

**POLICY PRIORITIES AT THE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND THE ADMINISTRATION'S FIS-
CAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET PROPOSAL**

OVERSIGHT HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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**OVERSIGHT HEARING ON POLICY PRIORITIES
AT THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND THE ADMINISTRATION'S FISCAL YEAR
2019 BUDGET PROPOSAL**

**Thursday, March 15, 2018
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC**

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m., in room 1324, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Rob Bishop [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Bishop, Young, Gohmert, Lamborn, Wittman, McClintock, Pearce, Thompson, Labrador, Tipton, LaMalfa, Westerman, Graves, Hice, Bergman, Cheney, Johnson, González-Colón, Gianforte, Curtis; Grijalva, Bordallo, Costa, Sablan, Tsongas, Huffman, Lowenthal, Beyer, Torres, Gallego, Hanabusa, Barragán, Soto, McEachin, Brown, Clay, and Gomez.

The CHAIRMAN. We are happy to welcome all of you here for this hearing that deals with the Department of the Interior and their Fiscal Year 2019 budget. The Committee on Natural Resources will come to order.

Under Committee Rule 4(f), any oral opening statements at hearings are limited to the Chairman, the Ranking Minority Member, and the Vice Chair. This will also allow us to hear from witnesses sooner. Therefore, I am going to ask unanimous consent that all other Members' opening statements be made part of the hearing record if they are submitted to the Subcommittee on Federal Lands Clerk by 5:00 p.m. today.

I appreciate that. I am going to submit most of my opening statement—well, the bulk of my opening statement—to the record.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. ROB BISHOP, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF UTAH**

The CHAIRMAN. Secretary, we appreciate having you here. Thank you, as well to those who are joining you. We appreciate that opportunity. We want to welcome you back to the Committee, Mr. Secretary.

I do have some praise I want to give to what you have done so far, as you have repositioned the Department into looking at what your core statutory functions are, and new evidence that the greatest concern is how you actually impact people.

For too long we have had people coming back here addressing us dealing with special interest groups, as opposed to simply people. We like the way you looked at some of the burdensome regulations that you inherited from the prior administration.

We will be talking about two elements that I think are extremely significant. I think some of your proposals have instituted a new

degree of federalism never heard before, which is very refreshing around this place.

And also, you have some new initiatives that deal with the backlog. I hope you will be talking to that. It is one of the things we will be talking about, not just today but in the coming few weeks at the same time.

It is a significant issue.

With that, I will submit the rest of my statement for the record.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bishop follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. ROB BISHOP, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES

Welcome back to the Committee, Mr. Secretary. We are pleased to have you here to testify on the Administration's Fiscal Year 2019 budget and its policy priorities for the Department of the Interior.

Let me start by offering my praise for your work on many fronts to improve land and resource management functions of the Department. Over the past year, you have worked proactively to reposition the Department as an ally and advocate to the people it serves, and to restore its core statutory functions.

The Administration has also prioritized greater American energy abundance and security, and you have positioned the Department as a chief contributor in this endeavor. In doing so, you have acted to address many overly burdensome regulations initiated under the prior administration that resulted in hindered American energy development on Federal lands, lost revenues and fewer opportunities for western communities.

Additionally, the Department has used its existing authorities to promote the responsible development of our vast onshore and offshore energy resources, including the Department's proposed National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

Whether they know it or not, many of my Democratic colleagues have become ardent supporters of federalism because of this plan. Imagine that: Political leaders wanting to decide if and how energy resources are developed in their states and not be dictated to from Washington. Unfortunately, their rush to defend local voices is only a priority when it benefits their own interests.

The Administration and the Department have also demonstrated a commitment to greater stewardship of public lands. You clearly realize the importance of conserving and maintaining lands and resources already under Federal control and have prioritized addressing our massive maintenance backlog as part of this effort. You have also taken on a broader reorganization of the Department to improve agency bureaucracy, elevate local input, and more effectively and efficiently serve communities and taxpayers.

The Administration's Fiscal Year 2019 budget reflects a commitment to these priorities and several others. The Administration's nearly \$800 million budget investment in energy related programs demonstrates your commitment to an "All of the Above" energy strategy to promote both onshore and offshore development.

The budget request includes innovative solutions to tackle the maintenance backlog, including a Public Lands Infrastructure Fund, which has garnered bipartisan support. Some have criticized your proposal for its reliance on oil and gas revenues as its funding mechanism. Ironically, many of these same special interest groups have led the charge for *permanent* reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a program that is almost entirely funded by oil and gas development on Federal lands.

Political posturing from a small group of fringe special interests shouldn't be allowed to detract a proposal viewed by most Members as a thoughtful and creative legislative proposal. I appreciate your commitment to this issue and look forward to advancing a solution during this Congress.

As mentioned, the Department has also outlined an ambitious plan for reorganization, a concept I wholeheartedly support. The Committee looks forward to continuing to work with you on this important initiative, and views the related \$17.5 million request within your budget as a down payment in this endeavor.

Mr. Secretary, you and your staff conducted significant outreach to Congress, governors, local communities and interested stakeholders on this proposal. This sort of local engagement is important in all decisions your Department makes and we hope this outreach will continue as you formalize next steps in the process.

The President's budget also makes tough choices, balancing fiscal realities while prioritizing scarce resources. Overall, it reflects a commitment to restore public

access to public lands, improve resource management and solutions that promote both conservation and economic prosperity.

This Committee is dedicated to advancing shared goals and working to provide any additional tools and authorities necessary to achieve them. I look forward to your testimony and the engagement of our Members.

The CHAIRMAN. I will now turn to Mr. Grijalva for his opening statement.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARIZONA

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me join the Chairman in welcoming you, Mr. Secretary, to the Committee. We are glad that you are here to discuss the Trump administration's spending priorities for the Department, and an opportunity for this Committee to exercise its oversight responsibilities.

And right now it seems a good time to exercise those oversight responsibilities. Recently, we have seen several reports of questionable spending at your Department. These reports have raised significant questions about your stewardship of taxpayer dollars. I believe the public deserves a detailed accounting of these questionable expenses, particularly now that you are proposing enormous budget cuts across your Department.

For example, just last week, it was revealed that taxpayers are on the hook for more than \$138,000 to replace some doors in your personal office. This, understandably, reminds the public of the \$31,000 dining set that was recently ordered by another cabinet secretary's office. In your case, your Department has said that the office's redecorating expenses are "reasonable." I hope you will provide some detailed answers today explaining why spending \$138,000 for office doors is a reasonable expense for the public to bear.

Going down the list of questionable spending, last month, taxpayers paid for your travel 1 mile outside Pennsylvania's 18th Congressional District 2 weeks before a competitive special election where you appeared in a photo-op with the Republican candidate in that race holding an over-sized ceremonial check for abandoned mine cleanup. As you know, these grants are routine, and you could have gone to over 1,000 abandoned mine sites in over 25 states to announce the issuance of grants for that cleanup. So, the question for the Committee, should you choose to answer that one, is why this particular site?

In October, we saw reports that taxpayers paid for several trips where you attended political fundraisers, including events at a ski resort in Montana and an upscale Alaskan steak house. These trips create the appearance that taxpayers are financing partisan political work. Taxpayer-funded trips to Santa Barbara and Montana, where you own homes, have similarly been called into question.

In fact, there have been enough questions about your taxpayer-funded travels that both the Office of Special Counsel and the Interior's Inspector General have opened investigations. This questionable spending is even more troubling, given the fact that you are simultaneously proposing significant funding cuts for important programs serving the American people.

Let me give you some of these enormous cuts in areas such as the construction of rural water projects which deliver drinking water to rural and tribal communities without potable, reliable drinking water; cuts to core climate research and science programs at USGS; cuts to renewable energy programs; and a 90 percent cut for land acquisition under the popular, bipartisan Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Americans expect our Federal agencies to responsibly manage taxpayers' money. The reports of your spending signal to the public that maybe we are not meeting that critical standard.

While the Majority does not seem bothered by reports of ethical lapses and conflicts of interest at the Department, my Democratic colleagues and I have sent dozens of oversight requests seeking information about these matters. Unfortunately, you have not seen fit to respond to any of them.

Last year I, along with other Members, sent two letters asking about the decision of the Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation, and Enforcement to halt the NAS study on the severe health impacts suffered by people who live near mountaintop removal coal mines. The rationale provided does not withstand scrutiny, and cancellation would result in the waste of approximately \$400,000 in taxpayer dollars. Yet, there has been no response. This is a public health issue and I understand it is not a coal industry priority, but it is a public health issue to the American people.

I also requested justification for your review of national monuments, but you did not respond, and it was not until the *Washington Post* leaked a copy of the final report that the public got a chance to see what it was and get an explanation as to why some monuments were included and some were not.

Last month, I requested information about another secret plan that BLM has been working on to steamroll the rights of Americans to an open government and an open process. The policy changes in the secret report are almost as disturbing as the process in which it was generated. The comment period was announced via press release, and comments were entered through a Google form. Your agency omitted contrary opinions and handpicked a selection of anonymous supportive comments. By any measure, that is really far from transparent.

You have an opportunity today to address these and other concerns to all my colleagues on the Committee, and I sincerely hope that you will.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Otherwise, everything OK?

Mr. GRIJALVA. Everything is good.

The CHAIRMAN. Good, good.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Grijalva follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, RANKING MEMBER,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome back to the Committee, Mr. Secretary. I'm glad you're here to discuss the Trump administration's spending priorities for the Department of the Interior, and I thank you for being here so we can exercise our oversight responsibilities.

I'm sorry to say, Mr. Secretary, that right now seems to be a good time to exercise our oversight responsibilities. Recently, we've seen several reports of questionable

spending at your Department. These reports have raised significant questions about your stewardship of taxpayer dollars, and the public deserves a detailed accounting of these questionable expenses, particularly now that you're proposing enormous budget cuts across your Department.

For example, just last week, it was revealed that taxpayers are on the hook for more than \$138,000 to replace some doors in your personal office. This understandably reminds the public of the \$31,000 dining set that was recently ordered for another cabinet secretary's office. In your case, your Department has said your office's redecorating expenses are "reasonable." I hope you'll provide some detailed answers today explaining why spending so much for your office's doors is a reasonable expense for the public to bear.

Going down the list of questionable spending, last month, taxpayers paid for you to travel 1 mile outside Pennsylvania's 18th Congressional District 2 weeks before a competitive special election, where you appeared in a photo-op with the Republican candidate in that race holding an over-sized ceremonial check for abandoned mine cleanup. The grants you were announcing are routine and you could have gone to over a thousand abandoned mine sites for a photo-op. You will need to explain to the Committee how you chose that one.

In October, we saw reports that taxpayers paid for several trips where you attended political fundraisers, including events at a ski resort in Montana and an upscale Alaskan steak house. These trips create the appearance that taxpayers are financing your partisan political work. Taxpayer-funded trips to Santa Barbara and Montana, where you own homes, have similarly been called into question.

In fact, there have been enough questions about your taxpayer-funded travels that both the Office of Special Counsel and Interior's Inspector General have opened investigations. This questionable spending is even more troubling given the fact that you're simultaneously proposing significant funding cuts for important programs serving the American people.

To take just a few examples, you've proposed enormous cuts: for the construction of rural water projects, which deliver drinking water to rural and tribal communities without reliable drinking water; to core climate research and science programs at USGS; for renewable energy programs; and a 90 percent cut for land acquisition under the popular, bipartisan Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Americans expect our Federal agencies to responsibly manage taxpayers' money. The reports of your spending signal to the public that you are not meeting this critical standard.

While the Majority has not seemed bothered by reports of ethical lapses and conflicts of interest at the Department, my Democratic colleagues and I have sent dozens of oversight requests seeking information about these matters. Unfortunately, you have not seen fit to respond.

For example: Last year, I sent two letters asking about the decision of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement to halt an NAS study on the severe health impacts suffered by people who live near mountaintop removal coal mines. The rationale provided does not withstand scrutiny, and cancellation would result in the waste of approximately \$400,000 in taxpayer dollars. Yet, there has been no response.

I also requested a justification for your "review" of national monuments, but you did not respond and it wasn't until the *Washington Post* leaked a copy of the final report did the public get any explanation as to why some monuments were included and some were not.

Last month, I requested information about another secret plan that BLM has been working on to steamroll the rights of Americans to an open government. The policy changes in the secret report are almost as disturbing as the process in which it was generated—the comment period was announced via press release and comments were entered through a Google form. Your Agency omitted contrary opinions and handpicked a selection of anonymous supportive comments. By any measure, this is far from transparent.

You have an opportunity today to address these and other concerns, and I hope you will.

Thank you, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. We want to welcome the witnesses that are here today.

First of all, the Honorable Ryan—do I have to say honorable all the time here—the Honorable Ryan Zinke, who is Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

He is accompanied by Olivia Barton Ferriter—we appreciate you—who is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget, Finance, Performance, and Acquisition—long title, but is here to answer specific questions on details of the budget, as well as Ms. Denise Flanagan, who is the Director of the Office of Budget within the Department of the Interior.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. Apparently there is another statement from the Democrat side. We do allow the Vice Chairs. We are going to waive that on our side.

Mr. Huffman, apparently you want to make a statement.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. JARED HUFFMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome to Secretary Zinke and our witnesses.

We are here to examine the President's Fiscal Year 2019 budget request for the Department of the Interior, a budget that many of us find deeply disappointing. It is not just the huge cuts that would hamstring critically important programs like western drought funding, climate research, endangered species conservation, and land acquisition through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

This is a budget that places the exploitation of our public lands above any other uses. It undermines national parks and cuts land and water conservation. It turns back the clock on our Federal Government's role to a time before Teddy Roosevelt, John Muir, and Gifford Pinchot.

This is a budget that prioritizes the profit that oil, gas, and coal companies can dig, drill, and otherwise wring out of our public lands, with no consideration of future generations or the long-term impacts to health and the environment. We are producing more oil and natural gas today than ever before, and now we have so much that we export millions of barrels of crude and billions of cubic feet of gas overseas every day, and yet, according to the priorities in this President's budget, the Interior Department still isn't doing enough favors for oil and gas companies.

Every year, average global temperatures get hotter. The Arctic ice cap gets smaller, storms get stronger, and droughts get more severe. Yet, according to the priorities in this budget, the Interior Department had been previously thinking and doing too much to combat global climate change.

In over 3,600 pages of budget documents from your Department, the phrases "climate change," "climate impact," "climate science," and "climate resilience" are used a grand total of 31 times combined, with 21 of those times being references to programs that are being slashed or eliminated.

The new DOI strategic plan eliminates all references to climate change, but makes sure that the first three words in the new departmental vision statement are to "promote energy dominance."

That is the kind of vision that leads to opening both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts to unwanted offshore drilling.

It is the kind of vision that leads to stacking a royalty collection advisory committee with oil, gas, and coal executives, which, unsurprisingly, led to recommendations to give those industries huge discounts and rip off the American taxpayers for the use of their lands and waters.

That is the kind of vision that leads to a cynical proposal to pay for maintenance in our national parks through vastly expanded drilling and mining. You want to fix that leaky roof at the visitor center? Fine, let's drill a few more oil wells.

We should not have to drill our parks in order to save them, especially not when the President is continuing to celebrate the enormous budget holes that he and this Republican Congress just created with their tax cuts.

The more you look at this budget, the more offensively misplaced priorities you see. The budget proposes drastic cuts to programs that have helped the United States to lead the international fight against wildlife trafficking, replacing these proven efforts with an ill-conceived International Wildlife Conservation Council to carry out the wishes of trophy hunters and the NRA.

And now it has gotten worse. Following a lawsuit by the NRA and others, unfortunately, Mr. Secretary, your Department has reopened the door for more elephant tusks and lion hides to be imported into the United States, lifting the ban on these big game trophies on a case-by-case basis. President Trump, who will never be mistaken for a conservationist, rightly described these trophy hunts as a horror show for elephants.

And while the Department is rolling back protections, ironically, China is stepping up its work on international wildlife conservation. So, just when our years of pressure and leadership are starting to work in the world community, we are abdicating our leadership role.

This decision to allow elephant trophies to be imported reflects an administration under the undue influence of the NRA. And we have seen reports that taxpayers recently paid for you to stay at the Four Seasons Resort in Dallas to attend a conference organized by the NRA, where you also reportedly met with several campaign donors.

I am reminded, too, of the decision by political appointees in your Department to muzzle the National Park Service's concerns about the provisions of the NRA-backed silencer bill.

The bottom line is we see a budget here that should uphold strong environmental protections for air, water, wildlife, and natural places, areas where we have been a world leader. But instead, this budget would dismantle those things. In so many ways right now, this great agency is mired in chaos, cronyism, and at least the appearance of corruption. That, and the upside-down budget priorities surely have TR rolling in his grave.

With that, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Huffman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HON. JARED HUFFMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And welcome back to the Natural Resources Committee, Secretary Zinke.

We're here to examine the President's Fiscal Year 2019 budget request for the Department of the Interior, a budget that is deeply disappointing. It's not just the huge cuts that would hamstring critically important programs, like western drought funding, climate research, endangered species conservation, and land acquisition through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

This is a budget that places the exploitation of our public lands above any other uses. It undermines national parks and cuts land and water conservation, and it turns back the clock on the Federal Government's role to a time before Teddy Roosevelt, John Muir, and Gifford Pinchot.

This is a budget that prioritizes the profit that oil, gas, and coal companies can dig, drill, or otherwise wring out of our public lands, with no consideration of future generations or the long-term impacts to health and the environment. We are producing more oil and natural gas than ever before in our Nation's history, and we now have so much that we export millions of barrels of crude and billions of cubic feet of gas overseas every day, yet according to the priorities in this President's budget, the Interior Department still isn't doing *enough* favors for the oil and gas companies.

Every year, average global temperatures get hotter, the Arctic ice cap gets smaller, storms get stronger, and droughts get more severe, yet according to the priorities in this President's budget, the Interior Department had been previously thinking and doing *too much* to combat climate change.

In over 3,600 pages of budget documents from your Department, the phrases "climate change," "climate impact," "climate science," and "climate resilience" are used a grand total of 31 times combined, with 21 of them being references to programs being slashed or eliminated.

The new DOI strategic plan eliminates all references to climate change, but makes sure that the first three words in the new Departmental vision statement are to "promote energy dominance." That's the kind of vision that leads to opening both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts to unwanted offshore drilling.

That's the kind of vision that leads to stacking a royalty collection advisory committee with oil, gas, and coal executives, which—unsurprisingly—led to recommendations to give those industries huge discounts and rip off the American taxpayers for the use of their lands and waters.

That's the kind of vision that leads to a cynical proposal to pay for maintenance in our National Parks through vastly expanded drilling and mining. You want to fix the leaky roof in that visitors center? Fine, hope you don't mind the seismic testing outside the front gate.

We should not have to drill our parks in order to save them. Especially not when the President is continuing to celebrate the enormous budget holes that he and this Republican Congress created with their tax cut scam.

The more you look at this budget, the more offensively misplaced priorities you see. This budget proposes drastic cuts to programs that have helped the United States lead the international fight against wildlife trafficking, replacing those proven efforts with an ill-conceived "International Wildlife Conservation Council" to carry out the wishes of trophy hunters and the NRA.

And now it's gotten worse: following a lawsuit by the NRA and others, your Department has re-opened the door for more elephant tusks and lion hides to be imported into the United States, lifting the ban on these big game trophies on a case-by-case basis. President Trump—who will never be mistaken for a wildlife conservationist—rightly described these trophy hunts as a "horror show" for elephants.

And while the Interior Department is rolling back protections, China is stepping up its work on international wildlife conservation.

The decision to allow for elephant trophies to be imported into our country reflects an Administration under the undue influence of the NRA. We've seen reports that taxpayers recently paid for you to stay at the Four Seasons Resort in Dallas to attend a conference organized by the NRA, where you also reportedly met with several campaign donors.

I am reminded, too, of the decision by political appointees in your Department to sideline the National Park Service's concerns about provisions of the NRA-backed Silencer Bill that would prohibit the Park Service from regulating hunting and fishing within park boundaries.

This is a sad state of affairs. The Interior Department budget should uphold our strong environmental protections for air, water, wildlife, and natural places. These are areas where we have been a world leader.

This budget would instead dismantle that conservation legacy bit by bit, rewarding extractive industry while ignoring our responsibilities to our children and grandchildren.

I have a lot of questions about this budget's misplaced priorities that I hope we'll have time for, but for now I look forward to hearing the Secretary's testimony, and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Gohmert, we will waive your statement so we can get back to questions, we can hear speeches all the time. We will waive your speech, going forward with that. Whether you want to waive it or not, you just waived it.

Mr. Zinke, let me turn the time over to you. You understand how the system works. You have to turn the microphone on. You have 5 minutes for the opening presentation, and then we will launch right into questions for you, if that is OK.

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. RYAN ZINKE, SECRETARY,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, DC**

Secretary ZINKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Committee members, for the opportunity to offer my support for President Trump's Fiscal Year 2019 budget for the Department of the Interior. With your permission, I would like to submit my entire statement for the record.

The President has been very clear about his priorities, and he has spent the first year in office keeping his promises he has made to the American people. And he is keeping his promises. The budget is a major step toward keeping another promise: rebuilding our infrastructure.

Our proposal is the largest investment in our public lands infrastructure in the history of this Nation. Our public lands are recognized as our greatest treasures, but they have suffered serious neglect from our Nation's leaders from both parties over the past.

Interior's deferred maintenance budget backlog is \$16 billion; \$11.5 billion of that can be found in our beloved national parks. This includes everything from roads, bridges, tunnels, visitor centers, and restrooms. It is no way to treat our national treasures. At the Grand Canyon alone, for example, a water pipe has broke 80 times since 2010. It has forced emergency rationing and has cost millions of dollars to fix over and over.

The President's budget proposes legislation for new public lands infrastructure to address the deferred maintenance problem. This legislation is a top priority. It is a legislation based on all energy, not oil and gas, as our policy is clear. We are American energy first, all types of energy, and not just oil and gas.

The fund will provide up to \$18 billion over 10 years for maintenance improvements in our national parks, wildlife refuges, and Bureau of Education, in that I am responsible for the education of 48,000 American Indian Natives, and they deserve a world-class education, too. This budget also includes \$1.3 billion for construction and repairs.

Infrastructure is not an expense, it is an investment. Our budget does just that, it invests in our Nation's treasures. Our public lands should be for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, as what is expressed in the Roosevelt Arch at the Yellowstone National Park.

In 2006, we had 330 million visitors through our parks, and spent an estimated \$18.4 billion in local gateway regions, nationwide. The economic support of the recreational industry is at \$887 billion and employs approximately 7.6 million Americans. All Americans should have the opportunity to enjoy our national parks, but without a significant investment in infrastructure to go along with a record-setting amount of visitors we have on a yearly basis, we are simply loving our parks to death.

Along with being a great steward of our public lands, again, I am the champion of our Indian Nations, and I take that responsibility seriously, in that it provides \$634 million to address our backlog of 150 Bureau of Indian Education schools in 23 states.

We see a great opportunity also to reorganize the Department for the next 100 years, and have the same courage Roosevelt did 100 years ago to bring this Nation on a path of our public lands. As a retired Navy SEAL, I think you will look at the front lines. Our front lines are too short and the authority in Washington to make decisions about our public lands in the field has oftentimes been wrong.

This budget includes \$18 million to begin shifting resources to the front line, where they belong, and establish unified regional boundaries in Interior's bureaus. This reorganization will also enable us to achieve our mission of stewardship.

Our organization is based on science. It is based on watersheds, wildlife corridors, ecosystems to manage our public lands and waters according to the best science, best practices, longest term, greatest good. That is the American conservation ethic.

This budget also recognizes that American strength relies on American energy. Under President Trump we are pursuing and reaching American energy dominance. And yes, I am proud to say that America produced 10.6 million barrels a day. For the first time in 60 years we are an exporter of liquid natural gas. I wish there was a battery. But until we get a battery, we are going to produce energy here at home. President Trump's tax cuts and smart regulation are helping to grow the American economy. We are growing the economy and American energy dominance is a part of that growth.

All told, our budget request for Fiscal Year 2019 is \$11.7 billion, with a proposed transfer—the Department of Defense for the Palau contract, or compact. It raised it to \$11.8 billion.

This budget clearly lays out a top priority of this Administration of energy, conservation, reorganization, and rebuilding our park system, our national wildlife system, and our Indian education opportunities.

With that, I am happy to take your questions.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Zinke follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RYAN ZINKE, SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the Committee, I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss the 2019 President's Budget for the Department of the Interior. The 2019 Budget Request for Interior is \$11.7 billion. The President's budget also proposes to transfer \$111.0 million of discretionary funding from the Department of Defense to support the 2010 Compact Review Agreement with Palau, increasing Interior's total 2019 request to \$11.8 billion.

2019 Budget Priorities

Interior's 2019 budget prioritizes American interests with targeted investments to advance American energy dominance, enhance public access to public lands, and strengthen the economy through infrastructure investment, regulatory relief, and fiscal responsibility. The Department's 2019 budget reflects the Administration's commitment to strike the right balance of development and conservation of America's resources to advance important national objectives.

A major component of the 2019 budget is the Public Lands Infrastructure legislative proposal, which will provide up to \$18 billion to address Interior's deferred maintenance backlog in the national parks, national wildlife refuges, and Bureau of Indian Education-funded schools. The investment in the Interior's infrastructure will be funded by Federal revenues derived from rents, rights-of-ways for energy purposes, and royalties collected by the Department of the Interior. The proposal complements the President's national infrastructure investment initiative and recognizes the strategic importance of long-term investment in America's treasures.

GENERATING REVENUE AND UTILIZING NATURAL RESOURCES

Growing America's Economy

Across Interior's diverse mission, the 2019 budget emphasizes the Department's crucial role in promoting economic growth for America. America's lands hold tremendous job-creating assets. Interior supports \$254 billion in estimated economic benefit, while direct grants and payments to states, tribes, and local communities provide an estimated \$10 billion in economic benefit. In 2017, the Department collected \$9.6 billion from energy, mineral, grazing, and forestry activities on behalf of the American people. Interior also supports the economy by eliminating unnecessary and burdensome Federal regulatory requirements. For example, in 2017, Interior initiated 21 deregulatory actions all with significant associated savings for the taxpayer, once enacted.

The 2019 budget maintains support for Interior programs that play a critical role in encouraging national infrastructure development. The 2019 budget includes \$98.8 million for the Fish and Wildlife Service's planning and consultation activities to support development while avoiding species conflicts. This request enables FWS to meet legal consultation requirements and avoid logjams that could delay infrastructure projects and associated economic benefits to communities, states, tribes, and companies. The request includes \$118.7 million for the Bureau of Reclamation's construction of water delivery systems for tribes and local communities. In addition, Reclamation continues to explore future water storage opportunities. The budget also includes \$48.3 million for the Bureau of Land Management's cadastral program, which maps and surveys the lands and resources needed to permit rights-of-way and other infrastructure project requirements in a timely fashion.

Advancing Energy Dominance

Interior plays a significant role in the Administration's objective to achieve America's energy dominance. The budget proposes \$792.0 million in current and permanent funding for energy related programs across the Department. Interior's 2019 budget continues to support an "all-of-the-above" energy development strategy, increasing funding for onshore and offshore oil and gas, expanding coal activities, and sustaining the current pace of renewable energy development.

