

Alaska Wilderness Action * Clean Water Action * Defenders of Wildlife * Earthjustice *
Environmental Defense Fund * Environmental Law & Policy Center * League of
Conservation Voters * National Parks Conservation Association * Ocean Conservancy *
Partnership for Policy Integrity * Sierra Club * The Wilderness Society

April 9, 2019

Re: Support HR 2021, Investing for the People Act of 2019

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters nationwide, we write to support the House's current effort to raise the budget caps imposed by the Budget Control Act to avoid the damaging cuts that would come with sequestration, a budgetary penalty that was not expected to be used when the Budget Control Act of 2011 was passed. The budget caps bill on the floor this week, H.R. 2021, the Investing for the People Act of 2019, would ensure that the agencies and programs that protect and care for our air, climate, lands, water, oceans and wildlife are able to better accomplish their critical missions.

The devastating sequestration cuts that will be imposed in the next fiscal year if Congress does not act would result in a \$125 billion cut to discretionary programs, causing irreparable harm to critical initiatives, programs, and priorities. These cuts would be felt deeply by states, localities and the most vulnerable segments of our society. In addition to cuts amongst all agencies and programs, given the White House's budget, sequestration could translate into an eleven percent cut at both the Department of Interior and Department of Energy, and over twenty percent cut at the Department of Transportation, at a time when level funding alone means funding cuts in reality. The more than thirty percent cut to the Environmental Protection Agency in the President's FY'20 budget proposal, and the questionable use of funds during the government shutdown, are clear signals that the administration would use the dire funding levels created by sequestration to justify further dubious budgeting and funding practices aimed at diverting funds from critical environmental and public health priorities.

H.R. 2021 represents a strong and responsible approach to avoiding the damage that would come with sequestration, and sets a timely path forward for Congress to raise the budget caps and still move ahead with the annual appropriations process, one of its most fundamental responsibilities. We urge members to support this bill and continue to fight for increased Non-Defense Discretionary funding to avoid the damaging impacts of sequestration.

Sincerely,

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