's Nomination as Interior Secretary

April 3, 2019

The undersigned organizations and individuals write to express our strong support for Acting Secretary David Bernhardt as nominee for Secretary of the Department of Interior (DOI). We urge the United States Senate to confirm Acting Secretary Bernhardt without delay, granting him full authority to manage the nation's lands on behalf of the American people.

Mr. Bernhardt has highly impressive experience for the position. As Acting Secretary of the Interior, Bernhardt leads an agency with more than 70,000 employees who are stewards for 20 percent of the nation's lands, including national parks, monuments, wildlife refuges and other public lands. From July 2017 through January 2019, he served as Deputy Interior Secretary, spearheading many of the (DOI) reforms that have improved management, value, and stewardship of federal-owned lands. Under the George W. Bush administration, Mr. Bernhardt served as Solicitor, Deputy Solicitor, Deputy Chief of Staff and Counselor to the Secretary, and Director of Congressional and Legislative Affairs and Counselor to the Interior Secretary. Mr. Bernhardt has also served on the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

As Acting Secretary and Deputy Interior Secretary, Mr. Bernhardt has played a key role in the Trump administration's sound stewardship of federal lands. Under the Trump administration and Mr. Bernhardt, DOI finalized the Hunt-Fish Rule which removed approximately 1,400 regulations and simplified 710 regulations to reduce the regulatory burden on the public, more closely match state hunting and fishing regulations, and expand hunting and fishing opportunities at 136 refuges. DOI also collaborated with a bipartisan group of Western governors to reform management plans for the Greater Sage Grouse. The amended plans now have unanimous support of governors of Wyoming, Nevada, California, Idaho, Oregon, Utah, and Colorado.

While providing sound environmental oversight, DOI under the Trump administration and Mr. Bernhardt also promoted American energy abundance and reform of over-intrusive government regulations and restrictions. DOI has saved a total \$3.7 billion through major deregulatory actions and has taken concrete steps to expedite and streamline the permitting process for infrastructure and energy projects reducing time frames under the National Environmental Policy Act. DOI in 2018 achieved the second straight year of growth under President Trump in federal energy revenues, including a record-shattering oil and gas lease sale on federal lands in New Mexico, grossing nearly \$1 billion. That is more revenue than all federal onshore oil and gas sales in 2017.

David Bernhardt is an outstanding choice for Interior Secretary. His leadership will allow the Trump administration to continue providing outstanding stewardship for the American people regarding federal-owned lands. We urge his prompt confirmation.

Sincerely,



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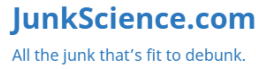
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