A large portion of Interior's energy development activities occur on the Outer Continental Shelf. The 2019 request includes support from offsetting collections for a total offshore energy development and safety program of \$379.2 million. The budget includes a total of \$179.3 million for offshore oil, gas, and renewable energy development activities managed by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. It includes \$9.4 million for BOEM to prepare the 2019–2024 National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program. The request for BOEM also includes \$28.1 million for Renewable Energy activities across the Bureau. The 2019 budget includes \$199.9 million for the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement's programs to

streamline the permitting process, conduct inspections, evaluate emerging offshore technologies, improve safety, conduct training, and maintain up-to-date policies, standards, and guidelines.

Onshore, the budget includes \$176.3 million in current and permanent funding for the BLM oil and gas management program which generated \$348.9 million from bonus bids derived from onshore oil and gas lease sales in 2017. The 2019 budget includes \$137.2 million in appropriated funds for BLM oil and gas management and oversight, including leasing, permitting, and inspections. This funding will be used to expand areas available for leasing, expedite permitting, and improve various aspects of program management. The budget includes \$19.5 million for the BLM coal management program to help reduce processing times, simplify the lease application process, and improve the timeliness to complete lease sale fair market value determinations. The budget includes \$16.0 million for BLM to support onshore Renewable Energy development.

An important component of Interior's natural resource programs is the collection and disbursement of receipts from development. The 2019 budget includes \$137.5 million for the Office of Natural Resources Revenue. In 2017, Interior held the first meeting of the re-established Royalty Policy Committee, which includes 20 members representing local, tribal, and state governments and other stakeholders. The RPC advises the Secretary on the fair market value and revenue collection from Federal and Indian mineral and energy leases, including from renewable energy sources.

Increasing Natural Resource Development

Interior manages a wealth of additional natural resource assets that require balanced stewardship and management. Maintaining healthy and productive forests requires active management. The 2019 budget includes \$9.5 million for BLM's Public Domain Forestry program and \$90.0 million for the Oregon and California grant lands. Both programs support jobs and local economies through timber and timber product sales. The programs also maintain and improve the productivity and resilience of forest and woodland ecosystems through sales and forest development projects such as density management and reforestation.

The BLM actively manages rangeland and grazing activities on public lands in the West which remain a vital part of local western economies. The 2019 budget includes \$82.1 million for the Rangeland Management program. The BLM manages nearly 18,000 livestock grazing permits and leases on the public lands.

Another example is the U.S. Geological Survey Mineral Resources program which conducts assessments to identify critical minerals and estimate potential supplies. A recent Secretarial Order directs all Interior bureaus to identify a list of critical minerals, identify domestic sources, and streamline permitting to encourage domestic production of these critical minerals. The 2019 budget for USGS includes \$19.1 million to support this Administration priority. With this funding, USGS will accelerate nationwide geological, geophysical, and topographical surveys of the United States to locate domestic critical mineral sources.

CONSERVING OUR LAND AND WATER AND EXPANDING OUTDOOR ACCESS

Interior is the steward of America's public lands and cultural resources for the benefit of current and future generations. Taking care of the resources we have rather than acquiring new Federal lands continues to be a top priority in the 2019 budget. To administer ongoing projects, the budget for land acquisition programs across the Department is \$8.1 million.

The 2019 budget includes \$4.6 billion for operating programs in the three primary land management bureaus—BLM, FWS, and the National Park Service. This funding supports the day-to-day management of the natural resources and public amenities of America's national parks, national wildlife refuges, and BLM-managed public areas, including its national conservation lands. Within this request is funding to support visitor services and safety, law enforcement, and maintenance of facilities. Early eradication and control of invasive species is an example of a core stewardship activity shared Department-wide, which is funded through land management operations. Across Interior, the 2019 budget includes a total of \$101.1 million for invasive species activities to address significant issues such as the spread of invasive mussels and Asian Carp.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund matching grants provided to states, and through states to local governments, support the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities all across the Nation. The 2019 budget continues a funding shift that began in 2018 for NPS State Assistance grants from discretionary to mandatory funding. Starting in 2009, discretionary LWCF

appropriations for the State Assistance program were supplemented by revenues from certain oil and gas leases in the Gulf of Mexico, as authorized by Section 105 of the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act. Under existing law, this permanent funding for NPS State Assistance grants is expected to reach \$89.3 million in 2019.

Ensuring the availability of water is central to the Department's resource stewardship mission and is vitally important to communities across the West. The 2019 budget includes \$1.0 billion for Reclamation's water resource programs to ensure millions of customers continue to receive the water and power essential for daily life, healthy local economies, and land management. The 2019 budget includes funding to continue the WaterSMART water conservation grants and funds Title XVI water recycling reuse research grants to support local innovation efforts to stretch water supplies.

The 2019 budget maintains an important commitment to Interior's neighboring communities, by including \$465.0 million in the discretionary request for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes program. The PILT payments offset the loss in property tax revenue for communities with significant Federal lands in their jurisdictions.

FULFILLING OUR TRUST AND INSULAR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department of the Interior upholds the Federal Government's unique trust responsibilities by fostering government-to-government relationships between the Federal Government and federally recognized tribes, American Indians, and Alaska Natives. The United States also has important relationships with the affiliated insular areas including the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Interior administers and oversees Federal assistance to the three Freely Associated States: the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

The 2019 budget addresses Federal responsibilities and tribal needs related to education, social services, infrastructure, and stewardship of land, water, and other natural resources. The budget prioritizes support for programs that serve the broadest service population rather than initiatives that are more narrowly focused. The President's budget maintains the Administration's strong support for the principle of tribal self-determination and efforts to strengthen tribal communities across Indian Country. The budget calls for full funding for Contract Support Costs and Tribal Grant Support Costs that tribes incur from managing Federal Indian programs.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs also undertakes initiatives to promote resilient tribal communities. The 2019 budget includes \$2.5 million to address the opioid crisis, which has been particularly devastating in Indian Country. The funding will support BIA participation in intra- and interagency initiatives that support opioid and substance abuse prevention efforts. The BIA liaisons will align, leverage, and coordinate Federal efforts and resources to assist American Indian and Alaska Native communities in achieving their goals to reduce the supply of drugs, provide opioid addiction prevention assistance, and otherwise combat the opioid crisis, which is an Administration priority.

The 2019 budget includes \$173.0 million across the Department to honor Indian land and water settlement commitments. This includes \$127.3 million in Reclamation and \$45.6 million in BIA. The budget continues to meet Federal responsibilities outlined in enacted land and water rights claim settlements with Indian tribes to ensure they have access to land and water to meet domestic, economic, and cultural needs.

In 2019, the Office of Insular Affairs will continue to execute activities which bolster healthcare capacity, strengthen island economies, and fulfill U.S. compact obligations. The proposed 2019 OIA budget is \$608.0 million, with \$84.1 million in current appropriations. The President's budget also proposes \$111.0 million in discretionary Department of Defense appropriations as a transfer to the Department of the Interior to fund the 2010 Compact Review Agreement with Palau.

PROTECTING OUR PEOPLE AND THE BORDER

A key component of Interior's land stewardship and public safety goals is management of wildland fire. The 2019 budget provides \$388.1 million for wildfire suppression. The budget responsibly funds 100 percent of the rolling 10-year average cost for wildfire suppression in the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior within discretionary budget caps, and proposes a separate annual cap adjustment for wildfire suppression operations to ensure adequate resource availability during severe fire seasons.

Over 12.5 million acres under Interior’s jurisdiction are within 50 miles of the United States-Mexico border. More than 40 percent of the border, or 820 linear miles, is managed by Interior’s land management agencies and the U.S. Forest Service. Interior is engaged with the Department of Homeland Security to increase security on the southwest border, including 74 border miles on tribal lands primarily made up of lands located on and managed by the Tohono O’odham Nation in Arizona. The budget includes \$1.8 million to continue implementation of the Department’s Southwest Border Radio Demonstration Project, which is an example of the coordination which occurs to help protect our border. The project was developed in cooperation with BLM, FWS, NPS, and the U.S. Forest Service in the southwest border region to address Office of Inspector General-identified material deficiencies in the land mobile radio program and infrastructure, and ensure continuity of communications essential for safety, law enforcement, and resource management in the area.

Interior also plays an important role in preparation for and addressing the aftermath of natural hazard events. The 2019 budget includes \$117.3 million for the USGS Natural Hazards programs to maintain important nationwide monitoring networks, including volcano and earthquake networks, which provide vital scientific information to emergency managers.

MODERNIZING OUR ORGANIZATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS

Infrastructure Management

Interior manages an infrastructure asset portfolio with a replacement value exceeding \$300 billion, ranging from elementary and secondary schools serving Indian children in the West, to highways and bridges serving the daily commuting needs of the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. Many of these assets are deteriorating, with older assets becoming more expensive to repair and maintain in good condition. Taking care of this significant asset portfolio is a persistent challenge.

Interior’s deferred maintenance backlog has grown to over \$16 billion in 2017 of which over \$11 billion belongs to NPS. In addition to funding proposed in the Administration’s Public Lands Infrastructure Fund, the 2019 budget for NPS includes \$256.5 million in current funding for construction and deferred maintenance projects. Construction and maintenance funding across the Department totals over \$1.3 billion in 2019, excluding Reclamation.

Management and Reforms

During the peak summer seasons, the Department of the Interior has nearly 70,000 employees in 2,400 locations across the United States, Puerto Rico, U.S. Territories, and Freely Associated States. Interior is also taking bold steps to better position itself for the next 100 years. In response to the President’s *Executive Order on a Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch*, Interior is working to reorganize its operating structure to establish unified regional boundaries to provide better coordination across the Department to improve mission delivery and focus resources in the field. The 2019 budget includes a total of \$17.5 million for this effort. The budget also proposes additional shifts to better align functions within the Department and respond to congressional direction related to the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians. The Department is continuing to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of BOEM and BSEE being separate organizations with the understanding that revenue collection activities need to be separate from safety.

The Department annually spends nearly \$3 billion to procure goods and services, over \$1 billion on information technology, and over \$300 million to administer acquisition and human resources services. In 2019, Interior will work to achieve cost savings of \$52.7 million across the Department, through more aggressive use of shared services and use of multi-agency “Best in Class” procurement vehicles, such as shared contracting with other bureaus and Federal agencies.

Bureau Highlights

Bureau of Land Management—The 2019 budget request for BLM is \$1.0 billion. The budget proposes \$930.6 million for the Management of Lands and Resources appropriation and \$90.0 million for the Oregon and California Grant Lands appropriation—BLM’s two operating accounts. The BLM budget proposes to restructure several budget lines to provide greater management flexibility and improve coordination of program activities.

Through BLM's multiple-use mandate, the 2019 budget advances energy resource development which generates revenues for Federal and State treasuries and local economies. The budget includes \$137.2 million in Oil and Gas appropriated programs to strengthen overall program capacity, improve management, and expedite permitting to facilitate increased environmentally responsible energy development. Within the total, \$9.5 million will establish a competitive leasing program in the 1002 Area of the Alaska North Slope, as required by the recently enacted Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and bolster BLM's capacity for permitting activities in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. The budget also includes \$19.5 million to strengthen BLM's Coal Management program and \$16.0 million to meet anticipated market demand in the Renewable Energy program.

To maintain the BLM's land stewardship responsibilities, the budget includes \$82.1 million for Rangeland Management and \$66.7 million for the Wild Horse and Burro Management program. The budget also proposes \$53.2 million for Recreation Resources Management and \$26.3 million to continue support for the National Conservation Land areas.

The budget includes \$90.0 million for the Oregon and California Grant Lands programs. At this level, the BLM will focus resources on timber harvests as it pursues the timber sale targets specified in the 2016 resource management plans.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management—The 2019 budget request for BOEM is \$179.3 million, including \$129.5 million in current appropriations and \$49.8 million in offsetting collections from rental receipts and cost recoveries. The budget proposes to offset a decline in offsetting collections with an increase in direct appropriations. The 2019 budget includes \$9.4 million to facilitate the development of a new National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement—The 2019 budget request for BSEE is \$199.9 million, including \$132.1 million in current appropriations and \$67.9 million in offsetting collections from rental receipts, cost recoveries, and inspection fees. The budget proposes to offset the decline in offsetting collections with an increase in direct appropriations. The budget proposes \$12.7 million for Oil Spill Research.

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement—The 2019 budget request for OSMRE is \$121.7 million in current appropriations. The budget includes \$52.4 million for state and tribal regulatory grants, a level consistent with anticipated state and tribal program obligations.

Bureau of Reclamation—The 2019 budget includes \$1.0 billion for Reclamation's water resource programs to ensure millions of customers continue to receive water and power essential for daily life, healthy local economies, and land management.

The 2019 budget includes a total of \$447.0 million for construction, planning, and management of water and energy projects and programs. Funding for these activities supports water supply, drought preparedness and response, land management including recreation areas, and promotes water reliability by addressing the impacts of Reclamation projects on fish and wildlife. The budget also provides a total of \$444.0 million for water and power facility operations, maintenance, and rehabilitation activities. Reclamation emphasizes safe, efficient, economic, and reliable operation of facilities, ensuring systems and safety measures are in place to protect the facilities, Reclamation's employees, and the public.

The 2019 budget continues support to address America's water reliability and availability by investing to modernize existing water infrastructure. The 2019 budget includes \$10.0 million to continue the WaterSMART water conservation grants and \$3.0 million for Title XVI water recycling reuse research grants that support local innovation efforts to stretch water supplies. The 2019 budget continues to support water technology innovation by incentivizing research through Reclamation's Water and Power Technology Prize Competitions. Reclamation's prize competitions target difficult scientific and technological problems related to infrastructure, water availability, and environmental compliance that affects water delivery and hydro-power generation. The budget also includes \$7.6 million for Reclamation to proactively stop the spread of invasive mussels in the West, including preventing the spread of zebra and quagga mussels into the Columbia River Basin.

U.S. Geological Survey—The 2019 budget request for the USGS is \$859.7 million. The budget includes \$72.9 million for satellite operations, which includes \$31.9 million to continue development of the Landsat 9 ground system component for launch in 2021.

The request emphasizes science to inform energy and mineral development with \$84.1 million for the Energy and Minerals Mission Area, including \$19.1 million to

locate domestic critical mineral sources. These commodities are those minerals with important uses particularly in technology, and no viable substitutes, yet face potential disruption in supply. This funding will support the Administration's initiative to spur critical mineral resource development in the United States.

The budget for Natural Hazards is \$117.3 million to support essential hazards monitoring, and provide scientific information needed by resource managers and policy makers. The budget maintains support for nationwide networks of more than 8,200 streamgages and nearly 3,000 earthquake sensors. The 2019 budget includes \$96.1 million for Ecosystems programs, focusing on nationally significant priorities, including detecting and responding to invasive species and wildlife disease, research supporting the conservation and recovery of species at-risk or protected by law, and science supporting biological resource management. The budget provides for continued collection of high-resolution elevation and hydrography data for the Nation, including modernizing maps for Alaska and complete national lidar coverage by 2033.

Fish and Wildlife Service—The 2019 President's budget requests \$1.2 billion for FWS programs of which \$1.1 billion supports FWS operations. The budget prioritizes funding to maintain operations and maintenance for the National Wildlife Refuge System at \$473.1 million and includes \$50.0 million for the National Fish Hatchery System.

Ecological Services programs are funded at \$211.8 million and the budget prioritizes funding for Planning and Consultation and species Recovery activities. The budget is \$74.8 million for FWS conservation grants including \$31.3 million for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants, \$33.6 million for the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund, \$6.0 million for the Multinational Species Conservation Fund, and \$3.9 million for Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation. The budget proposes \$7.0 million for FWS land acquisition activities, which includes \$12.0 million in new budget authority and a \$5.0 million proposed cancellation of prior year balances.

National Park Service—The 2019 budget request for NPS is \$2.7 billion which includes \$299.0 million provided in the Budget Policy Addendum for 2019.

The budget proposes \$2.4 billion for NPS operations. Within this account funding is prioritized for the care and maintenance of existing resources, including repair and rehabilitation projects, which addresses the deferred maintenance backlog, and cyclic maintenance projects, which ensure maintenance is conducted in a timely fashion to avoid increasing the deferred maintenance backlog. The budget proposes \$241.3 million for the Construction account, which includes \$157.0 million for line-item construction activities.

The request provides \$32.2 million for National Recreation and Preservation programs to support local community efforts to preserve natural and cultural resources. The 2019 budget includes \$32.7 million for the Historic Preservation Fund core grants-in-aid programs. The budget assumes funding for Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Grants shift from discretionary to mandatory funding from offshore oil and gas receipts, estimated to support an \$89.3 million program. The budget requests \$8.8 million to administer both ongoing Federal land acquisition projects and American Battlefield Protection grants, and includes a \$10.0 million cancellation in available prior year balances, for a net total of -\$1.2 million for Land Acquisition and State Assistance.

Indian Affairs—The 2019 budget request for Indian Affairs is \$2.4 billion. Funding for Operation of Indian Programs totals \$2.0 billion. In 2019, priority is given to programs serving the broadest audience rather than initiatives or pilots. Within this total is \$741.9 million for Bureau of Indian Education programs where funding focuses on direct school operations and full funding for Tribal Grant Support Costs. The main operating account also includes \$350.1 million for Public Safety and Justice programs including \$2.5 million to address the opioid crisis which has been particularly devastating in Indian Country. The budget includes \$258.9 million for Trust Services programs to fulfill key fiduciary trust responsibilities.

The budget fully funds Contract Support Costs at \$231.0 million, which will cover all anticipated tribal program administration requirements at the requested program funding level. The budget requests \$133.3 million for Construction programs and prioritizes dams, irrigation projects, and irrigation systems which deliver water to aid economic development as well as protect lives, resources, and property. The budget prioritizes funding within education construction for improvement and repair of existing facilities. The budget also includes \$45.6 million to provide payments to ongoing Indian Land and Water settlements and \$6.7 million for the Indian Guaranteed Loan Program.

Departmental Offices

Office of the Secretary—The 2019 budget request for Departmental Operations is \$134.7 million. The budget reflects the proposed transfer of \$140.5 million associated with the Office of Natural Resources Revenue to a new appropriation within Department-wide Programs.

Office of Insular Affairs—The 2019 budget request for OIA is \$84.1 million of which \$81.0 million is for Assistance to Territories and \$3.1 million is for Compact of Free Association programs. Separately, the President's budget proposes to transfer \$111.0 million from the Department of Defense to support the enacted 2010 Compact Agreement with Palau.

Office of the Solicitor—The 2019 budget proposes \$65.7 million for the Office of the Solicitor to provide legal counsel, administer the Department's ethics program, and help resolve legal issues among bureaus and offices as they fulfill their duties.

Office of Inspector General—The 2019 budget proposes \$52.5 million for the Office of Inspector General to continue support for audit and investigations across the Department. The budget supports the need for case management system maintenance, OPM security clearances, continuous data monitoring, and information technology systems assistance.

Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians—The 2018 budget requests \$107.1 million for OST. The budget proposes several organizational changes including to realign OST under the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs; to shift Land Buy Back Program for Tribal Nations to OST; and proposes OST assume coordination of certain functions of the Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation.

Department-wide Programs

Payments in Lieu of Taxes—The 2019 budget proposes \$465.0 million in discretionary funding for PILT. This amount includes \$68.1 million provided in the Budget Policy Addendum for 2019.

Office of Natural Resources Revenue—The 2019 budget request includes \$137.5 million for ONRR's receipts management programs as a separate appropriation to increase transparency of the program. The request includes \$3.7 million for anticipated contract cost increases to maintain the Minerals Revenue Management Support System.

Central Hazardous Materials Fund—The 2019 budget requests \$2.0 million for the Central Hazardous Materials Fund to support program management and legal staff. The program will fund highest priority remediation projects based on the availability of recoveries and focus resources on remediation projects with potentially responsible parties.

Wildland Fire Management—The 2019 budget request for the Wildland Fire Management Program is \$870.4 million. The request provides \$388.1 million for Suppression Operations to fully fund the 10-year average. Separately the Administration proposes an annual cap adjustment for wildfire suppression operations during severe fire seasons. The budget includes \$322.2 million for wildland fire preparedness activities to support Interior's firefighting capabilities. To maintain proper stewardship of public lands and address wildfire risk, Fuels Management activities the budget includes \$150.6 million. The budget includes \$9.5 million to support high priority restoration of public lands damaged by wildfire.

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration—The 2019 request for NRDAR is \$4.6 million. The budget includes funding needed for ongoing damage assessments and restoration activities.

Working Capital Fund—The 2019 budget proposes \$56.7 million for the appropriated portion of the Department's Working Capital Fund. The request includes \$46.8 million for the Financial and Business Management System and \$9.9 million for Department-wide cybersecurity needs.

Legislative Proposals

Public Lands Infrastructure Fund—The 2019 budget launches the Administration's Public Lands Infrastructure Fund (PLIF) to address repairs and improvements in national parks, national wildlife refuges, and BIE-funded schools. The PLIF would dedicate 50 percent of the Department's incoming, unallocated energy development revenues that exceed the 2018 budget baseline estimates, for the National Park Service, Fish Wildlife Service and Bureau of Indian Education infrastructure needs. These revenues will be deposited into the Fund for 10 years and will be capped at a total of \$18.0 billion.

Bureau of Reclamation Title Transfer—The Administration has recently submitted to the Congress a proposal to better facilitate title transfer of Reclamation facilities to non-Federal entities when such transfers are beneficial. This proposal will allow local water managers to make their own decisions to improve water management at the local level, while allowing Reclamation to focus management efforts on projects with a greater Federal nexus.

Cancel Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act Account Balances—The budget proposes legislation to cancel \$230.0 million in unobligated balances from the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act program over 3 years. This would redirect a portion of program balances to the Treasury for broader taxpayer use. The SNPLMA program is not proposed for elimination and viable conservation efforts will continue to be supported.

Land and Water Conservation Fund—The LWCF receipts authorization expires at the end of Fiscal Year 2018 and the Administration will review options for reauthorization.

Reauthorize the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act—The budget assumes permanent reauthorization of FLTFA's land sale authority, allowing Interior to dispose of lands with low conservation value and use the proceeds to acquire lands with higher conservation values, consistent with the original FLTFA mandate.

Recreation Fee Program—The budget proposes to permanently reauthorize the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, set to expire in September 2019. As a precaution, appropriations language is also submitted proposing a 2-year extension through September 2021. The revenues collected by Interior from these recreation fees—nearly \$318.8 million in 2017—are an important source of funding for land management operations, maintenance, and improvements to recreation facilities on public lands.

Termination of EPA Act Geothermal Payments to Counties—The budget proposes to restore Federal geothermal leasing revenue allocations to the historical formula of 50 percent to the states and 50 percent to the U.S. Treasury by repealing Section 224(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Wildland Fire Suppression Disaster Cap Adjustment—The budget responsibly funds 100 percent of the rolling 10-year average cost of wildfire suppression in the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior within discretionary budget caps, and proposes a separate annual cap adjustment for wildfire suppression operations in severe fire seasons, similar to how unanticipated funding needs for other natural disasters are addressed.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the President's 2019 Budget Request for the Department of the Interior. This budget maintains core functions important to the American people and supports transformation the Department needs to accomplish more effective management over the next 100 years. It reflects tough choices to prioritize and focus limited resources where investments have the most impact while continuing to deliver access and services that are critical to Americans. Achieving success in all of Interior's important responsibilities for the American people is the Department's primary focus and Interior is committed to take action to better accomplish our mission. Thank you again for your continued support of the Department's mission. This concludes my written statement and I look forward to your questions on this budget.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD TO THE HON. RYAN ZINKE, SECRETARY,
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

The Honorable Ryan Zinke did not submit responses to the Committee by the appropriate deadline for inclusion in the printed record.

Questions Submitted by Rep. Don Young

Question 1. Please describe in detail any DOI resources or personnel that have been or might be directed toward activities in support of the National Ocean Policy. In doing so, please provide specific references to FY 2019 budget request line items, if any, that might be used to support DOI's continued participation in National Ocean Policy activities, and describe in detail DOI's completed and planned National Ocean Policy-related activities.

Question 2. Given that this unnecessary and over-reaching Executive Order conflicts with the current Administration's priorities for job creation, economic growth, and reducing red tape and regulatory hurdles, what if any steps is DOI taking to review its participation in this unauthorized and unfunded initiative?

Question 3. BLM finalized the Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan under the Obama administration as part of BLM 2.0. This designated over 1 million acres of land as an "Area of Critical Environmental Concern" and over 362,000 acres of the Fortymile region. This Congress overturned BLM 2.0 with a CRA, but the Eastern Interior Plan is still in effect. What is the Department of the Interior doing to overturn this plan so that it is no longer hurting the people who live in the eastern interior? What is the proposed timeline for overturning this plan?

Question 4. The Fish and Wildlife Service has claimed there are "data gaps" in wildlife studies in Alaska. I understand the BLM is collaborating with FWS to collect additional data, specifically involving polar bear counts and caribou migration patterns as they relate to the Ambler Road project. BLM has informed FWS that they do not have the budget of staffing capacity to conduct the necessary studies for Ambler, so FWS is providing the data. I am concerned that these "data gaps" are simply created by career bureaucrats to slow-walk development projects they don't like.

4a. Are the data gaps unique to Alaska or do they exist in the Lower 48, and what other projects could they effect?

4b. Does BLM have the budget and personnel capacity to verify data provided by FWS?

4c. Are additional data necessary for the EIS to move forward with permitting in the projects?

Question 5. Fish and Wildlife is planning to increase the fees for use of the Iditarod Trail from \$10,000 to \$60,000, but the user fee increase only applies to Iditarod participants. Why is the increased user fee only applied to one user group instead of being spread out across all user groups?

Questions Submitted by Rep. Pearce

Question 1. I appreciate the Administration's support for addressing wildfire issues. In New Mexico and other western states, Conservation Corps help to accomplish remediation through invasive species and dead tree removal. How does this budget address remediation needed to thin our forests and prevent catastrophic fires? Does the budget aim to utilize the low cost work provided by Conservation Corps?

Questions Submitted by Rep. Glenn Thompson

Question 1. Secretary Zinke, thank you for the information that you provided last year in response to my request for an update on the status of the remedial action at the Folcroft Landfill, a property which was purchased by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1980 and incorporated into the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (JHNWR) under legislative authority provided by Congress. Congress provided \$19.5 million in funding for the development of the JHNWR and directed FWS to work with EPA to address the contamination at the site. In response to my request for detail on whether any of the \$19.5 million in funding provided by Congress is still available for expenditure, you indicated that "FWS does not immediately have a response for the inquiry regarding the funds appropriated from Congress in 1972 (P.L. 92-327), 1976 (P.L. 94-548), and 1980 (P.L. 96-315), "for acquisition of the Tinicum National Environmental Center, for construction of environmental educational center facilities, and for other development projects on the Center," (P.L. 96-315, July 25, 1980) but a search has commenced for records from that time period to confirm the expenditures for these expressed purposes."

Could you please provide an update on the findings of this research?

