

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 18, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators McConnell and Schumer:

As members of the Senate Western Caucus, we urge you to continue to prioritize executive nominations important to the West. Specifically, we would like to bring to your attention to two well-qualified nominees. Both have been reported favorably out of the committees of jurisdiction and we ask that you promptly confirm them.

1. Susan Combs, a rancher from Big Bend, Texas, was nominated to be Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget at the Department of the Interior (DOI). Ms. Combs has had a long and successful career both in business and in public service, including as a member of the Texas House of Representatives, as Texas' Agricultural Commissioner, and as Texas' Comptroller of Public Accounts. During her time as Comptroller, she successfully managed complex tax issues and streamlined bureaucracy to make it both more efficient and more accountable to taxpayers. Her proven management track record in the public and private sectors will be crucial to making DOI more efficient and effective and helping ensure responsible stewardship of western lands. Her nomination has been pending for 372 days, longer than her predecessors in the past 25 years.
2. Jeff Clark was nominated to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD) at the Department of Justice. Mr. Clark has been at the forefront of environmental and natural resources law for over two decades both in private practice and government service. He served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General at ENRD from 2001 to 2005 where he oversaw the defense of a wide range of environmental and natural resource legal positions in appellate courts throughout the country. His service as Deputy Assistant Attorney General gave Mr. Clark the experience needed to collaborate with federal agencies as they develop reform-oriented natural resources and environmental policies. It is imperative that the Justice Department has in place a Senate-confirmed Assistant Attorney General for ENRD to advise other federal departments and agencies on the development of sound land use policies, which primarily affect the West, and to vigorously defend those policies in court when they are challenged. His nomination has been pending for 406 days, longer than his predecessors in the past 25 years.


A fully staffed administration, especially in these positions, is essential to implementing the Senate's bipartisan objectives for responsible energy and natural resource development, stewardship of our public lands, and creating good-paying jobs that will benefit not only western states, but the U.S. economy as a whole.

We would also like to draw your attention to two additional nominees who are still being considered by their respective committees of jurisdiction: James Hubbard from Colorado to serve

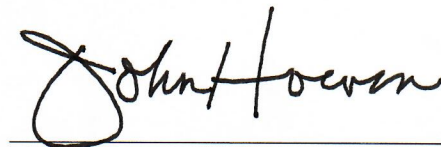
as United States Department of Agriculture Under Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment and Ryan Nelson, an Idaho native, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit. We ask that once these two nominations are reported out of committee that you promptly bring their nominations before the full Senate for consideration. Both have extensive experience in their professional fields and the positions to which they are nominated are of key importance to the West.


Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to working with you to further advance western initiatives.

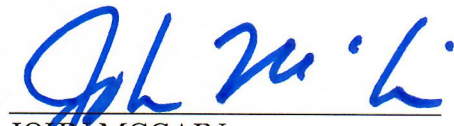
Sincerely,

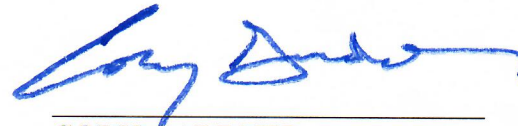

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United States Senator



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United States Senator



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