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6 OUTDOOR RECREATION: VAST IMPACT OF THE GREAT

7 OUTDOORS

8 THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2017

9 House of Representatives

10 Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer

11 Protection

12 Committee on Energy and Commerce

13 Washington, D.C.

14

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16

17 The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in

18 Room 2123 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Robert Latta

19 [chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

20 Members present: Representatives Latta, Harper, Burgess,

21 Upton, Lance, Guthrie, McKinley, Bilirakis, Bucshon, Schakowsky,

22 Dingell, Matsui, Welch, Kennedy, Green, and Pallone (ex officio).

23 Staff present: Zachary Dareshori, Staff Assistant; Blair

24 Ellis, Digital Coordinator/Press Secretary; Melissa Froelich,

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25 Counsel, Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection; Giulia
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31 Commerce and Consumer Protection; Madeline Vey, Policy
32 Coordinator, Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection; Hamlin
33 Wade, Special Advisor, External Affairs; Everett Winnick,
34 Director of Information Technology; Michelle Ash, Minority Chief
35 Counsel, Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection; Jeff Carroll,
36 Minority Staff Director; Jacqueline Cohen, Minority Senior
37 Counsel; David Cwiertny, Minority Energy/Environment Fellow;
38 Jean Fruci, Minority Energy and Environment Policy Advisor; Lisa
39 Goldman, Minority Counsel; Caroline Paris-Behr, Minority Policy
40 Analyst; and Matt Schumacher, Minority Press Assistant.

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41 Mr. Latta. Well, good morning. And I would like to call
42 the Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection to
43 order, and I appreciate all of our witnesses that will be
44 testifying today before the committee. And at this time, the
45 chair now recognizes himself for 5 minutes for an opening
46 statement. And again, good morning, and welcome to the
47 subcommittee. And today the subcommittee hearing is on the
48 outdoor recreation industry.

49 As a current member and former chairman of the Congressional
50 Sportsmen's Caucus as well as someone who passionately enjoys all
51 outdoor recreation has to offer, I am very excited to explore the
52 industry with you today. The outdoor recreation industry is both
53 diverse and far-reaching spanning many of the traditional major
54 U.S. economic sectors and at the core of the industry is the
55 American consumer.

56 The outdoor recreation industry thrives when Americans are
57 engaged, and now more than ever we are seeing more Americans
58 getting involved. Every year, millions of Americans across the
59 country go outside and enjoy the great outdoors. Whether they
60 are camping, fishing, hiking, hunting, or enjoying many of the
61 other pastimes outdoor recreation has to offer, Americans are
62 actively engaged. Increasingly, more and more Americans are
63 prioritizing outdoor recreation and in doing so helping grow the
64 industry. Vast contributions made by the outdoor recreation to

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65 the overall U.S. economy reflect this trend. Americans spend
66 \$887 billion in outdoor recreation annually in helping to create
67 7.6 million jobs and generate almost \$125 billion in federal,
68 state, and local tax revenue.

69 In my home state of Ohio where residents come to enjoy the
70 Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, the Magee Marsh Wildlife Area,
71 and other public destinations near our beautiful Lake Erie, we
72 have also seen significant economic benefits outdoor recreation
73 has to offer. Over 53 percent of all Ohioans participate in
74 outdoor recreation each year. With approximately 17.4 billion
75 spent by consumers in this industry, outdoor recreation helps
76 create almost 200,000 jobs and 5.1 billion in wages and salaries
77 alone in Ohio.

78 In recognition of the outdoor recreation industry's growing
79 influence, Congress passed the Outdoor Recreation Jobs and
80 Economic Impact Act last year. Under this law, the Department
81 of Commerce in consultation with federal agencies will analyze
82 outdoor recreation's contributions to the nation's gross domestic
83 product.

84 Through this analysis all the economic activity generated
85 by manufacturers, retailers, service providers, and thousands of
86 other businesses supporting the outdoor recreation across the
87 country will be quantified and incorporated into an annual federal
88 assessment of the national economy. As a result, the

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89 policymakers and stakeholders alike will have the necessary
90 information to make critical decisions that will allow this
91 industry to thrive for generations to come.

92 In addition to economic output, outdoor recreation offers
93 many other benefits. Outdoor recreation helps Americans get fit
94 and lead healthy lives. Whether it be hiking, trail running,
95 rafting, or the like, outdoor recreation offers Americans many
96 opportunities to get outside and be active. Recent studies also
97 suggest that investments in outdoor recreation may help reduce
98 crime and improve education throughout our communities.

99 Another example of the positive impact outdoor recreation
100 has on our communities that I am excited to hear about today is
101 Outward Bound's veteran program. Outward Bound combines outdoor
102 group adventures such as canoeing and hiking with facilitated
103 therapeutic sessions designed to help build self-confidence,
104 pride, trust, and communication skills that help veterans
105 readjust upon their return.