Questions Submitted by Rep. Tipton

Question 1. This Committee recently passed a bill by unanimous consent called the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act. Secretary Zinke you were a supporter of this bill when on this Committee. It would engage more Corps and thousands of young people and veterans who serve in Corps, like in Colorado, to help address more high priority projects like backlog maintenance. I've had the opportunity to visit one of the Veterans Corps in Colorado doing this work. We appreciate your focus on addressing the backlog. Can you talk about the impact of getting thousands more young

people and veterans working on these projects would have? Have you identified any plans to boost engagement of Corps to address the backlog?

Question 2. Wild horses and burros continue to threaten other animals and critically important habitats in the West. How does the Department intend to better manage the wild horse and burro populations in FY 2019?

Questions Submitted by Rep. Grijalva

Question 1. The Department of the Interior demanded that language connecting sea level rise and coastal flooding to climate change be removed from a press release announcing a new publication by scientists working for the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Do you agree that coastal communities deserve expert scientific research to inform their mitigation and resiliency efforts? If so, then why establish a pattern of censorship with critical public health concerns like coastal floods? Do you believe the communities in Houston, south Florida, and Louisiana, ravaged by recent hurricanes and damaged by unusually aggressive flooding deserve unbiased information from experts within your agency at the USGS? Will you commit to directing USGS to providing that information to these vulnerable communities without political interference?

Question 2. Just yesterday, the Office of the Inspector General published a report showing that DOI's ability to detect and respond to cyberthreats is highly inadequate. Undeniably, DOI data systems are a desirable target for both foreign and domestic hackers given the vast amount of public lands and energy resources managed by the Department. To address this issue, the Inspector General's report made 23 recommendations for improving DOI's ability to detect and respond to threats. Although your Department has agreed to all recommendations, the report notes that DOI's timeline for implementing these recommendations is concerning. Five recommendations will not be addressed for more than 5 years. Given the substantial budget cuts you've proposed, how do you intend to commit the substantial staff and resources needed to implement these recommendations? Where will you pull these resources from? The Inspector General also noted that some of the recommendations may require the recruitment of additional staff. Do you plan to ease hiring restrictions in order to hire personnel with the needed expertise?

Question 3. In 2015, Western Governors, sportsmen, ranchers, mining companies, oil and gas companies, elected officials, conservationists, and local business owners came together to find a solution to keep the West open for business while also keeping the sage grouse and sagebrush ecosystem healthy and robust. These sage grouse plans were an unprecedented collaborative effort. Despite the plans' widespread support, the Bureau of Land Management recently released a scoping report outlining changes it plans to make to the sage grouse plans. The report claims to summarize public comments related to the changes, but last week, BLM admitted that a "technical error" caused around 100,000 public comments to go missing. What are you doing to understand how 100,000 comments were not included in the report and how do you plan to fix it? How do you expect the public to have faith that their comments are being heard? Will you amend the report to include these missing comments or reopen the comment period to allow the public to be heard?

Question 4. Your Solicitor issued a legal opinion ending some protections for migratory birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act—one of our Nation's first and most successful conservation laws celebrating its 100th Anniversary this year—against the threats that are most significant and controllable in the modern age. The new opinion goes against all settled understanding of the Act by your Department, the Justice Department, and by numerous courts and congressional actions over 50 years and across administrations as articulated by a letter signed by 17 former Interior Department officials from each administration back to Nixon's Presidency asking you to reverse the opinion. More than 500 local and national organizations from every state in the country have also written to oppose this reversal. Your interpretation would have prevented the Justice Department from capturing fines for bird deaths to be used to restore bird habitat from BP for the Deepwater Horizon spill, and Exxon for the Exxon Valdez spill. And it ends an essential incentive for industries in many sectors such as oil and gas, power lines, communications towers, and of course, wind power, to develop and implement reasonable best management practices and technologies that minimize harm to birds, and that help fulfill the treaty commitment of the United States to protect and conserve migratory birds. Mr. Secretary, how do you intend to ensure that the migratory bird protections industries have implemented in consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service continue to be

implemented and that the United States continues to live up to treaty obligations ratified by this Congress?

Question 5. Your office has proposed cutting the FWS by \$135 million in FY 2019. FWS funds Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) which represent an advisory board equipped with local, state, and Federal agency representatives. Your office has also canceled the meetings of LCCs and effectively ended their input into DOI decision making. Why are you cutting critical stakeholders such as local businesses and scientists out of the process? Is this an effective way to share governance over public land? Should the Department be making decisions that impact states and localities without input from these LCCs? Can you please explain what will happen to the important work that was being conducted under these programs since they are being eliminated?

Question 6. The 1990 amendments to the Coastal Barrier Resources Act directed the Department of the Interior to map undeveloped coastal barriers along the Pacific Coast and to recommend areas that could be included in the CBRA. The FWS took a preliminary look but didn't propose additions. Given the benefit to taxpayers from the CBRA, which has saved over \$1.3 billion in Federal expenditures, could resources be made available for FWS to map Pacific coast areas so this taxpayer-friendly program could be brought to the Pacific Coast?

Question 7. On December 7, 2017, I released an update to my report titled "Missing the Mark: African Trophy Hunting Fails to Show Consistent Conservation Benefits" in response to your desire to form a body, misnamed the International Wildlife Conservation Council at the urging of groups like the Safari Club International and the National Rifle Association. Thus, it was no surprise to me when the names of the Council members were released and include SCI and NRA employees along with all but one person who has a tie to trophy hunting. Taxpayers should not be spending money for an advisory panel whose purpose is to make it easier for billionaires to turn imperiled wildlife into wall hangings. The charter for the IWCC lists the annual cost as \$250,000. I provided a detailed report that outlines why the tasks given to the IWCC have already been explored by other bodies or by Fish and Wildlife Service wildlife experts. How can DOI justify moving forward with this unbalanced Council under the guise of conservation? In the hearing, you stated that the Fish and Wildlife Service's position on trophy imports has not changed. Does this mean that the FWS will not allow the importation of any elephant and lion trophies from Zimbabwe and Zambia? Do you intend to go through a formal rulemaking process, including an opportunity for public comment, on the enhancement and non-detriment findings the Service withdrew? Given the fact that many trophy hunters are extremely wealthy, do you think it is appropriate that the American taxpayer foots the bill for 92 percent of all permit fees for wildlife trophy imports? Does the FWS have enough people and resources to review these permits? Was President Trump aware of the decision to allow trophies into the United States on a case-by-case basis?

Question 8. Mr. Secretary, you claim to be a sportsman and a conservationist and a defender of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. However, across your Department, you propose virtually eliminating LWCF, a popular, bipartisan program that promotes hunting and fishing access. Your proposed budget will impede the expansion of sporting and recreational activities available to the public. How do you claim to honor the stewardship legacy of Teddy Roosevelt and justify the proposal to eliminate LWCF? You keep saying that your Department is committed to promoting access for hunting, fishing, and all kinds of outdoor recreation. If that is true, I really do not understand how you can justify the elimination of LWCF. Are you not aware that acquisitions financed by LWCF promote access to public lands and support outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the country?

Question 9. Secretary Zinke, you proposed radical fee hikes at 17 of the most visited national parks as a way to address the deferred maintenance backlog that is plaguing our national parks. Our parks desperately need a dedicated source of funding and significant investment from Congress. Visitor fees alone cannot sustain America's parks and public lands. And, these increased fees threaten access to parks and discourage visitation by the public, especially communities that already lack access and do not have the funds to pay higher fees. In some cases, these significant fee hikes could end up tripling the costs for families. Visiting our parks is a right to be enjoyed by all Americans. Please explain why raising visitor fees will not discourage low-income families and communities from visiting our national parks?

Question 10. Your budget proposal includes a significant reduction to the National Park Service's visitor services account, including eliminating \$5 million from Youth Partnership Programs. This is an approximately 50 percent reduction from an

account that supports opportunities for veterans to gain valuable job training skills and experience through participation in the 21st Century Conservation Corps. How do you justify cuts to that program? Will you commit to working with this Committee to ensure that veterans have more opportunities to participate in their public lands?

Question 11. Secretary Zinke, at the end of last month you traveled to Pennsylvania to announce the latest round of abandoned mine lands funding. The announcement was made about a mile outside of the 18th Congressional District, 2½ weeks before a special election. The Republican candidate was there—you tweeted a photo with him. I didn't see the Democrat there. The race, at the time, was a toss-up. I have seen no evidence that any other Secretary has traveled anywhere since 2009 to announce these routine grants. You accepted an inherently political TV interview with Fox News about it. You could have chosen any of the thousands of AML sites but you chose this one. Locals, including members of the Republican party, were surprised you chose the location you did. You can understand that's a lot of coincidences that point to this being a political trip funded with taxpayer money. You've said that the state made sense because of the sheer number of AML sites there. But how did you choose East Bethlehem among the over 800 AML sites from within Pennsylvania?

Question 12. DOI has used the proposed reorganization of the Department to justify significant agency actions. Those actions include the reassignment of several members of the Senior Executive Service, the rescission of an existing 100-year plan for the National Park Service, the ongoing hiring freeze, and the expansion of authority for Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas, Doug Domenech. At the same time, you're claiming there is no final reorganization plan. If that's true, it is irresponsible to start implementing in a piecemeal fashion what you have called the greatest reorganization in the history of the Department without a plan. At what point in the implementation of the reorganization will you do an in-depth financial and managerial analysis that provides evidence that your reorganization will be effective?

Question 13. You initially justified your chartered flights on private jets, commercial flights to destinations close to your home or political events, helicopter flights and the like by saying all your flights had been reviewed by the Department's Law and Ethics Division. Then the Inspector General issued an unusual letter saying that your recordkeeping regarding your travel was insufficient for them to determine whether you had broken the law. What have you done to try to understand why your ethics team gave the flights the green light but the IG has said the recordkeeping is inadequate to make that call?

Question 14. You are proposing a cut in excess of \$100 million to the FWS budget in the FY 2019 requested budget for the Department of the Interior. The agency request also cuts \$28 million from the Office of Ecological Services which manages endangered and threatened species protection. Can these agencies operate at optimum efficiency and save our critical species while receiving inadequate funding? Do you anticipate that the agency workforce cuts will hurt agency conservation efforts?

Question 15. The damages to communities and real property such as oil and gas infrastructure from Hurricane Harvey were severely diminished because of natural infrastructure in the form of wetlands and coastal marshes. Given this lifesaving, property saving, cheap, and effective way to protect lives and properties, why did the Administration not include funding for natural infrastructure in the recent hurricane supplemental request to Congress?

Question 16. Given that we are in the middle of a global extinction crisis driven by irresponsible land use and climate change, do you believe that this budget will allow you to meet your statutory obligations under the ESA to prevent extinction and recover threatened and endangered species? The Endangered Species Act is our Nation's most effective law for protecting wildlife in danger of extinction. Ninety-nine percent of species listed under the Act have survived, and many are on the path to recovery. The American people care deeply about wildlife and are troubled by the concept of extinction. According to a June 2015 poll, 90 percent of American voters support the Endangered Species Act. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle like to say that the ESA is broken and needs reform. But the ESA is starved, not broken, and your FY 2019 budget request continues this sad state of affairs.

Question 17. Several years ago, FWS developed a 7-year workplan to allow the agency to prioritize over 350 species for ESA listing decisions. This workplan is supported by a wide range of stakeholders. While the FWS has made progress on listing decisions for a number of these species, more than 300 still await decisions, yet the budget proposes a 47 percent cut to the FWS listing program for FY 2019. This cut

will disrupt the time frames in the workplan and cause FWS to further delay listing decisions for many species leading to at the least longer recovery times or at the worst more extinctions of species. Species due for decisions in FY 2019 include the tufted puffin and monarch butterfly. Can you explain how the Department plans to make progress on recovering species with such an inadequate level of funding?

Question 18. This year marks the centennial birthday anniversary for The Migratory Bird Treaty Act. It is credited with saving many species of birds from the brink of extinction. While we have overcome many of the threats facing bird populations in the earlier part of the last century, such as the plume trade, new threats have emerged. Due to industrialization, millions of waterfowl, raptors and songbirds have died from oil pits and powerlines. In fact, the FWS found that electrocutions kill an estimated 5.4 million birds, while oil pits kill an estimated 750,000 birds this year. Given what we know about current threats, I am deeply alarmed with the agencies recent interpretation of the MBTA which eliminates FWS authority to address the incidental take of birds, such as the 750,000 birds that die tragic, avoidable deaths in oil pits each year. Will this decision result in more birds being needlessly killed? The problem will only be compounded by your proposal to reduce the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund. NAWCA is a landmark investment and one of the most cost-effective conservation programs. Federal dollars invested in NAWCA are typically matched by more than \$3 from non-Federal partners at the local and state level, including corporations, private landowners, and non-profits. Since its enactment, the program has generated over \$4.34 billion in partner funds leveraged by \$1.48 billion in grant funds to protect nearly 33.4 million acres across the Nation. Given the program's demonstrable success, why does your budget seek to reduce it by \$4.5 million?

Question 19. Invasive mussels are a serious threat to the waters of the western United States. They are not only a risk to wildlife and human health, but they can also block water pumping stations and impede the flow of water through pipes and infrastructure. Arizona's waterways are a major source of invasive mussel infestation and pose a large threat to other uninfested waters. Yet, Arizona is one of the only western states that has not implemented mandatory watercraft inspection and decontamination stations. This is primarily due to insufficient funding and lack of engagement from Federal agencies. Considering prevention and control methods for these invasive mussels have cost an estimated \$5 billion so far, shouldn't funding be increased to protect our waterways and prevent infestation? Many western states rely on Federal funding to operate watercraft inspection programs, but current review of Federal grant programs is hampering state planning for the 2018 boating season. When will this Federal review be completed to ensure that these Federal funds are accessible to state programs?

Question 20. Secretary Zinke, when you testified before the Committee, you stated that the Interior Department's "budget [for renewable energy programs] is consistent with expected demand in [Fiscal Year 2019]." You told Representative Anthony Brown that you would provide the data behind your Agency's decision to reduce the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's renewable energy program by over \$3 million. What energy demand data did the Interior Department use to justify its proposal to reduce BOEM's renewable energy program by over \$3 million? How is this consistent with the story reported by Bloomberg on September 29, 2017, which said, "[BOEM] is betting on heightened interest in offshore wind to drive up the price of the Atlantic Ocean leases it will auction next year," and, "We've had two unsolicited bids for the parcels already." [James Bennett, chief of renewable energy at BOEM said]. That and the fact that a recent BOEM auction for an ocean parcel off Long Island, N.Y, netted a \$42.5 million winning bid "indicates to us that interest in offshore wind has changed dramatically in just 2 years." Bennett said.

Question 21. Secretary Zinke, in August 2017, the Department of the Interior informed the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine that it should cease all work on a study of the potential health risks for people living near surface coal mine sites in Central Appalachia. The Interior Department stated it was conducting an agency-wide review of its grants and cooperative agreements exceeding \$100,000. Is this study still under review? When the study was halted in August 2017, there were approximately \$400,000 remaining on the contract with the National Academy of Sciences. This money could have only been repurposed until September 30, 2017. What happened to the roughly \$400,000 remaining on the contract? Is the Department of the Interior going to ask the National Academy of Sciences to resume their study? Is the Department of the Interior going to ask the National Academy of Sciences to start a new study of the potential health risks of surface coal mine sites in Central Appalachia?

Question 22. Secretary Zinke, when you testified before the Committee, you acknowledged that in December 2017 you requested access to a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) energy resource assessment for the North Slope of Alaska before it was officially published. The USGS's Fundamental Science Practices states, "Particularly sensitive results . . . such as energy and mineral assessments . . . that typically have significant economic implications are not disclosed or shared in advance of public release because pre-release in these cases could result in unfair advantage or the perception of unfair advantage." It is clear your actions violated USGS science policy. Do USGS guidelines about early release of sensitive data apply to you and to Deputy Secretary Bernhardt? If not, please explain why not. Were you aware of the significant oil resources that had been discovered along Alaska's North Slope since publication of the original USGS assessment in 2010? Was the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or anyone in their offices asked for information about the data in or the timing of the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska assessment by outside parties before the assessment was officially published on December 22, 2017? Did you or anyone at the Department of the Interior attempt to share or successfully share information about the data in or the timing of the December 2017 USGS assessment with anyone outside the Interior Department before it was officially published on December 22, 2017? Please provide all correspondence within and between the Secretary's office, Deputy Secretary's office, and USGS regarding the potential early delivery of the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska assessment to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary. Please provide all memoranda that discuss the potential early delivery of the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska assessment to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary. Please provide all notes or minutes from meetings in which the potential early delivery of National Petroleum Reserve Alaska assessment to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary was discussed.

Questions Submitted by Rep. Napolitano

Question 1. On December 6, 2017, you released your final report on the findings of the Trump Administration Monument Review. The report did not mention or recommend any changes to the size of the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, which is located just above my district. Although there was no recommendation, how can local residents, business and cities be confident to implement their city and business plans without fear that the President or the U.S. Department of the Interior will review their nearby designation again?

1a. Can you confirm today, that there will be no changes to the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument?

Question 2. Did you ever have plans to visit the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument before the Trump Administration Monument Review comment period ended on July 10, 2017?

2a. If not, how did you plan to make a decision on the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument without meeting with local residents, businesses and cities?

2b. What other information besides public comments made online did you take into consideration? Where did that information come from and who? How can local residents, businesses and cities be ensured that that information was in their best interest?

Question 3. While the Title XVI program has been successful in helping construct water recycling infrastructure, the program remains greatly underfunded. Currently, there remains a backlog of \$463 million for Title XVI water recycling projects that have been authorized by Congress but remain unconstructed. Additionally, in the new round of WIIN Act Title XVI projects, 44 feasibility studies have been approved with a total combined cost of \$3.6 billion. Despite the success of this program, President Trump has proposed a more than 90 percent funding cut for Title XVI water recycling infrastructure projects by funding this program at \$3 million. How do you think these cuts will impact farms, cities, and vulnerable communities?

Question 4. Secretary Zinke, the 2019 Proposed Budget also includes a 64 percent cut to the popular WaterSMART Grants program (2019 = \$10 million; 2018 = \$28 million). The WaterSMART Program provides cost-shared grants that help states respond to drought and work to increase water supplies largely through conservation, water-use efficiency, and water-reuse projects. My state of California has suffered and will continue to suffer through severe droughts so we should increase funding to these vital programs so western states can respond more effectively to persistent drought conditions. Why would the Administration propose severe cuts to yet another successful program that helps California and the West respond to drought conditions in innovative ways?

Question 5. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) which has saved places in nearly every state and every county in the United States, will expire on September 30, 2018 without action from Congress. One great example is the Pacific Crest Trail which spans 2,659 miles through the states of California, Oregon and Washington, and goes through the Angeles National Forest just above my district. Over 16 years, approximately \$31 million from the LWCF has been used to acquire and permanently protect more than 20,000 acres along the trail. The LWCF also provides block grants for state and local parks and recreation projects. How can this Committee work with your Department to ensure that these vital funds, paid entirely by energy companies drilling for oil and gas on the Outer Continental Shelf, are not diverted to uses other than conservation?

Question 6. The suicide rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives has been increasing since 2003. The rate in 2015 was more than 3.5 times higher than those in other racial/ethnic minority groups with more than one-third of suicides within American Indians and Alaska Native population being youths under the age of 24. What is the current availability of on-site behavioral health services for students under the Bureau of Indian Education?

Questions Submitted by Rep. Bordallo

Question 1. At a time when more and more citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS) are migrating to Guam and other affected U.S. jurisdictions under the Compacts of Free Association, why does the FY 2019 budget request propose eliminating the Office of Insular Affairs' "discretionary" Compact impact grants to reimburse affected jurisdictions?

Question 2. Mandatory Compact impact funding provided by the Office of Insular Affairs—split between Guam and other affected U.S. jurisdictions, does not come close to reimbursing GovGuam for the costs of serving our FAS citizen residents. Will you commit to taking a hard look at Compact impact in your budget request for next year, as well as the many low-cost, practical policy changes outlined in my Compact Impact Relief Act (H.R. 4761)?

Question 3. The FY 2019 budget request proposes to cut funding for the Office of Insular Affairs' "Assistance to the Territories" by more than 11 percent and proposes even more severe cuts to other programs important to Guam. How do these proposed budget cuts square with the Trump administration's stated goal of improving economic opportunity, governance, and quality of life in the territories?

Question 4. What is the Trump administration's position on extending full voting rights for the 4.5 million Americans living in the territories? Unlike the District of Columbia, the five U.S. territories are excluded from the electoral college so we have no say in choosing our president. Note that two of the five Members of Congress from the territories are Republicans, so this is not a partisan issue. I understand that this would require an Act of Congress, but what is the Administration's position?

Question 5. Under current law, the five U.S. territories and District of Columbia split—six ways—a single state's share from Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) each year. This is simply unfair and underfunds public park and recreation projects in the territories and DC. Will the Interior Department consider supporting my LWCF Parity for Territories and DC Act (H.R. 4179), which is supported by all six Members from the territories and DC?

Questions Submitted by Rep. Sablan

Question 1. Last year I brought to your attention that under the Office of Insular Affairs competitive system for Covenant Funds that originally all went to the Northern Marianas, my district now gets less than half the money. This deprives Saipan, the only U.S. municipality without 24-hour potable water, of needed infrastructure funds. In your written answer you said that the competitive evaluation criteria are evaluated and revised as necessary every 5 years. Can you explain the re-evaluation process to me and what year it will next take place? If this has occurred recently, what criteria was used and was this issue taken into consideration?

Question 2. Last year we also discussed the long overdue Marianas Trench National Monument Management Plan that the Fish and Wildlife Service has been working on for 9 years. In your written answer you stated FWS continues to work with its partners toward completion of the plan and that a number of steps have been taken to address or resolve important issues such as 2016 patent under the Territorial Submerged Lands Act. Can you tell me what has happened in the past

year and when the draft Monument Management Plan, which was to be completed in 2011 under President Bush's proclamation, will be issued?

Question 3. The Fish and Wildlife Service requests \$473—a decrease of almost \$11 million—for management of National Wildlife Refuges. This includes decreases to wildlife and habitat management, visitor services, law enforcement and elimination of funding for refuge conservation planning. These cuts will surely ensure that American hunters, anglers, and other outdoor enthusiasts will have less access to sporting opportunities on public lands. Do you believe the proposed funding levels for refuges are consistent with your vision of increasing access to America's public lands, while also managing and expanding the Refuge System to protect and enhance America's wildlife resources?

Question 4. In my reply to your soliciting comments to your assist your review of the Marianas Trench National Monument under Executive Order 13792, I wrote about the promises made to the people of the Northern Marianas that remain unfulfilled. You have submitted recommendations to President Trump under that Executive Order. Can you clarify if there was a recommendation concerning the Marianas Trench National Monument included in your submission to the President? If a recommendation was included please include the text and any information regarding the review process and timing in terms of presidential decision making.

Questions Submitted by Rep. Gallego

Question 1. Regarding the public comment period undertaken by the Interior Department in connection with the national monument review, did Interior analyze the approximately 2.8 million comments in totality to determine character of individual responses (i.e. quantify favorable vs. unfavorable or otherwise breakdown categories of response)?

1a. If so, please provide the categories used and respective numbers or percentages relative to total comments received. If not included in your internal categories, please include the number or percent of comments favorable to maintaining existing monuments.

1b. If not, how were public comments factored into the decision-making process without quantifying them?

Question 2. External sampling analyses reported a 99 percent rate of responses favorable to maintaining existing monuments. If the Department's analysis differs, how would you explain the divergence?

Question 3. Following the review, your memorandum to the President indicated that "Comments received were overwhelmingly in favor of maintaining existing monuments and demonstrated a well-orchestrated national campaign organized by multiple organizations." Did the Department undertake a quality control process that determined these comments resulted from a 'campaign'? Were these comments valued or considered differently than others?

3a. If so, please explain how.

Questions Submitted by Rep. Barragán

Question 1. Secretary Zinke, does the National Park Service expect to issue a Fiscal Year 2017 Funding Opportunity Announcement for ORLP grants in the near future?

Question 2. Does the National Park Service have sufficient capacity and staffing to dedicate the needed attention and administration of the ORLP program?

Question 3. Secretary Zinke, with respect to the Administration's infrastructure plan, how can the ORLP program better align to meet the shovel-readiness intent of the program? How can the funds be more quickly allocated to the areas that need them the most?

Question 4. Secretary Zinke, recognizing the value of the ORLP program, would greater flexibility in criteria thresholds (such as lowering the requirement that cities and towns have to have a population of 50,000 or more residents) and eligibility expansion (non-profits, for example) help cities better and more quickly deliver the intended outdoor recreation and economic benefits?

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate that. OK, we are beginning the question process. I am going to ask at the very beginning,

especially for our guests, that there be no disruptions of the testimony that we are going to hear today. It is important that the decorum rules of the Committee and the House be allowed to be maintained so that the Members, as well as the public, can hear the proceedings of this.

Mr. Gohmert, since I didn't let you talk, I will give you the first crack at questions for the Secretary and his guests.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And it is good to have our friend here. And since, obviously, you are responsible for all the good and all the ills that have beset the world, I would like to say congratulations on growing the ice in Antarctica. I don't know what it is you are doing to grow the amount of ice in Antarctica, but congratulations. You must be responsible; you seem to be for everybody else, or for everything else.

And I couldn't help but think, as you mentioned the \$16 billion shortfall, that it would be nice if the lawyer in the Clinton administration that changed the wording ever so slightly in our offshore drilling leases to benefit the oil companies by \$10 billion, one of which she went to work for right after that, it would have been nice to have that \$10 billion that the Clinton administration cost us. But, of course, the Obama administration rewarded her by bringing her back into the Obama administration to help other oil companies.

But we are behind, and obviously, your budget has not grown commensurate to take care of the \$16 billion shortfall that has particularly grown during the last administration. They seem to be much more interested in adding land and growing the shortfall of taking care of our parks and our national treasures.

So, Secretary Zinke, what plans do you have? How can we make up this terrible shortfall, the terrible damage like the water pipe you mentioned? How are we going to make that up, all of the damage that has occurred during the last administration? Do you have an idea?

Secretary ZINKE. This is the proposition. We all recognize that our parks' infrastructure and the current system is inadequate. \$11.6 billion in our park system didn't happen overnight. This happened over a long period of time, with both administrations.

So, how do we fix it? I think it is a fair proposition to say this. If you are going to produce wealth on our public lands, and we are not talking about drilling in the national parks—most of our energy comes from BLM and offshore. If you go back to 2008, Interior was the Number-two generator of revenue in this country. It was \$18 billion a year, just in offshore. It was a banner year. In 2016, when we took office, it was \$2.6 billion. We dropped \$15 billion a year, on scale, that would have addressed our entire backlog.

So, this is what the proposition of the bill says. If you are going to produce energy, all forms of energy on public lands—that is wind, that is solar, that is oil and gas—then you should also participate in paying for the maintenance and preservation of our public lands. It does not affect any current program. It does not affect LWCF. It does not affect GOMESA, because the proposition is net dollars of new energy going into the Treasury. It does not affect any program. And many people on the Gulf with the GOMESA or

LWCF program, which I support, it does not affect any of those programs. It is just net dollars.

I think, over the course of time, liquid natural gas would be a bigger player. I am hoping we have a battery. But we have to address the infrastructure in our parks, and our current system falls short.

So, that is what the President has proposed, that is what is in the budget. Believe me, it was not an easy process, getting OMB—and you remember our good colleague, Mick Mulvaney—it wasn't easy to get him on board. But the President and OMB are on board. And it is a bipartisan bill over in the Senate that addresses the Park Service. The Senate is organized somewhat differently, because we are also looking for companion bills on Indian education and wildlife refuges.

That is the proposal of how to do it. We think it is a good proposal. And it is in the spirit of Teddy Roosevelt.

Mr. GOHMERT. I appreciate that approach a great deal. I would love to see the Land and Water Conservation Fund at least be part of that, go toward taking care of our maintenance before we acquire more land. But I certainly appreciate your approach.

I am proud to call you a friend, and I appreciate what you are doing, and especially congratulations on growing the ice.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. I will let everybody know I am going to be a stickler on the 5-minute rule so we can get everybody in here.

The Democrats have been kind enough to give me a list of who the Minority wishes me to call on. So, Mr. Huffman, you have been requested to give the first set of questions by them.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, welcome, Mr. Secretary. I would like to ask you, Secretary Zinke, about the Administration's very ambitious proposal for new offshore drilling. I listened to your testimony in the Senate and the colloquy with Senator Cantwell, where you stated to her that you understood that the state of Washington opposes new offshore drilling, and that that would be reflected in the Administration's plan.

I would like to ask you what your understanding of how the state of California feels about offshore drilling along our coast.

Secretary ZINKE. Thank you. And if I could just take 30 seconds to explain elephant trophies, the court mandated that we change our—

Mr. HUFFMAN. If I could, Mr. Chair, I just don't have time for anything other than the answer to this question.

Secretary ZINKE. Well, you did bring it up in your opening statement. Let me take 30 seconds.

Mr. HUFFMAN. But that is not my time. It has to be on your time, sir.

Secretary ZINKE. The court mandated we change the process, not the policy.

Mr. HUFFMAN. I would like to reclaim my time.

Secretary ZINKE. We haven't imported one elephant, and we are 100 percent on board with the President's policy.

To your point about offshore, the decision that was mine. The last administration took 94 percent of offshore off. I did a zero-based analysis. I put everything on. It is clear—

Mr. HUFFMAN. What is your understanding of California's feeling on your proposal? You spoke about Washington to Senator Cantwell. I want to know what your understanding is of California.

Secretary ZINKE. I am going to have California down as opposed.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you.

Secretary ZINKE. I have talked to your governor—

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you. Next question.

Secretary ZINKE. California is opposed. I think you are opposed to it.

Mr. HUFFMAN. You are hearing us loud and clear, Mr. Secretary. I just wanted to make sure that that channel was working.

Secretary ZINKE. As well as your colleague next to you. Massachusetts is opposed, too.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Excellent. I appreciate that clarification.

Now I would like to ask you about water. The President's budget requests drastic cuts to the Bureau of Reclamation programs that invest in stretching our western water supplies, like conservation and recycling. They are proposing cutting the WaterSMART program by more than 75 percent below Fiscal Year 2017 levels. Similarly, a 90 percent proposed cut to Title XVI water recycling. While these dependable and collaborative programs are being gutted, there is one lucky project that is getting more money. The Department is proposing \$20 million in WIIN Act funds to move forward on design and pre-construction for the enlargement of Shasta Dam and Reservoir.

I have heard you speak at length about the importance of fiscal discipline and not wasting funds. Are you aware that this project that is being proposed—singled out, almost—among all of the water programs for this funding violates California law?

Secretary ZINKE. A couple things. One is the Bureau of Reclamation in the budget. I agree it is challenged. This is also the problem with Bureau of Reclamation. The initial deal made when Bureau of Reclamation came in is that the government would put large investments in, and then the water users would, over this course of time, pay for it and the title would be transferred.

Mr. HUFFMAN. But on this specific project are you aware that enlarging Shasta Dam violates California law? I have a letter from California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird explaining that. And, without objection, I would request that it be put into the record.

And my very specific question—we know you want to be careful, as a steward of these public dollars. Do you want to be throwing \$20 million into studying a project that is illegal?

Secretary ZINKE. We are looking at that. We haven't made a determination, but we are looking at it.

Clearly, California is short of water, and water storage is a part of the solution. Shasta was originally built to be, the water level was built to be much higher. The I-5, as I understand it, prevents it from going over 18 feet, so there are a lot of challenges. But clearly, increasing the reservoir for water storage is a big issue. And I have to tell you up front on the Central Valley, as some of your colleagues know, we still maintain that project in oversight, even though the water districts have now paid—

Mr. HUFFMAN. But I am not asking about that. I do note that there is one water district that would benefit from this project that is getting this fortunate \$20 million funding. It happens to be the Westlands Water District. Their former attorney and lobbyist is now your Number two at the Department of the Interior. Can you assure us that this has nothing to do with that?

Also, over a decade ago that district spent \$35 million to purchase 3,000 acres of land that would need to be acquired if that dam raise goes forward. Can you guarantee that none of this funding will go to a sweetheart land—

The CHAIRMAN. Sorry, your time has expired. Thank you.

Secretary ZINKE. Yes.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. You are not supposed to answer when I already gaveled down, even though thank you for doing it in one word.

Mr. Young.

Mr. YOUNG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, welcome. And it is such a pleasure to hear them squeal and squall on the other side after they stuck it to us all those years with Sally Jewell. I enjoy every moment of it.

We have a Secretary who understands public lands and where the wealth of this Nation comes from. It does not come from BS. It comes from the land. And you have to understand you want your social programs and et cetera, but you don't want to pay for it. The only way you can pay for it is utilization of our resources God gave us and we should be able to develop in the right way.

As far as the elephants go, ladies and gentlemen, those that try to protect the elephants and condemn the Secretary, you ought to study a little bit instead of BSing about what the environmentalists say. I happen to know a little bit about elephants. You are just taking and rewarding the poachers. That is what you are doing. You killed more elephants by the actions of Mr. Obama than any other time in history because of the poachers. So, if you like elephants, keep it up.

Mr. Chairman, I just have two questions about Alaska.

The BLM and their studies of the eastern, I call it the interior, came down through proposal that BLM was going to make a park out of it. Are you reviewing that? I hope you know what I am talking about, it is that eastern section of the interior of Alaska they made into restrictive areas?

Secretary ZINKE. There is no plan to scrap the plans. We are looking at it. I think what you are referring to are the RMPs, and we are looking at those very closely. And I can work on it with your staff, line by line.

Mr. YOUNG. Well, I would just like to say, Mr. Secretary, I would like to talk to you about that, because the way it came down from the BLM, who happened to become a Park Service under the last administration, instead of the BLM, multiple-use district, is trying to set it aside. And it does affect how people live in those areas. It does affect resource development, one of my native corporations. I want us to revisit that issue, so let's sit down and talk about it, whoever is running that operation.

I understand that the BLM and Fish and Wildlife are supposedly working together on bear counts and the affected Ambler Road.

Fish and Wildlife said we don't have the staff to do that, to make that study. I am just worried, Mr. Secretary, that the bureaucracy which is in place now within those two agencies is slow-walking you and hoping that you will no longer be with us after the next 2 years.

That is not what I am looking for. I want action, and I want to see this done. If I find out anybody is doing that, you definitely will hear from me, because I don't like slow-walking. I like things to get done. There is a responsibility, and if they are not doing it, get rid of them.

Secretary ZINKE. I agree. I think we are all frustrated in the permit process. And if a project is not appropriate, we should just say no. If a project is appropriate, we should say yes. It is the timeline that these are being drawn out that takes investors off the table, but we need to make sure that Interior bureaus work together. And part of the reorganization maps on your desk look at how we are presently organized.

I challenge anyone to figure this out because, real quickly, if you have a trout and a salmon in the same stream, upstream you have a dam, downstream irrigation, and that stream goes by a Forest Service holding. This is the way we are presently organized. The salmon are managed by NMFS, the trout are managed by Fish and Wildlife. The water flow and temperature is Army Corps of Engineers, upstream. Downstream irrigation is Bureau of Reclamation. If it goes past a Forest Service holding, surface is Department of Ag., sub-surface is BLM through me. And if you have a water compact, then it is a trifecta of BIA, the state, and the tribe.

You could have, literally, multiple biological opinions produced independently by bureaus that don't have the same regions or don't talk. So, next slide.

[Slide.]

Secretary ZINKE. What we are proposing is the thing called science. What we are proposing is, based on watersheds, ecology, based on trail systems, wildlife corridors, to redo our regions based on science, and unify them so at least the Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Reclamation, all of the departments have unified regions and can talk to each other focused on three things: recreation, because that is an \$887 billion industry; NEPA, which is important to us all; and permitting. If we can go that far, it would be helpful.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sorry, I am not looking at it. And, Mr. Young, you are the senior member of the House. You are not used to slow-walking yet?

Mr. YOUNG. No, I will never slow-walk. I know some people wish I did slow talk.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. I give. All right. Mrs. Torres, you are next.

Mrs. TORRES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Secretary Zinke, welcome to our Committee. I want to start talking about your budget with you.

We have had hearing after hearing in this Committee about the inequalities faced by Indian Country. Yet, your proposed budget slashes key programs that aim to address the disparities. If this were to become law, the overall funding provided for in Indian

Affairs would be lower than any level in the last 15 years—15 years.

Nearly every line item in the budget has reductions. The almost-half-a-billion in total cuts is the largest of any bureau at the Department of the Interior. We have to do better, Secretary Zinke, and I hope that you will work with this Committee to start over and fulfill the commitment that we have made to these communities.

Chairman Bishop, thank you for holding a hearing earlier this year on our bipartisan Jobs for Tribes Act. As you know, the bill would be a major economic boost for Indian Country, and would support increased commerce between tribes and indigenous people across the Western Hemisphere.

Mr. Secretary, during our hearing on the bill, the Director of Bureau of Indian Affairs told us that, in general, Interior supports the legislation, but that we need to make some technical tweaks. We are open to that. The Director gave me his word that the Interior would provide technical feedback on the bill as soon as possible, but that was 2 months ago, sir.

Secretary Zinke, do you have a timeline for when you can get comments back to this Committee?

Secretary ZINKE. I don't have a timeline, but I will make it a priority, and when I get back I will have a meeting today about it.

Mrs. TORRES. I appreciate you making a commitment to that.

Offshore drilling in California, I want to go back to that. Mr. Secretary, you know the strong opposition that Californians have toward more offshore drilling. I would like to emphasize that it is not just theoretical for us, we have seen firsthand the Santa Barbara blowout and the Refugio oil spill. Our goal is to get these platforms removed, not give them a new lease on life.

Florida, who also opposed the Administration's plan, got an exemption, so why can't California get an exemption? Other than being a blue state and Florida being a red state, why are we so different?

Secretary ZINKE. A couple things. Florida did not get an exemption. In the case of Florida, three things. One is every Member, both sides of the aisle, wrote me a letter. Second is the governor asked for an immediate meeting. And third, there is a little thing called a Federal moratorium that expires in 2022, but that Federal moratorium extends well past 100 miles off the coast.

Mrs. TORRES. When you say both sides of the aisle wrote you a letter, are you saying that the GOP California Representatives did not send you a letter?

Secretary ZINKE. Both sides of the aisle, every Member of the Florida Delegation, both Republican and Democrat, either wrote me a letter or wrote me a statement in strong opposition to drilling off the coast of Florida.

Mrs. TORRES. So, are you saying that California Republicans failed to send you a letter talking about the importance of shutting off oil drilling off of the California coast?

Secretary ZINKE. No, what I am saying is that Florida, I could have put Florida off the list in the beginning, because the Executive Order from the President didn't specifically look at

Florida. But had I left Florida off, it would have been arbitrary and capricious.

Mrs. TORRES. Thank you. I want to make sure—

Secretary ZINKE. So, again, my commitment to California—and I will say the same thing I said to your Governor Brown—is that at the end of the day this President wants to take in consideration local communities, the state, as we go through—and this happens every 5 years, this plan—

Mrs. TORRES. Just for the record in the last 30 seconds, I want to make sure that we understand that if the President wants to preserve Mar-a-Lago's ocean view, that he should also be looking to preserve his Los Angeles club.

Regarding the water needs in California, we have vast underground aquifers, specifically in Southern California, the area that I represent. But we are in great need of funding because that water is severely polluted by Federal contractors that came in, polluted, and then left.

My time is up and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Let me interpose myself now with a few questions, if I could.

First one, Secretary Zinke, is actually not really a question, but more a confusion that I happen to have. If, as I have heard, California opposes Federal action on Federal waters, and Florida opposes Federal action on Federal waters, and any other state opposes Federal action on Federal waters, why, when Utah was opposed to Federal action on Federal lands, on Bears Ears, did it go through, anyway?

Or, when everyone in the Utah delegation and the Utah governor and every other assembly of elected officials in Utah supports your recommendation on Bears Ears, why all of a sudden is that now subject to lawsuits by some groups, opposition from others, introduction of a legislation?

Somehow there is a disconnect here that I don't quite understand of why it is OK for some people to object to it, and not for others, why it is OK that public lands and public waters are treated differently, or that one set of public areas is not the same kind of set as other public areas.

I don't think you can answer that, because I don't think there is a logical answer. It is just I wish there was some logical consistency into what we are doing. And if, indeed, we want to allow local governments to have a say in how their lands are doing it, then allow that same thing to happen in my state, as well.

Actually, allow it in my state first, and the rest of you can go screw yourselves, I don't care.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Just so my state actually gets it.

Secretary, let me go to your infrastructure fund, if I could, for a second. Last year, we passed a Centennial Fund, and the biggest problem we have—I mean it is doing a wonderful job, but the biggest problem we have is actually finding a continuous stream of revenue to go into that particular fund.

Can you go once again with your proposal for backlog improvement funds, and why you are trying to do that again?

Secretary ZINKE. The buildup in infrastructure of our park system, which is about \$11.6 billion in backlog, the last great effort to build our parks was Mission 66, it was from 1956 to 1966. And I will agree that there were some good things that came out of Centennial, but the problem with the Centennial is nothing really substantial to address \$11.6 billion. It had some nice programs, Find Your Park. It had some development, a National Park Foundation, which is good. But there is nothing of weight to address \$11.7 billion.

So, looking at it, our bill proposes this. On new energy set at last year, net dollars go into Treasury. It is important that we say net dollars into Treasury, because many of you enjoy LWCF or GOMESA, and we understand, and I didn't want to get toe to toe—

The CHAIRMAN. Wait a minute, let me interrupt you for a second. You need to find a revenue source that is big enough to actually make a difference.

We can have cake sales all the time, it is not going to make a difference, and I appreciate that. But I also have some confusion, because some people have labeled this proposal as backwards, a sham, inaccurate. Although, at the same time, they like LWCF, what you just said—the LWCF money comes from offshore revenue. This program comes from offshore revenue. Is it possible there is actually good oil and bad oil and we need to make a difference between them?

Secretary ZINKE. Mr. Chairman, this proposal comes from all energy sources, to oil and gas, wind, solar—everything that is energy produced on Federal lands, that is the source of this revenue.

We don't judge energy. The policy of this President is all-of-the-above, recognizing that we have to power this country in energy dominance is a national security—morally it is right, environmentally it is right, and economically it is right. It is better to produce energy in this country under reasonable regulation than watch it be produced overseas with no regulation.

The CHAIRMAN. So, you will establish a baseline of what has been produced in the past that will fund the programs that are already there. And then anything that can be increased from that, that becomes what will be going to your backlog program?

Secretary ZINKE. And we believe that is correct because, in many places, it has been punitive and not allowing energy development to occur, where appropriate, on public lands. We are seeing a rise on offshore, we are seeing a rise on BLM land and permitting, and we are trying to address the permitting to do it.

The CHAIRMAN. I am giving you 20 seconds or less here. Tell me how your reorganization effort will help the level of service given to people. You actually have 17 seconds.

Secretary ZINKE. Well, given that, the drawing of what we are currently organized with, look at the next slide.

[Slide.]

Secretary ZINKE. This is based on science. And if we focus on recreation, NEPA, and permitting, and we force structurally for the departments to work together, we will have better outcomes sooner.

The CHAIRMAN. And I am out of time. Thank you.

Ms. Hanabusa, you are next.

Ms. HANABUSA. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome, Secretary Zinke. I want to talk to you about a couple of very small projects, in terms of your whole budget, but ones that are very significant and important, especially to Hawaii.

I sit before you, the granddaughter of two internees. Both of my grandfathers were interned during World War II, one in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and one in a place called Honouliuli in Hawaii, which people did not know about.

I didn't find out about the fact that my grandfather was interned on Oahu for a lot of the war time until he was 80-something years old, because they didn't speak about it. And that has been the problem that many face, the Japanese Americans who served in World War II. As you know, probably the most decorated unit to date in the history of the military in the 100th and the 442nd, as well as those who were interned, just did not speak about it. My grandfather was born in Hawaii and is a citizen by birth, though we were a territory then. And he did not speak about it.

This President's budget zeroes out what is I think a really nominal amount, compared to your whole budget. It is about \$2 million. But what it does do is eliminates the grant program that have at least kept various institutions throughout the United States who are trying to keep this history alive. Because I believe that it is essential that we, as a Nation, recognize our darkest moments, so that we don't have them repeat again.

So, Mr. Secretary, I would like to know. Even with the President zeroing it out, are you committed to continue the grant programs that are identified, I believe, as the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grants Program, which were funded in 2017? Will we see it funded again in 2018?

Secretary ZINKE. [Speaking native language.]

Ms. HANABUSA. I think it is still [speaking native language], but that is OK.

Secretary ZINKE. To your point, the priorities were set that fix the Park Service, fix our stuff first. And this program may have been caught up in that. I read about it this morning, so I will look into it. I am committed to making sure of the importance of this. And I agree with you, it is important.

We still have a grant program, but I think it probably got caught up in the priorities of fixing our stuff first—when I say “our” stuff, Interior facilities, bridges, pipelines, and infrastructure—before we extend grants to other programs. That is likely what happened, it got caught up in that. I will look at it, and I will work with you on it, because I think it is important.

Ms. HANABUSA. Can you tell me that, even if the President zeroes it out, would you have the discretion to, if Congress approves it, is that what you would need, for Congress to give a line item on it for you to over-ride the President?

Secretary ZINKE. The will of Congress, on the budget, is always looked at seriously, so if Congress moves, I am sure we are going to support Congress. But you have my commitment to look at it, because I think it was an oversight in the budget, again, because our priorities were on national park operations, and this is

probably one of the programs that was a result of that. I will work with you on it and look at it.

Ms. HANABUSA. Thank you.

Secretary ZINKE. I understand the importance of it to American history.

Ms. HANABUSA. Let me also point out two programs, also really not a lot of money, but has grave impact if you cut it.

One is what we call NAGPRA, which is, of course, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. That has also been zeroed out, and that is very essential, as you know, when we look at artifacts and keeping the history alive of our native peoples, including the native Hawaiians.

Will you also commit to look at that, as well?

Secretary ZINKE. I will. And that is probably, on some of these smaller grants, I am sure that is what occurred. And I can talk to you on grants, overall, we give about \$5.5 billion.

Ms. HANABUSA. That is right.

Secretary ZINKE. I did not bring in the stack of IGs with it, so there have been some problems with the grants. We are trying to organize it and track things. This is the copy of the IGs, so we are trying to track the execution of them a little closer. But I will work with you on it.

Ms. HANABUSA. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Lamborn, I apologize for stepping in in front of you, but—

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, you can do that any time you want.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. I had this burning within my bosom, sorry. You are recognized.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Secretary, it is great to have you here. What a difference a year makes. I am excited about what you are doing, and I appreciate your efforts.

Fifteen months ago you were on this side of the dais, asking the tough questions. Now we get to ask. But you were always an engaged and effective Member representing Montana very well, and our loss as a Committee is America's gain.

And I appreciate the fact that, with increased energy revenue, we now have turned \$1 billion back to states and tribes. We are fostering energy dominance. We are reorganizing. I like your ideas on reorganizing the Federal bureaucracy, there are some exciting ideas there. You are doing some great things.

Let me ask you about that reorganization. With the Bureau of Reclamation, in particular, there has always been an identity between Colorado and the Bureau of Reclamation. They have worked hand in glove so many times. As these talks continue on reorganizing, will you continue to look at Colorado as an end place for some of the current Washington-based bureaucracy to go and be closer to where the projects are that are being done by the Bureau of Reclamation?

Secretary ZINKE. Great question. And let me tell you where we are, so everyone knows in the reorganization.

We asked the USGS to strip the political boundaries, what it would look like to organize and manage on the basis of science, watersheds, wildlife corridors, ecosystems. They came back with 13

different regions. And then I brought every SES in—not everyone, but a selected group across the country, and these are senior executive service careers—and I asked them to take a close look at the maps and adjust them. I took every recommendation, because we have certain assets that extend past states. And the map you have before you is that map.

Then I coordinated with the governors. The governors felt pretty strongly out West that they wanted to maintain the BLM state directors. This organization does not affect it. And the governors felt pretty strongly that recreation, NEPA, and permitting were the areas that we would focus on.

Today, 16 percent of Interior is retirement age. In 5 years, 40 percent of Interior is retirement age, so we are a fairly senior group.

And there are bureaus—Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management—their primary activity is out West.

The other challenge we have is in some cities—San Francisco, Seattle, Washington, DC, Denver—it is enormously expensive for a GS-5, a GS-7 to have a quality life. So, we are looking at moving this, say, a recreation group or a NEPA group, to smaller cities, where they can enjoy a better quality of life. Because we are going to have natural turnover.

So, when a GS-15 retires maybe in Washington, DC, we can reprogram it out in the field, probably where it belongs, at a GS-5. And, yes, we are looking at smaller cities in each of these areas, not just the West, but in each of these areas, to make sure that our people, our young millennials that are coming in, can have a quality of life.

Mr. LAMBORN. And I know Scott Tipton would say Grand Junction is affordable. I will tell you Colorado Springs is affordable, compared to Denver.

Let me also ask you about another subject before the time runs out: illegal marijuana grows. These are happening all over the country. I think there is bipartisan interest in getting these under control. They wreak environmental havoc wherever they take place. Plus cartel activity is frequently involved, so I am real concerned about it.

How widespread is this problem on Federal public lands? And what are you doing and can you do to combat this horrible problem?

Secretary ZINKE. Well, it is a problem where the growing of marijuana outdoors is conducive. It is not really a problem in Montana, but it is a big problem in Colorado, a big problem in Northern California. And it is an environmental problem as much as anything, because the chemicals used are creating havoc in our watersheds. So, we are looking at forming task forces.

We have BLM, we have U.S. Park Police, we have BIA, we have a number of different law enforcement entities within the Department of the Interior, and we are looking at forming task forces to do our part to eradicate the illegal growing on Federal land, which has caused an environmental issue among other things.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. McEachin.

Mr. MCEACHIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, in previous hearings, you and I and others have had conversations about sexual harassment. It is our understanding that you plan to release an updated Department-level anti-harassment policy soon. Will you agree to provide us a copy of the draft Department-wide policy?

Secretary ZINKE. Sexual harassment, my policy is simple: zero tolerance.

Mr. MCEACHIN. Yes, sir. But will you agree to provide us a copy of the draft Department-wide policy?

Secretary ZINKE. I think we are just about done with that. I think we are going to release it next week. I will provide a copy to you.

Mr. MCEACHIN. Thank you. And how will you ensure that all bureaus' anti-harassment policies are updated to meet the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission standards?

Secretary ZINKE. Well, that is one of the things. Up front, our survey has improved on it. I take it seriously. I was appalled, at one of my advisory committees, a statement by one of the members that resigned was, "Yes, we knew about sexual harassment, but it wasn't our job to say anything."

Mr. MCEACHIN. Yes, sir. I understand that. But my question is how will you ensure that all the bureaus' anti-harassment policies are updated to meet the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission standards?

Are you saying that they will meet those standards?

Secretary ZINKE. The way we are doing it right now is each of the bureaus has submitted their draft. Some of the bureaus submitted a stronger one than others, and then we are going through with our solicitors, all departments, to make sure that we have the strongest possible standard within the different departments. That is where we are at.

I am sure EEO is a part of it, as well as making sure that the different bureaus that were tasked have some continuity between them. Our policy in general is see it, say something. And we take it serious. I fired four people, and they told me I couldn't fire. I will fire 400 if—

Mr. MCEACHIN. Mr. Secretary, that wasn't my question. Let me move on to my next one.

One of the actions that DOI took to address sexual harassment was to require all bureaus to produce action plans for addressing harassment at the bureau level. It is my understanding those plans were supposed to have been submitted to Deputy Bernhardt within 45 days of the announcement, which, by my estimation, was the end of January. Will you provide a copy of those plans to me, so that we can assure proper oversight?

This is especially important since my request for a hearing on the issue has yet to be honored by the Majority.

Secretary ZINKE. We will supply the reports. Draft reports, I don't think there is any requirement to do that, working drafts. But we will work with you if you would like to come over and make sure—

Mr. MCEACHIN. Well, Mr. Secretary, it is my understanding that they were due to Deputy Secretary Bernhardt within 45 days of the

announcement of the policy, which would have been the end of January. Are they not done yet? Are they still in draft form?

Secretary ZINKE. First of all, that was my direction. Second of all, we have copies of—

Mr. MCEACHIN. Are they not done yet, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary ZINKE. They are being reviewed.

Mr. MCEACHIN. So, they are not done yet. Is that the case?

Secretary ZINKE. Is there a final copy? Final form? No.

Mr. MCEACHIN. All right. Mr. Secretary, NASA, the military, business leaders, local governments, and countless other Virginians have vocally opposed offshore drilling in Virginia's waters. And that has been done on a bipartisan basis. Why has Virginia not received the same consideration as you have offered other coastal states, particularly Florida?

Secretary ZINKE. And what consideration would that be, sir?

Mr. MCEACHIN. Not having offshore drilling off of our coast, and taking us off the list.

Secretary ZINKE. Virginia has received the same consideration as every other state. All states are still in the process, although I did commit with Virginia to make sure there is no oil—I committed to no new oil and gas platforms off the coast of Florida, primarily because of three reasons. One is because every Member contacted me; the governor asked for an immediate meeting; and there is a Federal moratorium that would prevent me from conducting oil and gas operations off the coast. On the coast of Florida, on the basis of that, I committed to it.

Other states I have committed, too. I have talked to every governor. I have talked to almost every Member. And we are committed to make sure our plan reflects the interests of the local communities.

I can tell you most of the congressional districts on the coast are opposed to it, with a few exceptions. The governors on the East Coast, other than Maine and Georgia who are on the fence, are all opposed. The West Coast universally is opposed along the coast, and that is where we sit on the plan.

The CHAIRMAN. OK.

Mr. Wittman.

Dr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, thanks so much for your leadership and for your service. I want to try to hit five points as quickly as I can, and then get your comments.

First of all, for our Chesapeake Bay clean-up efforts, critical efforts. It is critical the relationship, the partnership we have with the Federal Government, especially the Department of the Interior agencies, is key to making sure that that cleanup takes place properly. As we go through the budgeting process this year, there will be a lot of debate about where the dollars go into those Bay clean-up programs. I hope to have your leadership and support to highlight the importance of those Federal-state relationships, especially related to Department of the Interior departments.

Second, in the Chesapeake Bay, an area on the Rappahannock River, arguably the highest-priority conservation site, is a place called Fones Cliffs. It has the greatest concentration of bald eagles in the Continental United States. Appropriation goes back to 2009. We have a willing landowner, willing conservation partners. I hope

that you will work with me to make sure that we finally get this land into the refuge system that we have worked on for years and years. So, I appreciate hopefully your consideration there.

Third, H.R. 3979, you talked about giving additional dollars this year for infrastructure. H.R. 3979, Keeping America's Refuges Operational Act that I put in with Representative Hakeem Jeffries, to make sure that we are continuing the volunteer and community partnerships that happen with our volunteers to maintain refuges, I think that is absolutely critical. Hopefully, we will have your support as it makes its way through the Senate. It has passed the House, it is awaiting passage in the Senate. So, your leadership there will go a long way.

I want to highlight, too, the importance of our regional fishery management commissions. I want to thank you so much for your leadership and commitment to objective, fact-based management decisions there, and what U.S. Fish and Wildlife did last year in decisions on Atlantic menhaden. I think those things are critical, going forward. I hope that that continued effort there, on a commitment to science-based fisheries management decisions and the maritime jobs and communities that go along with it will continue.

Last, we were just able to get through and the President signed H.R. 984, which is our Virginia Tribal Recognition bill that now fully recognizes the six first-contact Virginia tribes, the ones that provided the opportunity for Captain John Smith to survive. That is a good thing. Recognition long overdue. Thank you. In this year's Fiscal Year 2019 budget you included \$961 million for the initial Federal support for those newly recognized Virginia tribes, and I ask for your leadership in securing those dollars, as we have the debate through the budgeting process.

Mr. Secretary, the remainder of the time will be for you to comment back.

Secretary ZINKE. On the tribes, congratulations on your successful navigation with that, and your support of it. I know we are supposed to do an event, and the White House is involved with it, so we are working to coordinate that. The budget does include \$960,000 for that. As they are going to be recognized, I wish them well with it.

Other than that, on the list, I am aware of every one of the issues. We are working on it. Chesapeake Bay is, obviously, a concern, and it has been for a long time.

Dr. WITTMAN. Yes.

Secretary ZINKE. We are seeing some improvement in the Chesapeake Bay, which is a good thing. We have seen some species recover, so I think the path for the Chesapeake Bay is looking much better than it was a few years ago. And that is why we have regulation, so I am optimistic about it.

Dr. WITTMAN. Very good. Thank you so much for your leadership there. Again, that Fones Cliffs property, I think, is a really key element of what we have been working on there for years for that whole area, the Chesapeake Bay, a key element, a very unique part of the ecosystem there that is like no other place on the face of the earth. So, your continued effort there to make sure that all the willingness that I think is occurring there, both within your agencies and outside, I think the opportunities are there. I hope that

you and I, as well as the conservation partners, can work to make sure that we get that done here in the very near future.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ms. Bordallo.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Zinke, welcome. I am not sure if your Navy SEAL career ever brought you to Guam, but I am taking this time to extend an invitation to come and visit our island, since our agency is responsible for the U.S. territories.

Mr. Secretary, I am dismayed that the President's budget, for the second time, proposes to eliminate discretionary compact impact grants. Federal law mandates—mandates—Guam to provide local public services to nearly 17,000 residents who are citizens of the Freely Associated States. And our population is only 170,000.

At a time when more and more FAS citizens are migrating to Guam and other U.S. jurisdictions under the compacts, why does your Department budget propose eliminating this important compact impact reimbursement for our island?

If you could make it quick, because I have such little time here.

Secretary ZINKE. As a Navy SEAL, I have been to Guam multiple times.

The budget looked at priorities, and this is why it is a proposal, and not a finished product on it. This is the debate between the two branches of service. I will work with you on it. I understand how important Guam is. We had the meeting, as you know, the first 20 minutes was dedicated to what is happening out in the Western Pacific. I get it and I will work with you on it.

Ms. BORDALLO. Very good. Thank you.

Guam is facing a fiscal crisis, as are other U.S. territories, that mirror the Federal tax code. The governor has called our legislature into emergency session seven times. Local public services have now been cut back, government workers furloughed, and staffing work hours have been reduced.

The President's budget proposes to cut funding for the Office of Insular Affairs assistance to the territories by more than 11 percent, and proposes other cuts to Guam. How do these cuts square with the Trump administration's stated goal of improving economic opportunities, governance, and quality of life in the territories?

Secretary ZINKE. Again, as a budget proposal, it is not a finished. Insular affairs was consistent with the other departments. Trying to get together a responsible budget about where we spend our money, at what levels. You have been a champion of Guam. When I sat on this side, you have been a champion, and you continue to champion your message. And your message is being heard.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. And constant concern I hear from Guam residents is that we are part of the United States, and yet we cannot vote for President. The five U.S. territories are excluded from the electoral college, so we have no say in choosing our president. Only two of the five Members of Congress from the territories are Republicans, so it is not a partisan issue.

What is the Trump administration's position on extending full voting rights for the 4.5 million Americans living in the territories? I know that this requires an Act of Congress. But what is the Administration's position and your position?

Secretary ZINKE. That is way outside the Secretary of the Interior's box. I will ask. But you are right, this is a constitutional issue, and not an executive action. I can ask the President. I know there is a state visit that we are trying to organize, because it has been a while for the leaders, especially out in the Western Pacific, to have an office call and a state visit with the President. We are working on that, and that would be one of the things to bring up.

Ms. BORDALLO. Well, if I do introduce legislation, I would certainly like your backing.

My last question is—and I only have a little time—under current law, the five U.S. territories and District of Columbia split six ways a single state's share from the Land and Water Conservation Act. This is simply unfair and under-funds our public park and recreation projects in the territories.

Are you on record as supporting this, splitting this six ways?

Secretary ZINKE. I will take a look at it. I know there is a congressionally mandated split on that. We will look at it closely.

I can tell you that I agree with you that out West, the further you go out, the less people see our country as supporting them, and they feel like they have been neglected, especially with the rise of China. We talked about that.

Ms. BORDALLO. We have H.R. 4179, which is supported by all six Members of the territories. So, I will get with you on that, Mr. Secretary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. McClintock.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary, welcome back. I thought Mr. Huffman earlier brilliantly illustrated the problem that we face in California with respect to water: breathtakingly bad public policy that has made it impossible for us to meet the water needs of Californians. Ironically, California is one of the most water-rich regions of the country.

For California's water, the state's policy is essentially to place severe restrictions on water usage, ration water, even in flood years, as was recently proposed by Jerry Brown's State Water Resources Control Board. When the Republicans took the Majority in Congress, we set a very different objective for water policy, and it could be summed up in one word: abundance.

I am going to pose a very simple question to you, which might seem obvious, but I think it defines the difference between the parties on this issue. What do you think is better, water shortage or water abundance?

Secretary ZINKE. Well, you are right, the challenges in California water are multiple. And it is going to be a challenge this year. The reservoirs up north were full. There is a lack of storage. I think most people would agree with—

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Well, there is a complete lack of storage. We went through 4 years of record drought, where we drained our reservoirs almost into mud puddles. Many communities were

within months of running out of water, completely. If you want to know what that looks like, you just have to look at Capetown, South Africa. Then we had a year of record rainfall, and we had to open up the flood gates of those same reservoirs, because we had no place to put the water.

What is the Administration doing to restore abundance as the central objective of both our water and hydroelectric power policy?

Secretary ZINKE. This Administration is in support of more storage. But on Southern California—California is big, on Southern California, those reservoirs never filled, because you have a drought, continuing drought, in Southern California around Santa Barbara.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. That is because we cannot pump surplus water as it heads out to the ocean to those reservoirs. The fact is that Northern California, we have no place to put the water.

Secretary ZINKE. I agree. This Administration, I certainly support more storage. Shasta is an example of that.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Yes, everybody thinks the Colorado River is the big river in the West. The Sacramento system is bigger. The problem is we store 70 million acre feet out in the Colorado, we only store 10 million on the Sacramento, and the rest we lose to the ocean every year.

Secretary ZINKE. True. And back to reorganization, you have NMFS versus Fish and Wildlife versus Army Corps of Engineers versus Bureau of Reclamation versus the state. You have a number of these entities that have differing views that is ensuring no progress on any front. And you have seen it.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. And an ideology that is simply adverse to new water storage.

Secretary ZINKE. But I think, at the end of the day, almost everyone wants the same goal. They want a healthy environment, they want clean water, they want sufficient systems, but we cannot do it structurally, so we are going to have to change—

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Well, let's go to the healthy environment and move to Federal lands policy for a moment.

We imposed laws years ago that have made the management of our forests virtually impossible, all in the name of improving the forest environment. I think after more than 40 years of experience with these laws, we are entitled to ask how those forests are doing. You have seen the answer to that; they are dying.

We set three over-arching objectives for Federal lands: to restore public access to the public lands; to restore good management to the public lands; and to restore the Federal Government as a good neighbor to those communities impacted by the public lands. Could you briefly tell us what the Administration is doing in pursuit of those objectives?

Secretary ZINKE. Well, in the power of the Secretary, I signed a Secretarial Order mandating the active management of our forests under Interior. I have coordinated that with the Department of Ag. and the Forest Service. Overall, this Administration wants to reduce the amount of dead and dying timber, reduce the fuel load.

We are going to spend, I don't know what the figures are, but probably over \$2 billion last year. I think there is movement within Congress, though, because of the devastating forest fires in

California, Oregon, and Washington, in some of the groups that have historically resisted cutting dead and dying timber.

I now look at the policy as a threat. Certainly, the loss of life in Santa Barbara, Montecito, some of these neighborhoods that have influence, watching a needless fire continue because we have not been able to do prescribed burns, mechanical extraction in our Forest Service holdings out West are filled with dead and dying timber. I think it is time to act. And this body can be enormously helpful in that effort.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Members, I have, like, 90 minutes of questions sitting here. I have 40 minutes of time with the Chairman. So, I am going to go to the next speaker, and then I may ask you if some of you would be willing to either voluntarily, or under a UC motion, cut our times down to 3 minutes so I can get everybody in.

Mr. Costa.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member. Kind of a curious order we are going in this morning, but I have more questions than I have time.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here. I want to get into some specifics, as it relates to California's water issue. I find it somewhat saddening that some of our colleagues here on the Committee continue to think that growing food is of less importance, and using farmers and farm workers as a political football, and kicking them in the teeth is somehow appropriate. But nonetheless, I will continue to try to solve and fix some of the broken water problems we have in California.

To that end, we had a bipartisan piece of legislation that you are familiar with, the WIIN Act, that was passed. It has a 5-year window, in terms of its implementation, the idea being simply to use greater flexibility when we have water moving through the system without violating existing environmental law, to move more water through the system for the state.

Under current rainfall in California, can you speak to the specifics of how Reclamation intends to implement the flexibility provided in this Act?

Secretary ZINKE. Yes. We have put additional funds in the WIIN Act. And I have always found it actually somewhat ironic, because they always talk about the rich Republican farmers, but they are being represented by a poor Democrat legislator. Thank you.

[Laughter.]

Secretary ZINKE. But water is a serious issue.

Mr. COSTA. It is the farmers, the farm workers, and the communities that put food on America's dinner table every night.

Secretary ZINKE. Absolutely. And, quite frankly, much of the debate in this central issue is internal between California. I have always found it, as the Federal water sometimes referee, I am refereeing water that begins in California, ends in California, and is used in California. And there is never a scenario where the Federal Government is going to win in this.

Mr. COSTA. So, is your notion or the conversation we had previously about returning Federal projects within a watershed totally within a state to return those to states?

Secretary ZINKE. I have talked to the governor about it, and we are willing to discuss it.

I understand when you have basins and they go multiple state, why a Federal Government needs to be the fair referee.

Mr. COSTA. Well, as I told you, that is not a new idea. And it has merit, but it also has a lot of controversy, like everything else in California involving water.

Secretary ZINKE. I am not sure it is more controversial than what I deal with every day.

Mr. COSTA. Interior's budget, does it provide enough resources to implement real-time monitoring of fish populations, so now that we have been getting water this week, that we can pump more water when endangered species are not present?

Secretary ZINKE. I think it provides an adequate amount. Some of it is, again, the way we are organized between the different bureaus.

Mr. COSTA. Right, and we talked about that. Would you support legislation to put those purposes of NOAA and NMFS from Commerce into the Department of the Interior? And, by the way, how well are you working with Commerce, NOAA, and NMFS?

Secretary ZINKE. We work with them well. And I am on the record—and I haven't changed since I was a Congressman—I have always looked at Interior, the Forest Service, NMFS, we need to either work together more closely and make a structural change to do that, and I am not—

Mr. COSTA. So, you would consider supporting legislation that would make it more logical? We know the political reasons on how this evolved some 40 years ago.

Secretary ZINKE. I would. I can tell you the headwinds, a lot of it, are over in the Senate.

Mr. COSTA. I know.

Secretary ZINKE. It has nothing to do with what is right. It is what—

Mr. COSTA. I have been dealing with this for 36 years, both in Sacramento, and now here in Washington.

Let me segue over. I will submit some questions and you can respond to it for the record.

But finally, a lot of us were concerned with the proposed increased fees to cover the way overdue—and you mentioned it—maintenance efforts for our national parks. And, while I don't represent Yosemite or Kings Canyon, they are in my backyard, and I feel like it is a part of our area. Those increases, I think, are very harmful to people who want to have access to the parks.

I think we ought to find a better way to put the money up front to deal with this deferred maintenance for all of our national parks, but obviously I am focused on Yosemite and Kings Canyon, which I know you visited.

Secretary ZINKE. The proposals that are oftentimes in the news were just that, they were a series of proposals. We have not made a decision yet. When we get to a draft, no doubt the Chairman, the Ranking Member in both houses—

Mr. COSTA. And these belong to all Americans, and we want to make sure they are accessible and affordable.

Secretary ZINKE. I agree. I think the best value in America still is the year pass, \$80—

Mr. COSTA. Perhaps America's greatest idea—

Secretary ZINKE. Greatest idea. I am not sure who pays for the parks. Everyone goes in for free.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Thompson.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Chairman. I will try to do this within 3 minutes.

Mr. Secretary, good to see you. Great to be with you at the scouting Report to the Nation event. And thanks for coming to Pennsylvania last month. We really appreciate you being there to announce the 2018 AML grants. We made great strides in restoring our historical mine lands over the past four decades, but there are a lot of scars left, a lot more work to be done. The OSM estimates that the unfunded liabilities of the abandoned mine lands across the Nation exceeds at least \$10 billion, and that number continues to grow, as more work is done.

I have been to a number of these reclamation sites in Pennsylvania, and the work is impressive. It is helpful in restoring our lands, our waters, our communities, so, obviously, something that we have a lot more work to do.

Can you discuss how the Office of Surface Mining plans to continue working with states and communities to restore abandoned mine lands, and especially in the uncertified states with the most needs?

Secretary ZINKE. Abandoned mines are an issue across—and by the way, both sides were invited to attend the public meeting when I went to Pennsylvania, and I think it is important for the Secretary to meet with local leaders and actually see it. So, there is a lot of work, and Pennsylvania received the lion's share of the AML for a reason, that there are a lot of reclamation jobs that need to be done.

We remain committed to the program. We think the program is good. Across this country, the way that we used to mine was destructive. Modern mining techniques are a lot better, and we have a lot more regulation on it. But repairing the past mistakes still remains to be a priority in this budget.

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes, I have the largest, I don't know if it is a privilege or a burden of having the most abandoned mine sites in my congressional district than any in the country. But we are very proud of the coal that we mined that fueled the Industrial Revolution and helped to win World War I and World War II. So, we will never apologize for that.

Just real quickly, is the Department or OSM considering any additional AML support for these states?

Secretary ZINKE. We have a plus-\$51 million on it, and we want to make sure the process of how we execute the funds—we think there is savings in that, too. You know, analyzing, when we give grants and money for this program, how is it being better spent, or how could it be better spent to shorten the timeline, we think that will save money, which will allow us more flexibility and more programs.

Mr. THOMPSON. And actually make a bigger difference. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Sablan.

Mr. SABLAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Secretary, welcome back to the Committee. The covenant, the agreement between the United States and the people of the Northern Marianas, includes a provision or language that says that the United States will help the Northern Marianas so that the lives and the communities will be advanced to a state of a similar community in the United States.

Last year, I brought to your attention that under the Office of Insular Affairs competitive system for covenant funds, funds that were originally intended strictly for the Northern Marianas to promote that advancement of standard of living, all went to the Marianas. My district now gets less than half the money. This deprives Saipan, the only United States municipality without 24-hour potable water, of needed infrastructure funds.

In your written answer, you said that the competitive evaluation criteria are evaluated and revised as necessary every 5 years. Can you explain the evaluation process to me, and what year it would next take place, please?

Secretary ZINKE. I recognize that the territories are different, they are smaller communities. And there has been criticism, and some of it has been in the IGs, that when we issue a grant there is not transparency in how they are conducted, or the standards are somewhat different.

But I also understand that I think we are making the threshold of standards too stringent and not flexible enough. We all want transparency, but the territories themselves many times don't operate the same as the Lower 48 or Alaska, and we need to be flexible and transparent. We are looking at how to do that within the confines of the law.

Mr. SABLAN. I don't want to disrespectfully cut you off, but if you won't today, can you explain, even in writing, again the re-evaluation process to me, and what year it would next take place? Because it has been over 5 years.

My next question is, last year we discussed the long-overdue Mariana Trench National Monument Management Plan the Fish and Wildlife Service has been working on for 9 years. In your written answer, you stated FWS continues to work with its partners toward completion of the plan, and that a number of steps have been taken to address or resolve important issues such as 2016 patent under the Submerged Lands Act.

Can you tell me what has happened in the past year, and when the draft monument management plan, which was to be completed in 2011 under President Bush's proclamation, when will it be issued?

Secretary ZINKE. A principal issue at the moment is science. The recommendation that went forward to the President about the monument was to allow commercial fishing, we are trying to look at the science behind it. If you are going to allow commercial fishing, which is the most regulated industry, I think. We forget about

how regulated fishing is. But we are trying to look at the science, whether or not and what levels of that.

And I will get back to you on where the Fish and Wildlife—we are also pulling data from the USGS and we are looking at the enforcement part of it, too. Because even though we do things as this country, we don't have a lot of enforcement and enough physical presence out there to make sure that other countries are in compliance. So, that has to be taken into consideration of any plan, because, as you know, Russia and China are out there, not abiding by the rules.

Mr. SABLAN. Exactly, exactly, leading to my next question.

But first, you mentioned a state visit. The President won in the Northern Marianas in the primary and lost in Guam. So, just remind him about that.

Secretary ZINKE. And that is our priority, and we are working to get a state visit between the three.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Secretary, I would like to sit down with you again like we did last year, when everyone ran off to vote and it was just you and I, to discuss your thoughts about the military plans for the Marines for the need for the island of Pagan.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Gosar.

Dr. GOSAR. Thank you.

Secretary, thank you so very much. I am going to cut it short to try to let others speak, but there are too many things that I can say and applaud you for, putting your elbow and your shoulder behind.

The first thing I really want to compliment you on is to continue this reorganization plan. But you heard from my colleagues on both sides of the aisle that Arizona would like to be exempt from California, that would be our one little clue.

On the critical minerals, I absolutely love where you are going with this. Just a side note, you are a geologist, you understand that some of these side metals that are very critical are associated with copper and with nickel mining. So, maybe inclusions of those would be very forthright. It is going to be our future, so that we are not dependent upon China for that.

You are very aware of the Grand Canyon beefalo. This is an invasive, non-native species. The Park Service has dragged their feet over and over again. They are destroying a critical ecosystem. We would love to see you—I know you were a co-sponsor of the bill—this is a win-win situation in allowing the Arizona Game and Fish to allow hunting experiences, make some money off of it. So, we would love to see you make some inroads there.

Twin Metals and the Superior National Forest. Thanks for the M opinion. We appreciate that. Any new information on the withdrawals that were actually done by Congress twice? Any new updates on that, sir?

Secretary ZINKE. In regards to the M opinion, it was a legal analysis that, when they canceled the preferred leases, it was not on legal standing, so we withdrew those. And now they have to go through a NEPA process, as they should. We are just trying to be fair.

And, up front, there are places to mine and extract, and there are places not to. That is why we have a NEPA process in our country that should be fair, should be firm, but it also should not be arbitrary.

Dr. GOSAR. Last, but not least, your proposed 5-year offshore plan was a breath of fresh air. Please put forward a final plan that closely resembles what you proposed. Hundreds of Members of Congress on both sides applaud you for that.

I would like to take my last 30 seconds and just say thank you for engaging, making it a bottom-up, instead of a top-down. I think that makes a world of difference for trying to get the West looking like it should. With that, I am just going to say thank you.

Secretary ZINKE. Thank you for your comments, Doctor.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, I appreciate that.

Ms. Tsongas.

Ms. TSONGAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Zinke. A couple of things. I think I have heard you say you understand well that Massachusetts, as a state, on a bipartisan basis we have met your test, a letter from every Member of Congress, as well as our Republican governor, signing on in opposition to drilling off our beautiful shore. So, that is your understanding, is it not?

Secretary ZINKE. It is clear that Massachusetts stands firmly opposed to offshore. But you should also know that there are really no resources off the coast of Massachusetts. And we can go through science, where they are, but yes, I have you down for a no.

Ms. TSONGAS. Thank you very much. I also want to revisit the issue that Mr. McEachin brought up, which is the issue of sexual assault. You referenced it more broadly across the Department of the Interior, but there was a survey done within the National Park Service, and I think it is important to highlight the results of that survey, that 38.7 percent of survey participants experienced some form of harassment in the last year; 10.4 percent of participants experienced sexual harassment in the past year; 74.7 percent of employees who experienced harassment did not file a report or complaint about the behavior. Of those who chose not to report, 45.9 percent thought nothing would be done if they filed a report or complaint, and 33 percent did not trust the process.

Your budget does not include any dedicated funding to this issue. In my role on the House Armed Services Committee we have seen all the services wrestle with this very seriously, as well as the Defense Department, more broadly. It does require resources to be effective.

You said the budget is a work in progress. Can you imagine finding funds to dedicate to this, whatever efforts you put in place?

Secretary ZINKE. Well, the report looks back. And I don't give judgment, it was a previous administration. It is still there. The sexual harassment is still there. I think much of it is leadership.

Ms. TSONGAS. Leadership, but leadership often requires a backup. For example, in the DoD we found nothing really happened until a general was put in charge of the sexual assault prevention response office. So, somebody with real standing within the organization has to take charge, and I hope that you will consider this as you move forward.

There is also another survey that has been done of part-time employees. When do you expect the results of that to be released? Because I understand that it has been completed. Initially, we expected to hear it in spring of this year.

Secretary ZINKE. I will look on that. But I can tell you what sent shock waves through Interior is when I fired four. And I have said it again. I will fire 400, if necessary. Like you, I think sexual harassment is a cancer in an organization, and everyone deserves the right to come to work free of harassment, free of intimidation, and have a work environment that promotes integrity, innovation, and a strong work ethic.

Ms. TSONGAS. I agree. But, obviously, given the numbers that have been revealed, it is going to take a real culture change. And I appreciate your actions, but I do think something more comprehensive will be required. And within the National Park Service, there is yet to be a permanent director. I imagine a permanent director at the head of that service could begin to wrestle with the culture change that is needed.

When does the Administration plan to nominate a director of the National Park Service, a permanent director?

Secretary ZINKE. The Office of Government Ethics and the FBI, I just had my nominee—the President's nominee, excuse me—for the USGS just came out of the Office of Government Ethics and FBI after about a year. He is an astronaut. He has a Ph.D. in earth sciences. He has a top secret—

Ms. TSONGAS. No, we are talking about the National Park Service, though.

Secretary ZINKE. But this gives you an example.

Ms. TSONGAS. Do you have a permanent nominee?

Secretary ZINKE. All has been done. I don't have BLM, I don't have Fish and Wildlife Service. I don't have Park Service. I still don't have USGS. I can go on, but it is not the White House.

Ms. TSONGAS. Speaking quickly of USGS, you have mentioned a number of times today about the importance of science in your decision making, and the USGS's role in doing that. And yet, you are proposing to restructure the climate and land use change program and significantly cut the numbers of dollars that would make their way into the USGS, I think seriously compromising its role in establishing good science around climate change and other things. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Two things, very quickly.

First of all, the Secretary has graciously said he will stay here longer than we had originally planned. Thank you for doing that.

Secretary ZINKE. I am just having so much fun, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, so am I. Your efforts to cut back, you don't necessarily need to do that. It is not happening, anyway, so you don't necessarily need to do that.

Second, I appreciate you having Massachusetts written down as a no on activities in Federal waters. Have you got Utah written down as a yes on activities on Federal lands in my state? And I hope the other side would recognize that, as well.

Mr. Tipton.

Mr. TIPTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Zinke, great to see you, I appreciate you taking the time to be here. And I do want to thank you and Deputy Secretary Bernhardt for your efforts in regards to the issue which was impacting four of our counties with the surplus revenues which were paid into the AML funds. And I do want to note that I am particularly appreciative of all of your efforts to be able to bring this to some level of conclusion for these counties. It really is important. Thank you for that.

I did want to take the opportunity to be able to visit with you on the Fiscal Year 2019 budget that was coming out.

We have a project in Colorado that is in my district, or a portion of my district, the Fryingpan-Arkansas project, which was started in 1962. Part of that project was also the Arkansas Valley conduit, to be able to deliver fresh drinking water into southeastern Colorado, as a result of EPA mandates under the Clean Water Act.

Mr. Secretary, our communities in southeastern Colorado are literally in a no-win situation, and the concern is that was zeroed out in the budget. The EPA has required the Clean Water Act to be employed. The resources are not there to be able to build it. This has been going on since 1962. And, in fact, if we had probably taken the money that was spent on the studies, we could have built the project during that period of time.

But the concern is they have a no-win. Simply with the mandate out of the EPA, the resources are not there, zeroing this out in the budget. Can you speak to this issue and what we might be able to expect in southeast Colorado?

Secretary ZINKE. Well, it is. And I understand the water district is looking at different innovations. The challenge we have in the Bureau of Reclamation is this: the initial idea was for the government to step in, make the investments, and then, over the period of time, the water users would pay for it and we would transfer title. Not transferring title has resulted over time in an enormous amount of infrastructure that we now pay for that we shouldn't. And transferring title, when it is appropriate, will free up money to invest in new projects that the small communities cannot afford. That was what the fundamental idea about Bureau of Reclamation was all about.

So, we find ourselves in systems that have long since paid for themselves, when the initial deal was made, but yet we maintain enormous amount of overhead, maintenance, and political battle on it when we should be transferring. That would help the Department of the Interior. We have asked in the budget for a title transfer authority to be given. And we will make sure it is appropriate and work with Congress to do it, but there are some projects, if we transfer it, it will free up money to fund exactly what you are talking about, what the intent of the Bureau of Reclamation should be doing.

Mr. TIPTON. I appreciate that. And we look forward to working with you, an important issue, obviously, for our district.

The next issue—and I still want to be respectful of your time and my colleagues' as well—we have introduced legislation, myself and Cory Gardner on the Senate side, to authorize a study by the Department to be able to move BLM headquarters to the West. I appreciate the reorganization plan that you are currently putting

together and I would like to be able to get your ideas on that. I would be remiss if I did not note that Colorado would obviously be the prime location for you to be able to consider.

But can you give us an update on some of your thoughts on BLM relocation?

[Slide.]

Secretary ZINKE. Where we are in the organization is the map you see. We are that far. And, quite frankly, there are bureaus that we think are candidates to move out West, because the preponderance of activity is in the West. BLM, certainly, Bureau of Reclamation. We haven't decided where we go, but I would think what we would do is we would create a matrix on quality of life, good schools, hospitals, accommodations, those types of things, and target cities within these groups for candidates. And perhaps even compete the cities to it.

We have 2,600 facilities nationwide, and we are in a lot of towns that people don't think they are. But my concern is making sure that we go to a community that has a high quality of life, that is affordable for the GS-5, GS-7, great communities that can compete for millennials that will want to be there. Colorado, certainly, fits that description.

Mr. TIFTON. Thank you. I concur with that. I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Grijalva.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, just following up on Congresswoman Tsongas' scientific integrity questions, should the Department of the Interior pursue and publicize peer review, scientific data, even if you, yourself, or the President disagree with the data?

Secretary ZINKE. Yes. If you are referring to the petroleum reserve, the National Petroleum Reserve, I don't change a comma. But I can tell you when I am responsible—just like your staff, if your staff releases a document, I think you probably look at it first.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Yes, but—

Secretary ZINKE. Same thing with mine. It doesn't mean I change it, especially when it is scientific integrity in a study. I don't change a comma, but I do read it before it goes out.

Mr. GRIJALVA. In the specific case we are referencing, a USGS scientist resigned because he felt he was being demanded to see data before it was made public. And the demand violated the agency's fundamental science practices, and the feeling was to allow energy companies to trade on this information unfairly.

Secretary ZINKE. That would be an allegation, sir, that is untrue. I would like an apology, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GRIJALVA. But do we ask the scientist who made the allegation?

Secretary ZINKE. No, but to allege something that occurred. I did not change a comma in a document, and I never would. But I can tell you I read it. In the case of the National Petroleum Reserve, I want to know why the data was not consistent. Same set of data, two reports, only a couple years apart, and yet—

Mr. GRIJALVA. So, your intention is not to suppress scientific findings that you might disagree with, or to release sensitive

scientific information in violation of your own rules in the Department?

Secretary ZINKE. I don't change a comma from any scientific report, but I do read it before it goes out, because I want to know.

Mr. GRIJALVA. It is not about changing. It is about disclosure and peer review and getting it out—

Secretary ZINKE. I think you should know why—I should know, the boss, why the same data set was different, same study, 3 years apart, that grossly under-estimated the reserves.

Mr. GRIJALVA. OK. Another question dealing with issues of transparency and other points that have been brought up through this discussion.

Do you agree the Department should have a permanent Inspector General, and that the IG should operate independently from your office, and that funding for that IG office should be sufficiently increased in the next budget cycle?

Secretary ZINKE. The IG is an independent body that follows the law. I think their budget is sufficient to carry out their duties.

Mr. GRIJALVA. I want to submit for the record, Mr. Chairman, in the time I have left, a statement from the Vietnam Veterans of America, a statement from American Veterans, AMVETS, a letter from the American Society on Aging, a statement from the Vet Voice Foundation, a statement from the National Disability Rights Network, a statement from Alliance for Retired Americans, a statement from Social Security Works, all essentially condemning the remarks Secretary Zinke made blaming the elderly, veterans, and people with disabilities for the push to increase fees in our national parks.

And I also think it is important for the Committee to know that there is a distinction with the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The LWCF is a 53-year-old program. These proposals that we are talking about today to engage in dangerous new drilling off the beaches of Florida, California, and other states are separate issues. And Congress authorized \$900 million a year on paper for LWCF, but that money, of course, is subject to appropriations by Congress.

In contrast, the Administration's proposal, what we have heard from the Secretary, and the legislation that is in Congress now incentivizes new drilling in places where it has been deemed inappropriate in the past. New drilling is the only way NPS backlog gets money. Further, this money would be mandatory spending, so Congress would have no role in deciding how it gets done. This proposal amounts to saying we have to risk destroying some parks, or our parks, in order to save them.

It is also ironic that at a time when you are arguing for new OCS revenue as a way to fix our parks, there is also consideration by the Department to reducing the royalty rate for that same drilling. I don't know how that will work.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Perhaps you will have a chance to answer that question some time.

Mr. Labrador.

Mr. LABRADOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Zinke, it is great to have you here this morning. Thank you for all you have done this past year.

Last week, I, along with Senator Crapo, sent you a letter regarding grazing management in wilderness areas on BLM land. Specifically, the letter asked you to re-examine BLM manual 6340 that was finalized during the Obama administration and fails to reflect congressional intent. The record is clear: Congress intended to allow grazing, including increasing the number of AUMs, where appropriate, in designed wilderness areas.

Since we just sent you the letter last week, I don't expect you to have a complete answer for me today, but will you commit to reviewing this particular manual to ensure it is consistent with congressional intent?

Secretary ZINKE. Well, as you know, the Wilderness Act of 1964 was a grand compromise between three parts: the preservationists, the hunters and fishermen, and the cattlemen. And it is my opinion that we have not lived up to the obligation and the intent of that law. And we are looking at it.

Clearly, when you cannot do timber harvest, there is a lot of dead and dying timber and undergrowth, which is a fire hazard. And many times in wilderness it starts in the wilderness, either by lightning or other means, and it extended outside. So, having grazing has always been a positive in most cases of removing the dead and dying timber and some of the growth. We are looking at that policy.

Grazing also—you have to weigh it with elk and deer, because in many wildernesses it is a competition for food, and we want to make sure we don't have unintended consequences. But we are looking at it hard, and I agree with you it should be looked at.

Mr. LABRADOR. Thank you. I also want to discuss 68 grazing permits up for renewal in Owyhee County, Idaho. These permits have come to be known as the Owyhee 68. Originally scheduled for renewal in 1997, these permits are still awaiting renewal more than 20 years later, due to ongoing litigation.

Over the years, BLM has repeatedly capitulated to the demands of environmental groups, to the detriment of ranchers who have worked on the land for generations. While grazing permit renewals can be complicated, they should not be this complicated. What are you doing at the Department of the Interior to ensure that BLM and the other agencies involved in the renewal of grazing permits have the resources they need to complete the process?

Secretary ZINKE. I think in this case, my understanding, it is before the administrative judges at the Interior Board of Land Appeals. But I agree with your overall thesis, that it could have been willful and intentional, to slow-roll these things, and we have seen that across the West. We will work with you on it, and we will show you all the data that we have on it.

Coming from Montana, where there are a lot of really good people out there, in my experience, our ranchers respect the land. And some of the greatest land in this country is in the hands of ranchers. They are good people, they work hard, they preserve the land. In general, if a lot of our land had ranchers on it, we would not have the issues we do.

Mr. LABRADOR. All right, thank you. For the sake of the Committee I will yield back the rest of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Soto.

Mr. SOTO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, first I want to thank you for publishing the sand skink relocation permit in the Federal Register this week. This is an area in Winter Haven in our district that has a new community center in an economically depressed area, so we appreciate that.

The AP report of this week that the manatee population has taken a pretty steep dive because of a cold winter, as you may know, it got reduced down to threatened. Do we have your commitment to hold the line on at least the threatened status for manatees, given the erratic population numbers over the past couple of years, due to weather?

Secretary ZINKE. You have my commitment, I will work with you on it. It is an issue to us. We are concerned about it. We are looking at the same data that you have, and we are trying to expedite that. The cold winter has affected a lot of species down in the Everglades, and I am committed to work with you on it. I think we are on the same page. We just want to make sure that it is a healthy population of manatees.

As you know, one of my priorities when I came to office is to go down to Florida, look at the Everglades, and the Everglades which you are concerned about, as well as I am, it starts with making sure the plumbing is right. The Everglades won't be fixed until we get the water flow right. And the water flow affects the entire peninsula. We are working hard to come up with a plan and expedite it.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Secretary, I am glad you mentioned the Everglades, because that is what I was going to ask about next.

As you know, we have sped up the Herbert Hoover dike construction. But there was recently in our State Legislature a new reservoir passed in a bipartisan manner that requires 50 percent Federal funding, \$1.4 billion, all together. It is an 8-year project, 10,500-acre reservoir and 6,500-acre treatment marsh.

I know Congress, obviously, makes the final decisions on these funding issues, but can we count on your support for the funding that Congress will need to make sure this new reservoir becomes a reality?

Secretary ZINKE. You can. And here is an issue that we need to work together on. It is the way that new starts are in process with the Army Corps of Engineers. That project should be all one. But it is listed—each different component is a new start, so it takes Congress to authorize a new start. And what happens is, on a project management scale, we cannot begin and end the certain components unless we fix the structure of it. So, that whole project should be one start, and you can do it as a project management and proceed expeditiously.

If we all work together on this, we can make it more efficient and get it done faster with less cost.

Mr. SOTO. So, if we got a new start consolidation for the Everglades project out of this Committee, that would be something you would support?

Secretary ZINKE. I would. If we put the whole project, these projects, as one entity so you didn't have to go to Congress to

authorize each component of it, it would speed the process up exponentially.

Mr. SOTO. And last, with regard to offshore oil drilling, is it fair to say, since there has been some confusion, that Florida is going through the BOEM process, but that you expect, given your past statements, that we will be excluded? Is that fair to say?

Secretary ZINKE. My commitment is we will do no new oil and gas platforms off the coast of Florida. I can't make it any clearer than that. Legally, there is a process that we go through. But my commitment is the same as I made to the governor.

And you would have thought that all the Members of Florida would have went, "Yes." But there was blowback. Somehow it was either a political decision, but it was the right decision in Florida, and I will stand by it was the right decision in Florida, unless you disagree.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Secretary, we were very pleased about the decision. I can tell you it was just when the BOEM Director stated that we were still in the process that then put it into a tailspin. That was really where we find ourselves today.

But yes, we definitely appreciate Florida ultimately being out of it. So, no possibility we are going to be ending up in it by the end?

Secretary ZINKE. My commitment remains steadfast.

Mr. SOTO. Thanks, and I yield back the remainder of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. I will remember that on Bears Ears.

Mr. LaMalfa.

Mr. LAMALFA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Secretary, how is it going?

Secretary ZINKE. The dam, here it comes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Are you braced for it?

Secretary ZINKE. I am braced.

Mr. LAMALFA. All right, good. We will need some new answers, too.

Two years ago, you spoke on the House Floor and you had a really good statement about two of the bills that we had passed to streamline constructing of hydroelectric projects on two dams that affect Montana and Idaho, citing as a serious disconnect between DC and rural residents. I will quote you, "While unelected bureaucrats sit in their offices in comfortable government jobs, residents are stuck in limbo, not knowing if good-paying jobs will come through, or if they will receive some relief in energy prices."

Last year, I sent you a letter asking your agency to reverse the misguided previous Obama administration campaign to ensure that regulatory conditions forced removal of the Klamath dams, three of them in my district, one on the Oregon side, which have provided flood control, recreation, access to affordable, reliable, renewable electricity that there are so many mandates for now these days.

I also included dozens of letters from my constituents in Siskiyou County, who would still like to be heard on this issue, and basically have been insulted by your bagman up there, Alan Mikkelson, who has been up there six-plus times, insulting the people that oppose dam removal, and listening only to the ones that want to remove the dams. That is how it seems and feels for them up there.

You would have heard the pleas of these families who see the disregard that the predecessor to your job has treated my constitu-

ents for the crime of being rural residents. You would learn the hopes that these parents, that they continue farming and ranching and living in a community where they have an economic opportunity would continue to go on.

During this time of this Administration, Congress has passed 15-plus congressional review act legislation pieces in order to downsize the unfair regulations that have been dumped on resources, on agriculture, on many things that have hurt the economy in this country under the previous administration. A 22-to-1 ratio, at least for a while, of rescinding versus new regulations have come into place.

Now, when we are talking about the Klamath dams up here, Interior has played a critical role in the decisions relating previously to the Klamath removal. Two years ago your predecessor included the agency as a signatory to the KHSA, with the explicit purpose of dam removal. You can withdraw that, sir. Your predecessor submitted a secretarial statement of support for dam removal to FERC, the agency that we need to get relicensing from for these dams to continue to operate, declaring Interior's policy to support removal of dams directed under the KHSA. You can withdraw that. I have asked you to do so.

These actions were taken before the agency ever completed the process to determine the impacts of dam removal, and done in a way to completely avoid the public process. Indeed, secret meetings, and my office was excluded, to set up a shell corporation so the liability would no longer be on the Federal Government or anybody else, except for this shell corporation, which will disappear after the dams were removed.

And that also removes legal remedies opponents have they can use under a normal secretarial determination process, because there has not even been a completed NEPA to determine what the impacts of the dam removal and the 20 million cubic yards of sediment going down this river to supposedly help this river and help coho salmon and other species recover.

So, I have several questions I would still like to take a shot at with you at a different time here today, the Ides of March, 2-year anniversary of your previous statement. Will you allow a NEPA process to be completed before a decision is made? Will you withdraw the signature that the previous agency member sent to FERC so that they will have a true picture of what is going on up there on the environmental impacts, the economic impacts, and the 79 percent of my constituents in Siskiyou County that voted against removal, as well as the 72 percent that voted against removal on the Klamath side?

Mr. Secretary, will you take these things into account and do as I have asked you before?

Secretary ZINKE. I certainly am committed to work with you on it. Here is the issue. We have looked at it, bow and stern. Interior doesn't have a role. And I can't speak to the last administration—

Mr. LAMALFA. Interior has had a role, sir, up to this point. Now you will say you have passed it off to FERC. Yes, these are private dams. These are not private dams when you have \$250 million of

state money, as well as \$200 million of ratepayer money, and government action has forced them out of business.

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

Mr. LAMALFA. I will seek to have a further conversation. Thank you for listening.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, I will need you to maybe answer him in writing, if possible.

Mr. BROWN.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before my time starts, I have a parliamentary inquiry. Did the documents that Mr. Grijalva asked to be entered into the record, were they entered into the record? I didn't hear the—

The CHAIRMAN. No one objected.

Mr. BROWN. OK.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you objecting?

Mr. BROWN. No, no.

The CHAIRMAN. OK, then—

Mr. BROWN. I don't want to be redundant.

The CHAIRMAN. If you are objecting, they won't be added.

Mr. BROWN. No, not at all. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon, Secretary Zinke. You are a veteran, I am a veteran. I don't think you need to be a veteran to respect and appreciate the sacrifices that veterans have made. We often hear and we say frequently that we owe veterans a debt of gratitude that we will never be able to fully repay. I believe that that extends beyond the veterans, but also includes family members, spouses, children, and even grandchildren of our service members, as those to whom we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Veterans often use public lands as a way to find renewed purpose and a place of refuge and solitude. I want to ask you about your testimony in the Senate, because I know that you are a veteran—I thank you for that service—perhaps an opportunity to rehabilitate what seemed to be a very troubling statement that you made regarding admission fees at our national parks, and the need to raise fees due to disabled veterans being able to visit them for free, because you said, and I quote, “When you give discounted rates to the elderly, veterans, and the disabled, and do it by the carload, not a whole lot of people actually pay at our front door.” And again, I find this statement troubling.

Secretary ZINKE. Well, it is true.

Mr. BROWN. So, let me ask you the question, then. Are you going to make disabled veterans pay for access to public lands?

Secretary ZINKE. No, no. And I appreciate the question.

Mr. BROWN. Yes, I am trying to give you an opportunity to rehabilitate here, because that sounds like you are going to pay for deferred maintenance on the backs of veterans and the disabled and the elderly.

Secretary ZINKE. No, no. I have no intention of changing the policy on such things. But I have worked a lot of kiosks, and it is amazing to me how many people come through that don't pay because it has been a policy that—

Mr. BROWN. Let me ask you this. How many visitors do we have to our national parks every year?

Secretary ZINKE. About 330 million visitors a year.

Mr. BROWN. About how many come in cars?

Secretary ZINKE. Most.

Mr. BROWN. Most? And how many of those visitors are veterans?

Secretary ZINKE. We don't track—

Mr. BROWN. OK, how many of them are military members or dependents?

Secretary ZINKE. We don't track.

Mr. BROWN. OK. How many of them are disabled or elderly Americans?

Secretary ZINKE. We don't track who is in the car, other than—

Mr. BROWN. OK. I am very concerned, then, when I hear that they come in by the carloads, but we don't keep track of the carloads, yet in your testimony to the Senate regarding whether or not the fees at the parks are sufficient—

Secretary ZINKE. I think you should go to a—

Mr. BROWN. If I may, you suggested that it was because of disabled veterans, elderly, so I am just really concerned, and particularly where you don't have a count—

Secretary ZINKE. Well, if you will let me answer, I will talk to you.

Mr. BROWN. Well, I asked you some specific questions. Do you know the number of veterans? And you said, no.

Secretary ZINKE. We track the number of—when you buy a card, a year card, we track that. We don't track—as long as a person has a car, we don't record who is in it. But I have been, and I will invite you to a kiosk with me and go through.

Presently, our policy—and I don't intend to change it, because I am comfortable with the policy—it is disabled—

Mr. BROWN. OK, then I am fine. I am fine. Thank you for answering the question. I am fine. I do appreciate that you won't change the policy on the fees for our veterans.

Let me ask another question, if I may, shifting focus. Your budget includes a 15 percent decrease for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's renewable energy program, which is about a 1 percent higher decrease than your overall budget, from the 2017 funding levels. Earlier this week, before the Senate, you stated that budget cuts for renewable energy programs are driven by expected demand.

Are you anticipating a 15 percent decrease in national demand for offshore renewable energy resources in Fiscal Year 2019, compared to 2017? And, if so, what criteria are you using to determine those projections?

Secretary ZINKE. Our budget analysis, both onshore and offshore, is consistent. And we budgeted toward expected demand. There are numerous projects that are leased. We have several leases off the East Coast. Generally, you are talking about a 3-year project completion. California is looking at 330,000 acres of Federal land. That has to go through a NEPA. But our budget is consistent with our expected demand in this fiscal year.

Mr. BROWN. Which you expect to decrease?

Secretary ZINKE. Well, it is matched to the demand. And I will show you the same data we have.

Mr. BROWN. OK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Westerman.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Secretary Zinke, for being here today. It is always good to see you. And I didn't see the Senate meeting you had the other day, but I heard that the Senators were very interested in how you got from point A to point B, and seemed to be infatuated with that. I wish they would have hearings and talk about policy and issues that we have tried to push through on the House.

But on the travel side of it, I was glad to see you show up to work the first day on a horse. I thought that made a good statement about you and about our national parks and the Department of the Interior. So, I give you a thumbs up on that one.

You were talking about forestry a little bit earlier, and I want to talk about forestry, but really in the vein of water. We know that the states that seem to have the biggest water problems also have some of the worst-managed forests, the least healthy forests out there. We have heard testimony in this Committee that in California the forest is dying at a faster rate than it is growing. We certainly saw the catastrophic wildfires out there last year.

I was in Arizona recently. I heard about the big water issues, and I saw a lot of poorly managed forests in Arizona. And the story goes on in the forests and water issues. But scientifically, we know that forests play a very important part, not only in water quality, but in water quantity.

And as you consider water issues, is your team putting an emphasis on the interactions of forestry and water? And also, are you working with Secretary Perdue and his staff in this area?

Secretary ZINKE. We are. And on travel, what people don't talk about is the last administration spent over \$1 million, 80 trips, on charter flights. And I do three. And I have 12 time zones, about a fifth of the territory of the United States. And in every case they are reviewed by ethics. In every case they are reviewed by legal. And there was no other alternative, so it is amazing that no questions were asked.

I looked at Sally Jewell's, and I think she was actually appropriate. So, when she took a charter flight and went on a hike—I didn't go on any hikes, but I can tell you she was right, because that is the job of the Department of the Interior. I appreciate your comments.

Forestry, we are consistent with policy. I think we are probably leading in my Secretarial Order to look at mechanical extraction, prescribed burns, and be more aggressive on our holdings. It would be helpful if we had category exclusions to take bigger chunks out, to make sure we can restore the health, and we have talked about that.

But the condition of our forests, country-wide, nationwide, it now has resulted in death. Last year, just in Santa Barbara County, dozens perished because we have too much dead and dying timber in the fuel load. And maybe this last forest season—maybe this country and our political leadership will take pause and understand that the present policy we have is causing great harm. And I am optimistic, because it happens on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Shifting gears a little bit to infrastructure, I know there is the huge maintenance backlog that you talked about.

In my district, actually, in my hometown of Hot Springs National Park, we have used historical leases of old bath houses to great effect, and the park has been able to take these bath houses off the maintenance backlog and have new attractions there. You would get a little bit of income from the lease, plus you don't have that maintenance expense any more.

With your emphasis on maintenance backlog, have you encouraged other parks to creatively use historic leasing and other private and public opportunities to further impact those investments?

And with that I want to personally invite you to Hot Springs so I can show you the great job that is happening there in the bath houses.

Secretary ZINKE. We are looking at appropriate public-private partnerships across the board. Our rangers don't flip burgers now, they never have. So, lodging, a lot of our transportation at Interior, and food is vendored out. Not everything should go public-private partnership, but we are encouraged there has been some innovation, and we are trying to look at it across the board, to give the superintendents more flexibility to enter public-private partnerships, looking at longer-term contracts to incentivize investment. And there are a number of things that I think we can do within the park system, especially, to incentivize investment. Again, there are appropriate things, there are non-appropriate things.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Thank you.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK [presiding]. Thank you.

Mr. Gallego.

Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Secretary Zinke, Number one, I want to echo what our Congressman from Maryland said in regard to our veterans. And any decisions being made, I think should be done in a manner after a thorough study.

But let's move on and talk just briefly about the monument review. I know Interior undertook a very good and long public comment process where more than 2.8 million Americans shared their opinions on the monument review. So, tell me, is it true that approximately 99 percent of those comments you received were in favor of maintaining our national monuments?

Secretary ZINKE. I would have to check the statistic for you. But what I can say is we have 150 monuments. The President asked me to look at 27, and the recommendation——

Mr. GALLEGO. Secretary, can you just answer that question first? My question is what do you understand? Was it overwhelmingly supporting of keeping the monument process, or not? If you can't give me the exact number, what do you know?

Secretary ZINKE. I can give you the number of Congressmen, Senators, State Legislature, and governors in the state of Utah that——

Mr. GALLEGO. Secretary, I am just simply asking with the public process.

Secretary ZINKE. I will have to get the numbers for you.

Mr. GALLEGO. So, you don't even know, anecdotally, whether it was supportive or not?

Secretary ZINKE. I will have to get the numbers for you.

Mr. GALLEGO. OK, so you undertook a review process and, for some reason, off the top of your head, you can't remember what the public commented on, for, essentially, changing a very, very established law.

Secretary ZINKE. I do know specifically of the elected officials that represent the state of Utah.

Mr. GALLEGO. Secretary, I am not asking you that. I am asking a very simple question. You are the Secretary of the Interior. You took a public comment period to review the national monuments.

Secretary ZINKE. I would hate to mislead you and give you a false number. I will be—

Mr. GALLEGO. OK, you don't have to give me a false number. What is their overall impression, anecdotally? Were more people favorable or not favorable? A simple answer.

Secretary ZINKE. I would hate to give you those numbers without giving you the specifics, but I will certainly give the staff specifics—

Mr. GALLEGO. So, your recommendation to the President was to reduce the number of existing monuments.

Let's just skip to this. How many meetings with industry and representatives did you take before making your monuments recommendation? Roughly, the number.

Secretary ZINKE. The process for monument review was going out and visiting every state—which, by the way, I was criticized to take a helicopter. I don't know how you look at 2 million acres on an aerial survey without doing—

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Secretary, I wasn't the person that was actually criticizing you on that hawk, so stick to the question here.

Secretary ZINKE. And your question is what, sir?

Mr. GALLEGO. How many industry representatives did you take meetings with?

Secretary ZINKE. In regards to the monuments?

Mr. GALLEGO. Yes, monument review.

Secretary ZINKE. We looked at all sides of the issue. I had public meetings in multiple locations at every monument, which all sides were represented. We made sure that all sides were represented.

Mr. GALLEGO. OK. From what I understand, the answer is 180.

Secretary ZINKE. I will let you see the number of people that represented the other side, too. I am sure it is comparable.

Mr. GALLEGO. OK.

Secretary ZINKE. I am not sure where you are getting those numbers.

Mr. GALLEGO. How many meetings did you hold with the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition?

Secretary ZINKE. Pardon me?

Mr. GALLEGO. How many meetings did you hold with the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition?

Secretary ZINKE. I met them in Washington, DC. I met them there. I met them over the phone and had individual meetings.

Mr. GALLEGO. So, the actual coalition, it sounds like you have had one meeting, then, one face—

Secretary ZINKE. That would be incorrect. I had a meeting there, I had a meeting with the chairman in the office.

Mr. GALLEGO. You had a meeting there, meaning Utah?

Secretary ZINKE. I met with Begaye, so I would say multiple meetings with either the coalition itself, or parts of it, to include also the Navajo Nation in the state of Utah. The only elected official that represents, by Congress, a district of the Navajo, that would be Commissioner Benally.

Mr. GALLEGO. OK, so what would you say the number is, then, if you had to take a guess? Even giving you some sway on the—

Secretary ZINKE. Number of, your question is number of what?

Mr. GALLEGO. Meetings with people that are in the Tribal Council or involved with the Tribal Council.

Secretary ZINKE. I had a meeting there with the coalition. I had a meeting in Utah with—

Mr. GALLEGO. Secretary Zinke, I am asking for just a number. I know you have been a Navy SEAL and math might be difficult, but give me a rough number here.

Secretary ZINKE. Rough number of—what specifically is your question?

And I take offense about your derogatory comment about the U.S. Navy SEALs. Of course, having not served, I understand you probably don't know.

Mr. GALLEGO. Having not—

Secretary ZINKE. Not in the Navy, and not in the Navy SEALs.

Mr. GALLEGO. All right, Mr. Secretary Zinke, I apologize. But as you know, we have jokes all the time, as a Marine, and as a grunt. And, of course, I appreciate your service.

Secretary ZINKE. Semper fi.

Mr. GALLEGO. Semper fi, brother.

You do have a problem that you can't answer my question, in terms of numbers. Give me a rough estimate here.

Secretary ZINKE. A rough estimate of how many times that I met with the coalition?

Mr. GALLEGO. Yes.

Secretary ZINKE. I met with the coalition, as a whole, once there. I met with multiple members in my office. And I met with multiple members in the field. So, as a group, probably, as an entirety group, probably one there. But I met with multiple members in my office multiple times, and had phone conversations with them.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Secretary ZINKE. That is well documented.

Mr. GALLEGO. Thank you, I yield back.

Secretary ZINKE. Semper fi.

Mr. GALLEGO. Semper fi.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Graves.

Mr. GRAVES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, it is a pleasure to have you back in the Committee again, I appreciate you being here. General Bergman has offered to give you your seat back any time you want it.

Secretary ZINKE. Always a pleasure to be here.

Mr. GRAVES. First, I want to thank you for the change in the budget request for this year related to the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act. You and I had a number of discussions about that. As you know, the Obama administration for 2 years tried to cut that revenue-sharing program out, and we had some challenges last year. But I want to tell you that I do appreciate you taking

a fresh look at it, you agreed to do that last year, and I appreciate the change in the budget request this year. And I know that millions of people in south Louisiana do, as well. So, first I want to say a very big thank you for that.

Second of all, I appreciate you coming down to south Louisiana. A lot of times people, I think, get stuck in their bubbles or in their cubicles. And in your case, you have a little bit bigger than a cubicle, but people get stuck in Washington and, I think, lose the perspective of what is actually happening on the ground.

The investments in the case of Louisiana through offshore energy revenue sharing and other programs, I think, are yielding significant benefits, not just to south Louisiana, but to the Nation, in terms of the ecological productivity, the improved resilience, and the fact that you came out, we went in an air boat, and you stood on some of the new ground that we created in south Louisiana, and I think made a multi-billion-dollar commitment to us on a video, if I remember right. That was impressive, so thank you.

Mr. Secretary, you and I have discussed in the past this disparity that occurs. When you produce energy on Federal lands, that state gets 50 percent of the money, or in the case of Alaska, in some cases, 90 percent of the money. You have revenue-sharing programs related to wind and renewable energy. You have the timber revenue-sharing program. It happens all the way across the board.

But when you look in reality for the offshore, and I am going to take a pretty wild guess, but revenue-sharing, when you look at the total amount of money produced versus the revenue we will share in for this year, my guess is it is probably around 1 or 2 percent.

How do I explain to people at home the disparity in revenue sharing for onshore production that is 50 percent or even 90 percent, with an additional 40 percent going into the reclamation fund in the case of offshore Louisiana, which contributes a significant amount to our Nation's energy independence, or energy dominance, when we get such a small fraction of a percentage of overall revenue sharing?

Secretary ZINKE. Again, I appreciate your hosting me down there, and I want to make sure your coastline remains a working coast and not a disappearing coast. I was amazed that a football field of material is lost every hour.

If you are referring to the LWCF or the reorganization, that reorganization does not affect current programs. The infrastructure bill that is proposed in the budget, the largest investment in public lands in the history of this country as far as infrastructure goes, the model we have is net dollars into Treasury. So, it doesn't affect GOMESA, it doesn't affect LWCF.

If those percentages are adjusted by Congress, then there are still net dollars going into Treasury. The proposal would be half of that at a level that would go back into an infrastructure account to pay for our parks. So, if the LWCF or GOMESA is adjusted, it would not affect the net dollars going back in.

Mr. GRAVES. But, Mr. Secretary, do you understand, LWCF is funded from off shore our coast. Louisiana produces 80 to 90 percent of all the offshore energy production in Federal waters. If LWCF monies go out, if you are going to take funds for backlog maintenance issues, all of that is coming from off shore our coast,

and the very area where these funds are derived from is not sustainable.

It is very difficult for us to explain to people at home. It is difficult for us to defend—and, quite frankly, I won't defend efforts to try to take these monies and put them into other states, into other areas, when this very area that is really the golden goose for revenue for your Department is unsustainable itself. We need to first sustain that area.

Secretary ZINKE. Well, to your point, the infrastructure proposal that we have proposed is all energy. Quite frankly, it is onshore, offshore, wind, solar, all energy produced on Federal land, regardless of type.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Good, thank you.

Secretary ZINKE. It does not affect any current program.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Ms. Barragán.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to start by associating myself with the comments of my colleagues from California opposing your proposal to open up our coastline to additional oil and gas drilling. This would be disastrous for the coastal economy and public health. Sixty-nine percent of Californians strongly oppose new oil and gas drilling off our coast. I wanted to make sure to reiterate the importance of this issue and our opposition on the record.

As somebody who has fought to prevent oil drilling off the California coastline, it is also very personal for me, so I wanted to make sure to also express my opposition. I hope, Mr. Secretary, that you will give fair and due consideration to our concerns and the importance of California's coastline and its tourism to our economy when you are making decisions.

Secretary ZINKE. And I will relate the same thing when I talked to Governor Brown is it was my decision to put everything on so America could see its potential. Almost zero-based budgeting, and then I have talked to every governor, I have talked to most Congressmen about it. And then we are going to shape the plan to make sure it reflects the interest of the communities and the governors and—

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I only have about 3 minutes left, and I want to shift gears a little bit. I appreciate that.

First, I want to thank Ranking Member Grijalva for bringing up the issue of the Department of the Interior being a good steward of taxpayer dollars. This is also something that I have been doing over the course of my career.

Mr. Secretary, last October I led a letter, which I am holding up here, along with my friend, Mr. Beyer, that was signed by 24 other Members of Congress, including Ranking Member Grijalva and 9 other members of this Committee. It is dated October 3, 2017. It asked you to immediately disclose the full details of all of the privately chartered flights that you had taken.

Mr. Chairman, I want to start by asking unanimous consent to enter the letter into the record.

Secretary ZINKE. You should look at what we provided to—

Ms. BARRAGÁN. I am sorry, Mr. Secretary. If you let me just finish.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Yes, without objection.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you.

The letter that was written to you was a result of reporting by the *Washington Post*, *Politico*, and numerous other sources. The reports included a \$12,000 charter flight from Las Vegas, Nevada to Montana taken last June aboard a plane owned by executives of a Wyoming-based oil and gas exploration firm, part of an industry whose permitting process you are tasked with overseeing.

These flights can give the appearance that you are mixing political gatherings and personal destinations with official business.

As the letter points out, these privately chartered flights appear to coincide with events held by political donors and speeches before private entities that share a personal connection with you. Again, this letter was sent on October 3.

Neither I nor Mr. Beyer have yet received a response. Mr. Secretary, it is just a yes or no question. Can I get a commitment from you that you will respond and provide information that we requested in the letter?

Secretary ZINKE. Well, I can't speak for your Ranking Member, but I hold a note and response from me that is dated October 31, 2017. So, I would suggest you ask your Ranking Member to give you a copy of the letter we sent.

And if you would like more detail on it, we also had a meeting, which I had with the Ranking—

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Secretary, you used to be a Member of Congress yourself. When you wrote a letter to a cabinet secretary, did you not expect the cabinet secretary to respond to your letter?

Secretary ZINKE. October 31, 2017.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Is that letter to me? Is that responding to my letter, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary ZINKE. It is to the Ranking Member and to the Chairman of this Committee.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. OK. I think you have made my point, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary ZINKE. As well as I opened a meeting to—

Ms. BARRAGÁN. I reclaim my time, Mr. Secretary. I am not done with my line of questioning. And, I just very nicely am trying to get a response to my letter that is directed at me. I have a different office than the Ranking Member does.

And the reason I bring this up is because this is a pattern that is impossible to ignore, one that has the optics of the steward of our public lands allowing the concerns of political donors and the oil and gas industry to receive further greater influence than those of the American people—and the excessive spending, whether it is on this or a door.

Can I get a commitment that when I send you a letter, Mr. Secretary, you will respond to me in a timely manner, to me, as the Member who wrote the letter?

Secretary ZINKE. I would love to give you a commitment. And I wish you would give a commitment to me of courtesy, because I answered the letter. Not only did I answer the letter, but I also had a Minority meeting, which I invited every Member of the Minority to sit down and talk, line by line, on any issue you had.

And as far as an oil and gas concern, it is contracted by the Department of the Interior, blind of origin. If a company owns a contracted King Air, then we don't look at who owns it, because we go through a government contracting service, and that is exactly what occurred. So, to give an allegation that somehow we favor King Air traveling at night after traveling all day across from Pahrump, Nevada would be inappropriate.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. The Chair would ask the unanimous consent that the Secretary's response also be included in the record.

Ms. Cheney.

Ms. CHENEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. Mr. Secretary, I hope that you will put Wyoming down on your list as a yes. We, in Wyoming, fully understand and recognize that our fossil fuels are, in fact, national treasures, crucial to the functioning of our economy. And I look forward to my colleagues from those states that have been so insistent on taking time for political purposes and on denying the value of fossil fuels to try to run their state economies without fossil fuels. I think that would be an interesting challenge for them.

Mr. Secretary, I have just three issues I might want to list, and then get you to see what we can do to help us on all three of those.

We, in Wyoming, have been very grateful and pleased with the improvements in the permitting process. As you know, the technology in some instances has really outstripped the regulatory framework. So, when you have a situation, as we do in Wyoming, where you have split estates, you have private ownership of the surface and Federal ownership of the minerals, we are still facing significant challenges, and really need some clarification and some relief with respect to what is the role of the BLM, in particular, when the land is privately owned and the minerals are Federal, especially in situations where we have horizontal drilling now that is reaching out miles and miles.

The second issue I wanted to get your assistance and help on, Mr. Secretary, has to do with viewsheds. There was a memorandum issued at the end of the Obama administration that dealt in particular with section 106, tribal consultation, again, on private lands, and the National Historic Preservation Act. We need some clarification in this regard, as well.

We need a new instructional memo, we need some clarity for BLM field offices with respect to how they can properly conduct tribal consultations without the kind of very significant delay that we continue to see, and what seems to be uncertainty.

Then finally, Mr. Secretary, on the area of water, we have issues between the Bighorn Lake, which is in Wyoming on the Bighorn River. The Bureau of Reclamation seems to be imposing some rules and regulations with respect to water levels in the lake, water levels in the river that are not balanced. And we really need a return to balance, and would very much appreciate your support and your help, in terms of making sure we don't have a situation where my constituents in places like Lovell, who depend very much upon recreation and Bighorn Lake, are faced with levels of the lake that are inconsistent with the BOR regulations, that they are somehow focused on the needs of the river.

We need some balance there, and I would very much appreciate your taking a look at that issue, as well, and letting us know what we can do to ensure that those communities and the economies there that are so reliant on recreation and the lake are not infringed upon.

Secretary ZINKE. I agree. I am committed to work with you on it. I was unaware of the Bighorn issue, but we will look at it.

In general, the government is always behind innovation. And we are trying to look at a framework of regulation where we make sure there is a threshold for safety, reliability, stewardship, but to incorporate innovation, best science, and best practices. It is clear, with horizontal drilling and some of the innovation on wind and solar as well, that our regulatory framework is not capable of keeping pace with industry innovation. And in many ways, innovation improves reliability and safety.

So, we are working with energy and innovation across the board to look at giving some flexibility without diminishing our core responsibility of stewardship and environmental safety.

On permitting, which is always a problem, we are catching up. There is a state permitting process and a Federal permitting process, and we are looking at, within the confines of the law, how do we make sure we are not redundant. So, giving the front end to the state, having them do what they need to do, and then us doing just the tail end, rather than the Federal Government repeating the process, line by line.

The other thing that is not taking place in permitting is—if you are in the basin and you have 16 wells, for instance, same basin, same geology. Starting the permitting process of a new well as if it is the only well you ever drilled in the basin is a problem because it repeats things that are not necessary, and it takes the resources away from us looking at basins that are not commonly drilled that need a closer look.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Mr. Lowenthal.

Dr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thank you, Mr. Secretary, for coming before the hearing. I have a few questions, but I want to go back before I do that to understand for myself what had taken place in that question and answer between you and Ranking Member Grijalva. I am trying to understand that.

To me, in the USGS North Slope oil assessment, I don't think there is any question or any belief that you made any changes in that. No one is saying that. We assume that you made no changes at all, and that you just had the report.

I think the underlying question, though, is why did you request to see the USGS study before it was released? As I understand in the USGS manual, it says, "Particularly sensitive results, however, such as energy and mineral resource assessments and mineral commodity reports that typically have significant economic implications are not disclosed or shared in advance of public release because pre-release in these cases could result in unfair advantage or the perception of unfair advantage."

So, my question is, why did you do that? Not that you did anything changing anything, but why did you request to see it, when

in fact it was the policy not to share with anyone the USGS report because of the possible market implications?

Secretary ZINKE. First of all, there is a chain of command, and the USGS works for the Department of the Interior. So, I have every right to look at and review documents prior to release from the Department of the Interior. Same would be for your staff. Your staff works for you. I assume you look at releases prior to your staff releasing.

The question is integrity of documents. And in the case of scientific documents, I did not change a comma. And to your point, I did not—

Dr. LOWENTHAL. No one is saying you did.

Secretary ZINKE. But this is what I wanted to know in the case of this one. And I think you will be interested to know. You had the same data set, two studies within a couple years of each other, and the outcomes were different in magnitude.

So, why was there such a difference in magnitude? Was it because BOEM also looked at it, and BOEM has a better modeling of resources?

And when it says recoverable resources, is that modern technology using hydraulic fracturing, or was it standard? And did it include offshore? Those are the questions. Because it makes a difference, as Interior policy, about the National Petroleum Reserve. That is why I looked at it.

Dr. LOWENTHAL. OK. Let me go on, because I don't have a great deal of time. And I understand that.

But what I don't understand is when you say you are looking at the methodology, the first study was released in 2010, and then we are talking about what happened in the fall of 2017. Now we are in 2018, so it was almost 8 years ago. And there have been a number of major oil discoveries made in the region covered by this assessment. So, I don't think there is any mystery that the resources have jumped. It is not the methodology. We know that the resources have jumped.

The question is, even though you are asking about questioning the methodology, I don't think that—and I would like to hear your answer—is the critical issue. We all know that the resources, the question is were you not aware of the discoveries over the past few years, and that was the reason for the change?

Secretary ZINKE. The data set was largely unchanged, because in the areas we haven't done a lot of seismic and a review of it. But that is the question to ask.

And I am a geologist, and when you have one study that is done a few years, and the next study is done, BOEM comes in, and the magnitude of resources is significant—then I want to know at what level did we look at recoverable assets, because it is important. Are we looking at technology 7 years ago, 5 years ago, today? I think those are fair questions. And also, the extent, because you have horizontal drilling now that has a reach even a few years ago we couldn't go.

Again, as Department of the Interior, as the Secretary, I have every right to look at documents. Like you, I am concerned that if you were to manipulate the documents, I think there is an

integrity problem, because we all respect the scientific integrity of the people. And that is what we want to—

Dr. LOWENTHAL. If I might change the topic, just quickly, and ask one more question.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Ten seconds. No, your time is up, Mr. Lowenthal.

Dr. LOWENTHAL. I yield back.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I am sorry. The Secretary has been very generous and has already given us 45 minutes more than we had requested. We understand that he does have a hard stop at 1:00, so Members can do the math, as far as the time remaining.

Mr. HICE.

Dr. HICE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Secretary Zinke, thank you for being here today. We miss you around here, but recognize that your leadership was desperately needed at Interior, and we are very grateful for what you have already accomplished.

I recently read that the natural gas and oil industry supports about 10.3 million jobs nationwide, a staggering number. In Georgia, we face some natural factors of navigating offshore development due to the migratory patterns of the right whale.

So, to begin with, in your opinion, as good stewards of our land and oceans and so forth, do you believe that we can strike a balance between protecting our ocean environments and, at the same time, developing natural resources that provide not only jobs, but financial opportunity and national security?

Secretary ZINKE. I absolutely do. And I think our oil, gas, wind, and above American energy policy is correct. It is better to produce energy in this country with reasonable regulation than watch it get produced overseas with no regulation.

Second, morally, I don't want your kids to see what I have seen in battle, ever. I don't want to be held hostage by foreign entities over our energy needs, and I don't want to see your kids have to deploy and fight overseas for energy we have here.

Last, economically, every time America pulls up to a gas pump, we talk about the tax bill, how wonderful it was. And it is. But every time you pull up to a gas pump and you are paying \$60 rather than \$100 for a tank, that is \$40 America has in their pockets to spend elsewhere that they need, because American energy is producing. So, yes, I am pro-energy.

And Interior has two sides. We have the energy side, because we have offshore BLM property. We also have the conservation side, which is our parks and our public lands and our treasures. Yes, you can do it wisely, because American industry has shown you can.

Dr. HICE. Let me jump to this third question that I had, real quickly, regarding preservation of our battlefields.

We recently were able to protect Kettle Creek, which was a very important place for the Revolutionary War, and that battle. I believe these are very important to preserve, so I would be interested to know if you have any ideas to improve the American battlefield protection program. I would like to be able to work with you in that regard, and I want to know if you have any plans.

Secretary ZINKE. Our infrastructure bill that we have submitted and support in the budget addresses \$11.7 billion of that. That

includes our battlefields, to restore the landscape as it was when the battle began. Our battlefields are challenged. We have a lot of people going through them.

The preservation and maintenance of the battlefields—we don't charge at many of the battlefields, we don't charge in Gettysburg and most of them, which is appropriate, because they are America's look into a very difficult period in our history. But the infrastructure bill that we are proposing looks specifically at battlefields, parks, wildlife refuges, and making sure that we are stewards of our greatest treasures, to include the battlefields.

Dr. HICE. We have some ideas, and we would love to work with you on that and throw some of those ideas your way.

Last, I just want to know, going back to my constituents, how can I ensure them that the Department will not be in the same mess we are in now, what assurance can we give them that we are not going to repeat this process all over again?

Secretary ZINKE. I would think there are certain issues that are not Republican or Democrat, and I would like to think that public lands and our parks are red, white, and blue. I think we all care for them. And there have been proposals to make this a longer term. But I think up front, if we work together and we pass an infrastructure bill—again, it is new money—we will be in a good position to preserve our parks and our public lands into the future. It should be a bipartisan effort, and I am hoping it is.

Dr. HICE. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Mr. Gomez.

Mr. GOMEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Zinke, thank you for being here, Secretary, and going a lot longer. A few questions, and I am going to try to go quick, because I know I have colleagues on the other side that want to ask some questions.

You have said numerous times that the reason behind the Department's cuts on renewable energy programs is due to the expected demand. Is that correct?

Secretary ZINKE. That is correct. We looked at expected demand, both onshore and offshore of what can be put in during this thing, and our budget reflects that. And I will give you the numbers if you want them, and how we derived them.

Mr. GOMEZ. OK, thank you. Next question—in President Trump's fiscal 2019 budget request, he proposes an increase in the funding for oil, gas, and coal programs. Does the President's request also reflect the expected demand for those resources?

Secretary ZINKE. Some of the budget has to do with backlog of permits, which is in there, and opportunities. But, yes, it reflects, and I will give you the background on that. Coal is up \$9 million with that. I will give you a breakdown of everything in that package.

Mr. GOMEZ. OK. I appreciate it, because what I am trying to understand is what is the logic behind the Administration's projections, because the coal budget of the Bureau of Land Management has increased by 80 percent. However, according to Bloomberg and other sources, the coal production in the United States has gone

through a downward trend, even under President Trump. Can you explain that discrepancy?

Secretary ZINKE. Coal has leasing, permitting, and inspections on it. And some of the energy also is on the inspection side of our offshore leases, because you have to send people out there to inspect. So, you look at across the board—and improving safety and reliability.

Some of the money is looking at how we can improve safety. No one wants an oil spill off the coast. So, we have to invest in it and make sure that we don't have that. And there are certain areas that the last administration, I think, did not focus on. We are focused on looking at innovation, best science, best practices to improve reliability and safety. And, in some cases, it costs a little more, but it is a better policy, overall.

Mr. GOMEZ. OK. I appreciate that, because as you know, we have seen a downward trend on this, 2017 coal production was up over 2016. The pace of production in 2018 is 6 percent below 2017 and 21 percent below 2015. And you are explaining the 80 percent increase based on safety.

We also saw offshore lease sales were weak, bringing in the third lowest amount in the past 12 years, about one-fifth of the average. So, we are going to see a significant increase in the oil, gas, and coal budgets, partly reflected in demand, partly reflected on safety.

What I am trying to understand, and I guess I am going to answer my own question, when it comes to renewables, demand is the critical factor in determining if the budget goes up or goes down. But when it comes to oil, gas, and coal, it is other factors.

Secretary ZINKE. I would not characterize it that way. But I would say the last administration, there is no doubt—and I don't give judgment—the last administration wanted a larger profile of renewables and put a budget in place to kick-start it. And it is clear the last administration did that.

We looked at expectation of demand, and we had the largest lease sale of offshore oil and gas in the history of this country in the western and eastern Gulf, so just to run the leases and inspections is going to take more.

Mr. GOMEZ. I appreciate that elaboration. The reason why I am curious, and the reason why I am asking is that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management also said that a cut to the budgets of renewable energies would make stakeholder meetings less effective, delay lease sales, harm increasing staff, and that there would be an impact on the demand of renewables.

I think that looking at demand is a great way to look at it. I support a balanced portfolio, but it needs to be honestly balanced, and right now it definitely seems like one energy source is being promoted and given more funding than the other energy sources.

I yield back my time. I am out of time, anyway. Thank you so much.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Johnson.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Secretary, thanks so much for your service to the country in so many capacities. We appreciate you being here today. Time is short. Let me get right to it.

As a Louisianan, I am very grateful that the budget doesn't call for an outright elimination of GOMESA. But it does threaten the

security of this critical funding for Louisiana by way of the public infrastructure fund proposal.

I am disheartened, all of us in the Gulf states are. Yet again, Members who represent regions most directly impacted by this proposal were not included in the pertinent discussions. It is a red, white, and blue issue. All of us want folks from around the globe to be able to enjoy our parks and wilderness areas. But refusing to stop the loss of land in my state means loss of property, and ultimately, loss of life.

And none of us should pretend that this shifting of revenues and resources can be justified. I mean you gave a SEAL analogy in the beginning, in your opening statement. To use that analogy, the Gulf Coast is our front line. We are talking about hurricane preparedness, flood risk mitigation, coastal restoration. All that is urgent. You acknowledged a few moments ago that a football field of land is being lost every single hour.

So, in your testimony, in the subject budget documents you provided this Committee, you highlighted the significant contribution that oil and natural gas revenues generate. Onshore production, on the other hand, places in comparison, so I just want us to be clear and honest today. I know you will be. The revenue for your fund is going to be coming from offshore to fund Interior. And we should not pretend that wind and solar are going to be picking up the check for the Department's deferred maintenance; it is just not going to happen.

So, here is the question. You say the infrastructure fund proposal will not affect GOMESA funding at all. I think you have said or implied that today. The problem is that the issues are with the baseline projections. We have not been given any specific numbers that were used to establish the baseline in the bills, even as late as this afternoon. How do you respond to that concern?

Secretary ZINKE. The baseline, of course, will require Congress. If you go back to 2008, Interior made about \$18 billion just in offshore—and thank you for that. When we took office, that number was about 2.6. When you add onshore production, that was the baseline. And the proposal had what is called new energy.

But to your point, you were exactly correct. It does not affect GOMESA. It is net dollars going into Treasury. So, GOMESA, LWCF, and there are other states' shares and all that. It is just net dollars that go into Treasury. So, if Congress changes the portfolios, the different types of programs from oil and gas, it would be whatever is left over, net into Treasury, half of that goes back to address our backlog in maintenance. We think, given projections, that we can catch up in as much as 8 years, with favorable conditions.

But it is also all energy. It is different than LWCF or GOMESA, because we look at a trend. And we will see on the March leasing sale what the level of interest is. Because, as you know, drilling for oil off the coast has greater risk. The market tends to move toward less risk, higher returns. The shale plays in Texas, in New Mexico, in the Bakkan still remain strong, as well as innovation in renewables. The East Coast is going gangbusters on renewables, and we are all of the above. I support renewables, too.

Mr. JOHNSON. I get that, I get that. I am running out of time.

Senator Alexander was quoted on March 11 in a *National Journal* article saying that both the National Park Restoration Act and the National Park Service Legacy Act of 2017 should be considered in committee. Both pieces of that legislation would threaten GOMESA funding, as well. Do you agree with the Senator that those bills ought to be considered?

Secretary ZINKE. Like everything in Congress, everything should be on the table. I think what is in the President's budget, given that I was a Congressman, GOMESA is important to a lot of my friends and Members, and that is why our proposal left those programs in Congress intact. So, it is just net dollars going to Treasury.

Obviously, I support the work of the President, and I support having a dialogue, and putting together a bill that addresses the maintenance and repair.

Mr. JOHNSON. Has the Department considered alternative funding sources to pay off the deferred maintenance backlog? For example, the sale of federally held lands to some of the states?

Secretary ZINKE. We have not. Park entrance fees, primarily, I think, should go to the parks where entrance fees are at, and the superintendent should have more flexibility to address those issues in those parks. But park fees itself will never address \$11.7 billion in backlog.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Secretary ZINKE. And clearly, Congress has had some challenges to do it.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Mr. Beyer.

Mr. BEYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thanks, Mr. Secretary. I am still deeply concerned by the shooting death by the Park Police of 25-year-old Bijan Ghaisar last November in Virginia. And we only know about it because the Fairfax County Police also responded, and they had their car cameras.

I want to applaud the Park Police for the pilot program to begin deploying body cameras, and thank you for agreeing to brief our Committee on how the Department is updating its policing policies.

But I am concerned that there is no current set-aside for law enforcement to adopt body cameras or car dash cameras, and no tech set-asides. We know if it is not in the budget, it won't happen, so I am asking for your commitment to this Committee that the Department will prioritize funding beyond the pilot project for these cameras for our Park Police.

Secretary ZINKE. We are looking at it. Of course, I, too, share your concerns. I love law enforcement, I love the U.S. Park Police. I am with them every day, they are wonderful people. There has to be some certainty among our citizens that a force has integrity, does the right thing all the time because, as you know, law enforcement is raised to a higher standard.

We are looking at it. We have not made a decision. And I want to see it on the basis of facts, but we are looking at different options along the way to increase transparency of our actions of the U.S. Park Police, BLM, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. We have a lot of people with a badge out there.

Mr. BEYER. Yes, Mr. Secretary, wildlife trafficking is the fourth biggest organized criminal activity in the world, and it is linked to organized crime syndicates, terrorists, and insurgent groups.

The Fish and Wildlife Service law enforcement is critical for combating illegal wildlife trade, yet the Administration's budget proposes a drastic reduction of funding for it, which decreased the number of special agents that work to stop domestic and international wildlife crimes, which brings me to the recent announcements that the Fish and Wildlife Service will now allow elephant and lion trophies to be imported from certain African countries on a case-by-case basis.

How do you reconcile this policy with President Trump's previous comments calling trophy hunting "a horror show," and saying he did not "want elephants killed and stuffed and have the tusks brought back into this country."

And I am particularly curious about your assurance that you are 100 percent in step with the President's position, and the White House stating that the President's thinking has not changed.

Secretary ZINKE. How I explain it is this, the court. There was a lawsuit by NRA and a number of people, so the court looked at it. The court mandated that we change our process. But our policy has not changed. We are 100 percent aligned with the President's policy. We have imported zero elephants, and our policy has not changed. But our process reflects the court ruling.

Mr. BEYER. Great, thank you. The proposed elimination of the cooperative endangered species fund is surprising, considering that you praised one of these grants during the Obama administration, when you were part of us, for a conservation easement to assist the Whitefish Lake Watershed project in Montana. You said, "This grant is proof of what is possible when our delegation works together."

Do you stand by what you said in 2016, and why eliminate this program that seemed to work pretty well in Montana?

Secretary ZINKE. And, up front, the LWCF, as you know, is reduced in our budget, primarily for land acquisitions. But I am focusing the grants right now on wildlife corridors and public access. Those we are reconfiguring, because I signed a Secretarial Order to identify and conserve wildlife corridors, starting with big game and going through. Because, as populations go up, our public lands get challenged, and we have to make sure we connect things that are critical for, in the future, watersheds, wildlife corridors.

We are looking at our grants to make sure of public access and conservation easements, and our grants are going to focus a little while, as far as conservation, on protecting the critical pieces of land management, watersheds in the Chesapeake, things going into it, and wildlife corridors.

Mr. BEYER. I want to sort of thank you personally for your attention to the wildlife corridors. There are many, many folks in the environmental movement who believe that preserving and creating these corridors may be the most important thing we have done in a generation. So, Mr. Secretary, thank you.

I yield back.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Thank you.

Mr. Gianforte.

Mr. GIANFORTE. Secretary Zinke, thank you for being here, and thank you for your leadership. I very much appreciate that.

As a fellow Montanan, we watched with heartache this past summer as much of Montana burned, over 1.2 million acres, and I just wanted to start with a thank you. When the Lodgepole Fire burned, over 27,000 acres, I really appreciated your timely response to get the C.M. Russell Wildlife Refuge open for grazing. Our ranchers in Garfield County and the nearly 65,000 hungry cattle also thank you. So, I appreciate that.

Secretary ZINKE. I think that was the fastest that BLM moved perhaps in the history of the bureau.

Mr. GIANFORTE. It shows that government can work. And, again, your leadership was critical. It would not have happened without your support. So, thank you.

I want to stay on wildfires. I know you visited a number of fires, as I did. We were together at the Lolo Fire this past summer. I am curious. As you have talked to incident commanders and first responders on these various wildfires, what lessons have you taken away that will allow us to better fight fire in the future?

Secretary ZINKE. The lesson is, the first element of making sure that fires don't happen is prevention. And there is too much dead and dying timber, and the fuel load of our forests is too high. Everyone agrees that temperatures are higher, the season is longer. But what isn't helping is the amount of fuel load. And we need to go to an active management policy, which I have given a Secretarial Order to address that.

It would be helpful if Congress would give the secretaries, both Sonny Perdue and myself, a category exclusion, so we can look at addressing the millions of acres we are behind on getting the fuel load out, so we don't have the same problems year after year.

And you and I have been in the same Bitterroot Valley probably for three seasons together. And every time we hear the same thing: What have you done between now and the last fire? And the answer is we are thinking about removing some dead and dying trees. We almost have a timber sale. We almost have it, and then the next season we are back there again watching the people have to evacuate.

Mr. GIANFORTE. And you are well aware we are tied up in endless litigation over these projects. We can't get them approved.

Secretary ZINKE. Endless.

Mr. GIANFORTE. I have co-sponsored the Resilient Federal Forest Act, along with Congressman Westerman. That has passed out of the House. Have you reviewed that bill? And would that help us start to manage our forests better?

Secretary ZINKE. When I was in the House I signed onto it, too, because I think it is a great bill. It is not perfect, but I can tell you it gets an A because, as you know, nothing is perfect in Congress, nothing is perfect. I wake up every day, I have 70,000 employees, 12 time zones, a fifth of the territory of the United States. Something bad is going to happen every day. But a lot more good happens than bad. I support your bill and I think it is absolutely needed.

And a lot of it comes in in the execution of the bill. All of us can agree that we need healthier forests. I am hoping all of us agree

one of the many ways to get there is to remove the dead and dying timber and go to an active forest management policy. And there are other countries, quite frankly, we can learn from.

Mr. GIANFORTE. Well, we will continue to advance this Resilient Federal Forest Act. What additional action should Congress be taking to give your agency better control to do better land management?

Secretary ZINKE. I think category exclusion would be helpful. I think probably reviewing the National Historic Preservation Act.

There was an incident about doors that I had in the office. I was reading the article, too. How could doors be \$139,000? So, I asked the question. We got it down to \$75,000 by manipulating, but a lot of the issue is on historic buildings you have to follow such stringent rules, even though some of them don't make common sense, that it just costs the taxpayers, and we are bound by those rules. I don't have any choice.

I think a little more flexibility, where common sense can be put in, and sometimes our rules have good intent, but when you are bound by a law that does not make sense, this is where working together can be helpful.

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Secretary, thank you for your leadership, and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. Mr. Curtis.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I certainly appreciate you waiting for the new guy to have just a minute with you.

Secretary ZINKE. I, too, sat where you did, right here.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you. And let me just say personally, for anybody that is concerned about your use of tax dollars, I have seen you sit on the back of an airplane with me in the lowest economy seat, and somehow you folded up those legs of yours and got them in that seat. So, I hope the taxpayers appreciate that.

Secretary ZINKE. I fly coach. I always have.

Mr. CURTIS. Good, good. Also, a deep appreciation from my district and from the state of Utah for your attention to our needs there, for the difficult decisions that you have made, and much appreciation from my state. Let me just mention a couple of things briefly to you, and then I will be done.

I was the mayor of my city of Provo, Utah, for the last 8 years. The very first year as mayor, the Central Utah Water Project came through my city. They put a 60-inch pipeline from one end of the city to the other end of the city. None of that water was delivered to our city, it went further north. But we tolerated and embraced that project, because we know how critical it is to our valley and to the state of Utah.

Now, another arm of that project is going in that will help Provo. There was a \$2.4 million gap—not huge—between what was appropriated and what was in your budget, and I just wanted to see if you would take a look at that and see if there is a possibility of closing that gap so we could finish this critical project for our valley.

Secretary ZINKE. Well, we funded \$8 million, I know it was about \$2 million short. I think what Congress can help me with is transfer authority, because I am holding books on a lot of projects that should be transferred over to the water districts, themselves.

Because again, the original intent on a lot of these projects was these small communities could not afford them. We wanted to make sure the land was productive, so the Federal Government would come in, invest in it, and, over the period of time, the water users would pay it off and then title would be transferred at an appropriate time.

We forget about the title transfer at an appropriate time. And thus, when you look at it now, years later, decades later, we are holding on to a lot of assets that we are paying for that we should transfer over to the water districts, and then focus on building new projects and being a good neighbor once again.

Mr. CURTIS. We would love to explore that when we have more time, to see how I could be helpful with that. Thank you for your attention there.

The second and last thing is—I am fortunate to have the district with the iconic Arches National Park unit. It is an amazing asset. The state of Utah every once in a while wonders if we did the right thing by advertising these parks. We are loving them to death. The lines are long to get in. And the current park supervisor has worked very hard to try to come up with a plan, and currently is looking at a reservation system in the park.

It won't surprise you to know that that is causing some consternation in Moab, and simply an ask to help us all make sure that we are exhausting every possibility, in that we are trying to accommodate as many visitors as that park can appropriately handle. I learned just today that she was doing an economic development study, and that is really critical for that area to know what the impact would be of a reservation system. And then just the hope that we can continue to exhaust every possibility before we move to that reservation system to make sure that is the right thing there.

Secretary ZINKE. Well, we certainly are looking at options. One of the options, actually, is going to a transporter on maybe the top 10 parks. And a transporter is probably having Tesla or one of the zero-emissions, because people love those, design—in Glacier Park, like a red bus carrier, where we begin to limit the number of cars, and then tie it in to an app. Part of the problem with Zion has been if you have a bus system out there, they drop 70 people off at a trail head. So, your visitor experience is a clump of 70 people. We are actually looking at an app system, where you can tell whether a trail is red, yellow, or green, to make sure the park experience that we all love is maintained.

So, we think that that model may work, and we are evaluating what it means. But there is no doubt there are going to be more visitors through our parks than we had this year, that we are loving our parks to death. We have to address the backlog, maintenance, and repair. And there is a capacity that is probably there, and we are over capacity in some parks. But it is about people management, and making sure the visitor experience is sacred.

Mr. CURTIS. I think it would be fantastic if I could go back and tell the good people of Moab that we are looking at those types of options, and at least considering technology to make that visitor experience valuable.

There is about a \$25 million backlog in Arches. And although fees cannot overcome all of your deficit, that is one situation where you may have the ability to come closer to that deficit, if we could increase the number of people in that park.

Secretary ZINKE. Knowing Moab, I can bet they are going to like zero emissions.

Mr. CURTIS. You are right, yes. Thank you very much for your time.

The CHAIRMAN. Don't ever say that again.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Steve, I gave you—sorry, Representative Curtis, can you change your first name, so you match the mayor?

Mr. CURTIS. You are going to owe me more time, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, you have an extra 30 seconds because you are from Utah.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. Secretary Zinke, I appreciate you going above and beyond the call of duty here. I hope it is either from your background as a SEAL, which goes above and beyond the call of duty, or simply your background of having sat here and been cut off when the speaker leaves before you have a chance to ask any questions. But the fact that you spent this much time means something really significant.

So, I do want to thank you for putting out that much time, because you have stayed longer than you actually said you could stay. And that doesn't necessarily happen with a whole lot of other people who have come to testify in front of us.

You know the drill here, Committee Rule 3(o) says that any Member who has additional questions has 3 days to send them and submit them to us by the close of business on that third business day. And you get to look at those and have 10 days to answer them as part of the record. I appreciate you doing that.

Secretary, I also want you to know that some things are said hopefully in jest, and heaven knows I do that all the time, too. But in no way does this Committee want to condone or recommend that we disrespect any of the service or the service of Navy SEALs, and I apologize for anything that may have been misconstrued on what the meaning of this Committee said. We have a great deal of respect for your former colleagues and I just want that very clear on the record.

So, I apologize from the Committee for anything that may have been offensive that was said in this particular Committee.

With that—

Secretary ZINKE. Apology accepted. I am always willing to work with this great committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, look, there are only four of us that cared. Do you want to give a benediction of anything?

[Laughter.]

Secretary ZINKE. I will see you next year.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. That is close enough.

Secretary ZINKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Secretary. Thank you for your staff that was here with you, as well.

This Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:18 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

[ADDITIONAL MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD]

Rep. Grijalva Submissions

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS

Statement for the Record

The Alliance for Retired Americans appreciates the opportunity to submit comments to the Committee on Natural Resources on the hearing titled, "Interior Department FY2019 Budget."

Founded in 2001, the Alliance is a grassroots organization representing more than 4.3 million retirees and seniors nationwide. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Alliance and its 36 state chapters work to advance public policy that strengthens the health and economic security of older Americans by teaching seniors how to make a difference through activism.

Secretary Zinke and the Trump Administration are blaming seniors, veterans, people with disabilities and even school children for higher entry fees at our national parks. This is happening at the same time that the Trump Administration's own budget proposal cuts the National Park Service funding by \$493 million next year. The Administration also slashed funding for the park service last year.

In addition, the Administration and congressional leaders just passed an enormous tax cut for corporations the wealthiest Americans. Now they want middle- and low-income Americans to pay more to visit our national treasures.

Our national parks are for the entire American public to enjoy. It is disgraceful to blame veterans and seniors who have already sacrificed and given so much to this country, and those individuals who are least able to afford it, for the Administration's misplaced priorities.

On behalf of its more than 4.3 million members, the Alliance for Retired Americans appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony on this critically important issue.

ASA Leadership Responds to Interior Secretary Blaming Elderly for National Park Fee Increases

The American Society on Aging's (ASA) Board Chair Bob Blancato, Chair-Elect Karyne Jones, and CEO Bob Stein today condemned remarks offered by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke during testimony to the Senate Energy and National Resources Committee on Tuesday.

As reported in *The Hill*, Zinke said, "When you give discounted or free passes to elderly, fourth graders, veterans, disabled, and you do it by the carload, there's not a whole lot of people who actually pay at our front door. So, we're looking at ways to make sure we have more revenue in the front door of our parks themselves."

ASA leaders responded by saying, "On behalf of the older and disabled Americans and veterans in our membership, we take offense at the comments of the Interior Secretary about all of these groups not continuing to enjoy free access to national parks. It is especially disingenuous coming from a Cabinet Secretary who, according to published reports, spent almost \$140,000 in taxpayer funds to fix doors leading into his office. This proposal to impose these new fees should be shown the door."

ASA will continue to support policies that provide preferential access to public resources for older Americans, youth, the disabled and the veteran community.

AMVETS,
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS,
LANHAM, MARYLAND

March 15, 2018

Hon. ROB BISHOP, *Chairman*,
Hon. RAÚL GRIJALVA, *Ranking Member*,
House Committee on Natural Resources,
1324 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515.

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva:

In light of comments made by Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke earlier this week at a Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources hearing regarding access to National Parks, AMVETS wanted to reach out to you prior to today's hearing.

AMVETS works hard to advocate for those who serve this country, and we are proud of our Americanism program which aims to inspire patriotism in the youth of America. The future of our military depends on "Americanism," and the number of people who qualify to join the military under current standards is quickly decreasing as the United States faces the longest period of armed conflict in its history.

Secretary Zinke, as a veteran, should know this. Revoking discounted entry to our National Parks for veterans, the disabled, and the elderly can only be categorized as a blatant insult to those who stood up and served in the military, those with daily challenges of living with a disability, and our elderly who live in a country that sadly seems to be losing reverence for those that came before them. Blaming this group of Americans as Zinke floats hiking entry fees for others is also a needless insult and burden.

Surely the Secretary can consider more palatable cost-saving measures other than nickel and diming our veterans, the disabled, and the elderly while perpetuating disrespect of those who deserve more from the leaders of this country.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH R. CHENELLY,
Executive Director.

GREENLATINOS,
Washington, DC

March 14, 2018

Hon. ROB BISHOP, *Chairman*,
Hon. RAÚL GRIJALVA, *Ranking Member*,
House Committee on Natural Resources,
1324 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515.

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Grijalva:

On behalf of GreenLatinos—a national network of Latino Environmental and conservation advocates—we submit this letter for the record during the Committee's upcoming hearing on the Department of the Interior's (DOI) policy priorities and Fiscal Year 2019 budget.

As an organization that represents one of the fastest growing minority populations in America on matters of environmental and conservation policy we remain deeply concerned with the drastic cuts that Secretary Zinke and the Trump Administration have proposed for the agency. An overall reduction in the agency's budget by 14 percent from 2017 enacted levels will have visceral adverse impacts to parks visitation, cultural heritage programs, land acquisition, and rural water and drought mitigation efforts—which disproportionately impact minority and low-income communities, particularly in the southwest region of the country.

Many of the proposed cuts will greatly impact GreenLatinos member-driven core policy priorities (which include: environmental justice, civil rights, and public

engagement; Indigenous rights and sovereignty; climate and clean air; toxics and pesticides; and clean water) and we wish to share a few of those concerns with your committee.

On the environmental justice, civil rights, and public engagement priorities—it is deeply concerning to us that the agency has regressed on its commitment to inclusion, transparency, and the enforcement of policies and practices that impact the civil rights of both the public and the employees within the agency. For example, there has been little action to correct the agency’s deficiencies that have been indicated from employee surveys indicating a pattern and practice of sexual harassment within the department. Further, a recent report from this Committee’s minority staff have highlighted concerning gaps in the agency’s anti-harassment policies to protect workers at all levels. Secretary Zinke’s watering down of the agency’s commitment to efforts that ensure the nation’s cultural resources and programs reflect the rich and diverse tapestry of America, as evidenced by the proposed strategic plan language that eliminates those efforts as an agency goal, are both troubling and disappointing.

Our commitment to climate and clean air priorities also remains under threat with some of the agency’s proposed cuts. For example, proposal includes a cut of nearly \$13 million to the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) Renewable Energy program while prioritizing expansion of oil, gas, and coal. Additionally, The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) proposes a 15% cut its renewable energy program, which will have tremendous consequences on the development of deployment of offshore wind energy—an important component of a clean, renewable energy future. Clean Water continues to remain a chief priority for GreenLatinos. It is troubling to our organization and its members that the agency, through the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has proposed significant cuts to the WaterSMART program (a 92% cut to Title XVI water recycling project and a 65% cut for WaterSMART efficiency grants), a critical program to ameliorate the impact of drought through conservation, water-use efficiency, and water reuse projects. Equally concerning to our members is the \$50 million dollar decrease in funding for rural water projects—projects specifically aimed at addressing water scarcity in the most vulnerable communities.

We urge the committee to explore these concerns with Secretary Zinke and advocate strongly for a course correction in these important areas from DOI. These policy and funding decisions will have deep and lasting impacts for many vulnerable communities, including Latino and low-income families. We feel strongly that fostering transparency and public input, protecting civil rights and promoting environmental justice, maintaining a commitment to address climate change and protect clean air, ensuring clean water—particularly for vulnerable communities, and respecting the sovereignty and rights of indigenous communities are all critical aims that should be pursued with tremendous rigor.

NATIONAL DISABILITY RIGHTS NETWORK
Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities

To blame a fee hike on admission to the most visited national parks on veterans, people with disabilities and the elderly is uninformed, hurtful, and frankly unconscionable. Collectively our national parks can be seen “as cumulative expressions of a single national heritage.” When speaking of that national expression of a single heritage, NDRN encourages Secretary Zinke to be more considerate of the lived experiences of all Americans.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION,
WASHINGTON, DC

March 12, 2018

Hon. RAÚL GRIJALVA, *Ranking Member,
House Committee on Natural Resources,
1324 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515.*

Dear Ranking Member Grijalva:

On behalf of the National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) more than 6 million members and supporters and 50 state and territorial affiliates, we submit this letter for the record to express our deep concerns with the Department of the Interior (DOI)'s funding levels proposed in its fiscal year 2019 budget proposal. Significant cuts to key agency programs will greatly harm ongoing habitat and wildlife protection efforts. The agency proposes a \$128 million decrease to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)—a bureau charged with a mission to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats. This reduction will strain the management of over 500 national wildlife refuges and conservation units visited by over 50 million people annually, and put in greater jeopardy more than 1,600 plant and animal species listed as threatened or endangered. Conservation programs and efforts within other DOI bureaus are also at risk. For example, the agency's proposed \$263 million cut to the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) could impact ongoing fish and wildlife restoration activities in the Central Valley Project area of California. The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Wildlife Management program is cut by \$102 million.

While all of these reductions and the overall proposed funding level for the agency—representing a 14% cut—are troubling, equally concerning is the department's approach to public input, stakeholder engagement, and transparency. Secretary Zinke's agency reorganization plan, for example, has yet to be publicly released despite reports of its ongoing implementation. The public must have an opportunity to input into the agency's reorganization plan, and Congress must have the opportunity to exercise its important oversight responsibilities with respect to the details and impacts of this plan. We also note the recent admission by the agency that it did not properly record many thousands of public comments—including from the National Wildlife Federation—in support of plans to protect and conserve the sage steppe landscapes relied upon by the Greater Sage-grouse, plans agreed to by eleven Western governors.

We encourage the House Committee on Natural Resources to explore these issues with Secretary Zinke and to ensure that DOI departmental decisions are made in the best interest of wildlife and habitat protection, using the best available science in a manner that is transparent and open to public input and legislative oversight.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

Sincerely,

LAURA DANIEL DAVIS,
Vice President, Conservation Strategy.

PRESS RELEASE
Social Security WORKS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE March 15, 2018
Contact: Linda Benesch, 240-342-4301, lbenesch@socialsecurityworks.org

**Social Security Works Statement for House Natural Resources Committee
Hearing on FY19 Budget**

(Washington, DC)—The following is a statement from Alex Lawson, President of Social Security Works, in reaction to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's proposal to raise fees for visiting national parks:

“The only thing more reprehensible than Ryan Zinke's plan to jack up fees for visiting national parks is his blaming the price hike on seniors, Americans with dis-

abilities, and veterans. The average Social Security retirement benefit is \$1,369 a month and the average Social Security disability benefit is \$1,172 a month. If Zinke goes through with his plan it will make it impossible for millions of Americans to visit our country's greatest natural treasures.

Zinke is a disgrace to the legacy of President Theodore Roosevelt, and everyone who has worked hard for over 100 years to make our nation's national parks accessible to everyone.”

VET VOICE FOUNDATION

Twitter

@VetVoiceFound

Disgusting! @SecretaryZinke blames his decision to look into hiking entrance fees to our public lands and national parks on veterans, the disabled, and elderly. Shame on you, Secretary Zinke. #VetsVSZinke



9:11 PM—13 Mar 2018

PRESS RELEASE

Vietnam Veterans of America

IMMEDIATE RELEASE March 14, 2018 No. 18-2

Contact: Mokie Porter 301-996-0901; 301-585-4000, Ext. 146

Secretary Zinke: Don't Blame Veterans and the Disabled for Raising Park Entrance Fees

(Washington, DC)—In reaction to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's plan to raise the entrance fees for national parks, saying the National Park Service must charge more because too many people, including veterans and the disabled, get in for free, VVA National President John Rowan issued the following statement:

“Secretary Zinke's rationale to steeply increase the entrance fees for others, because disabled veterans and active-duty military get in for free, is a small-minded and mean-spirited jab that pits some citizens against others. I believe that we, as a nation, are more inclusive and compassionate than this.

“By discounting fees, we honor our veterans and our seniors and bring a bit of inexpensive enjoyment to our disabled citizens. Does Mr. Zinke really think that citizens who pay \$25 or \$30 per carload to enjoy some of our most popular national parks are going to pay twice as much? Does he really believe that they will buy his ill-conceived argument that because veterans get in for free, the rates must be doubled for everyone else?”

“Secretary Zinke’s flawed plan needs to be discarded and forgotten.”

Rep. Huffman Submission

CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY,
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

March 13, 2018

Hon. PAUL RYAN, *Speaker of the House*,
Hon. NANCY PELOSI, *Democratic Leader*,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC 20515.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL, *Senate Majority Leader*,
Hon. CHARLES SCHUMER, *Senate Minority Leader*,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC 20510.

Re: Shasta Dam and Reservoir Enlargement Project

Dear Honorable Representatives Ryan, Pelosi, McConnell and Schumer:

The letter is to express opposition to the Department of the Interior’s proposal to fund design and pre-construction activities associated with the proposed Shasta Dam and Reservoir Enlargement Project.

As you may be aware, the Shasta Dam enlargement project would violate California law due to the adverse impacts that project may have on the McCloud River and its fishery. California Public Resources Code section 5093.542 generally prohibits state agencies and departments from assisting in any way “in the planning or construction of any dam, reservoir, diversion, or other water impoundment facility that could have an adverse effect on the free-flowing condition of the McCloud River, or on its wild trout fishery.”

California shares the Department of Interior’s commitment to investing in new water storage. In 2014, California voters overwhelmingly approved a \$7.5 billion water bond (Proposition 1) that provides \$2.7 billion to invest in new water storage. The California Water Commission is reviewing 11 proposed projects as part of a competitive process and expects to make initial funding determinations and award early funding this summer. The Shasta Dam enlargement project would inundate several miles of the protected McCloud River in violation of state law and therefore is not eligible for Proposition 1 funding.

Leveraging state, local and federal dollars is the most effective way to ensure that important water storage projects are funded and built. As such, I ask that you not pursue the Shasta Dam enlargement project, which disregards California law, and instead work with the State of California to fund water storage projects consistent with our California Water Action Plan and Proposition 1.

Sincerely,

JOHN LAIRD,
Secretary for California Natural Resources.

Rep. McClintock Submission

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
WASHINGTON, DC

October 31, 2017

Hon. ROB BISHOP, *Chairman,*
Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC 20515.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter provides additional information and clarification relating to your October 3, 2017, request for information on Department of the Interior Secretarial travel use of non-commercial flights.

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of a disk titled "00005042_001" that contains an electronic set of the documents transmitted to your Committee by the Department on October 5, 2017. This electronic set of documents contains several updates to the paper copy originally provided to your Committee. First, the disk contains four additional documents identifying travel policies in the Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Reclamation. Second, we have identified and included 6 additional documents relating to Secretarial travel during the years 2011–2015.

With the addition of this new material and other corrections to the organization of the original document set, the summary of pertinent information included in our original letter has also been updated to reflect this new information, as follows:

Year	Total Costs	# Trips	Secretary
2010	\$215,512	16	Salazar
2011	\$247,712	19	Salazar
2012	\$177,015	17	Salazar
2013	\$119,923	13	Jewell
2014	\$145,804	7	Jewell
2015	\$95,781	8	Jewell
2016	\$86,863	8	Jewell
Total	\$1,088,610	88	

In addition, for the Committee's convenience, the Department is providing below descriptions and justifications for Secretary Zinke's 2017 non-commercial travel on behalf of the Department of Interior.

Official DOI Travel Using Non-Commercial, Chartered Flights by Secretary Zinke			
Aircraft	Destination	Cost	Purpose
Turbo Prop Plane	Return trip from St. Thomas to St. Croix, US Virgin Islands	\$3,000	Keynote speaker on behalf of the President for the transition of power centennial ceremony that memorialized the transfer of the islands from Denmark to the U.S. He was accompanied by Governor Mapp, U.S. Virgin Islands and the Prime Minister of Denmark. No commercial flight was available.
Turbo Prop Plane	One-way trip from North Slope to Anchorage, AK	\$3,983	Guest of a bipartisan Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Congressional delegation. Transportation from North Slope oil fields to Fairbanks, AK. No commercial flight was available.
Turbo Prop Plane	One-way trip from Las Vegas, NV to Kalispell, MT	\$12,253	Announced PILT grant awards in Pahrump, NV, visited BLM Red Rock Canyon NCA, and was the keynote speaker at Golden Knights training camp. He traveled to Kalispell for keynote speech and round table at the Western Governors Association conference in Whitefish, MT. No commercial flight was available within schedule confines.
Total		\$19,236	

Official DOI Operational Flight Missions Using Non-Commercial Flights by Secretary Zinke			
Aircraft	Destination	Cost	Purpose
Contract-DOI Rotary Wing	Round trip from Las Vegas, NV returning to Las Vegas, NV	\$39,295	Aerial survey of objects and boundaries pertaining to the 704,000 acres in Basin and Range National Monument and the 300,000 acres in Gold Butte National Monument.
DOI Rotary Wing	Round trip from Washington D.C. to Shepherdstown, WV	\$8,066	Emergency preparedness exercise in support of National Command Authorities
DOI Rotary Wing	Round trip from Washington D.C. to Jamestown, VA	\$6,252	Aerial survey of proposed high voltage transmission line over James River and tour of Yorktown National Battlefield along with ceremony to award Maritime Recreational Grants
Total		\$53,613	

The above information does not include flights on Air Force One and other inter-agency mission aircraft.

Finally, as noted in the Joint Statement of Melinda Loftin (Department of the Interior Designated Agency Official and Director of Departmental Ethics Office) and Edward Keable (Deputy Solicitor-General Law), released on September 29, 2017, the Scheduling Office meets regularly with the Department Ethics Office and Division of General Law to ensure that all travel is thoroughly reviewed and approved in advance and that it is fully compliant with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Consistent with this process, these trips were reviewed and approved in advance by both the Department Ethics Office and the Division of General Law and were determined to be compliant with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

If you or your staff needs any additional assistance regarding this production, please contact Micah Chambers, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, at (202) 208-5348 or micah_chambers@ios.doi.gov.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER P. SALOTTI,
Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs,
Department of the Interior.

[LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD RETAINED IN THE
COMMITTEE'S OFFICIAL FILES]

Rep. Barragán Submission

—Letter from Rep. Barragán and other Members of Congress
to Secretary Zinke dated October 3, 2017