106 Today as we gather to discuss the outdoor recreation
107 industry, I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on how
108 outdoor recreation is driving investment, creating jobs, and
109 promoting innovation and working to establish more enjoyable
110 consumer experiences through outdoor activities. For many
111 states and communities, outdoor recreation is the cornerstone of
112 economic activity. It creates jobs and generates revenue and

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113 spurs vital investments. Our goal is to continue that progress
114 and ensure that the outdoor recreation industry remains a strong
115 pillar in the United States economy.

116 And at this time, I have about a minute left, are there any
117 members on our side that would like the remainder? The gentleman
118 from Indiana is recognized.

119 [The statement of Mr. Latta follows:]

120

121 *****COMMITTEE INSERT 1*****

122 Mr. Bucshon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like
123 to comment on the state of Indiana. Obviously this industry is
124 very important to our state, specifically the RV industry in the
125 northern part of our state, and I am pleased to see that last year
126 was the best year that that industry has had since the late 1970s.
127 So I appreciate the hearing and look forward to the testimony.
128 I yield back.

129 Mr. Latta. Thank you very much. The gentleman yields back,
130 and I yield back the balance of my time. And at this time I would
131 like to recognize the gentlelady from Illinois, the ranking member
132 of the subcommittee, for 5 minutes.

133 Ms. Schakowsky. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, let me
134 welcome our colleague, Don Beyer, who is not only the sponsor of
135 the bill that we passed last year, the Outdoor Rec Act, but also
136 the co-chair of the Safe Climate Caucus, and appreciate you being
137 here.

138 Let me just add, Mr. Mullin, I recreate in Indiana. I have
139 a house on the lake, so it is not just RVs, but it is a wonderful
140 place in Michigan City. The outdoor recreation industry
141 is an important part of our economy and outdoor activities are
142 enjoyed by 144 million Americans every year. Outdoor recreation
143 in the United States thrives because of our tremendous natural
144 resources and diverse landscape. But our natural wonders are
145 under threat from a changing climate and destructive policies that

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146 we have seen by this administration and this Congress.

147 Climate change is already having a noticeable impact. In
148 Chicago, we had a snow drought this winter. There was not a single
149 flake of snow in January or February. If we don't act now, winter
150 will become a thing of the past. That means fewer people enjoy
151 winter sports and fewer sales for the outdoor recreation industry.

152 And summer will be worse too. When summers become too hot
153 that discourages Americans from leaving air-conditioned
154 buildings to experience the great outdoors. The actions of the
155 Trump administration and Republicans in Congress are putting
156 outdoor recreation at further risk. President Trump has moved
157 to dismantle the Clean Power Plan to reduce carbon pollution from
158 our power plants. Republicans in the House of Representatives
159 voted to undo limits on methane emissions from drilling on public
160 lands. Instead of investing in the green economy of the future,
161 they are trying to reverse the progress we have already made.

162 Where leadership from the President is lacking, the private
163 sector is stepping up. Those working in the outdoor recreation
164 industry know the real economic impact of our changing climate
165 and they have been leaders in the fight against global climate
166 change. In November, REI and Columbia joined 1,000 other
167 companies on a letter to President Trump calling for
168 implementation of the historic Paris climate agreement. That
169 letter stated, quote, failure to build a low carbon economy puts

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170 American prosperity at risk, but the right action now will create
171 jobs and boost U.S. competitiveness.

172 The success of the outdoor recreation industry relies on
173 protecting the outdoors starting with our public lands.
174 Yesterday, the Trump administration took first steps to undermine
175 protection for our public lands. I joined with Democratic
176 colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Natural
177 Resources Committee to call on the Department of the Interior to
178 explain its review of the Antiquities Act. I hope our Republican
179 colleagues will join us in efforts to make sure that our public
180 lands remain protected.

181 I want to thank all of our witnesses for your work to promote
182 outdoor recreation and to protect our environment, and I look
183 forward to hearing from you as we work to ensure that future
184 generations can enjoy America's unparalleled outdoor spaces.

185 I have a minute left. I don't know if anyone would like it.
186 Yes, Congresswoman Dingell, I yield to you.

187 [The statement of Ms. Schakowsky follows:]

188

189 *****COMMITTEE INSERT 2*****

190 Mrs. Dingell. Thank you, Ranking Member Schakowsky.
191 Outdoor recreation is not only a driver for Michigan's economy
192 it is a way of life. In my state everyone heads up north to go
193 camping, skiing, fishing, or John Dingell's case, hunting. But
194 I can tell you it wasn't always like that. To give you one
195 example, from 1946 to 1948, 5.9 million gallons of oil products
196 were released annually into the Detroit River. It was one of the
197 most polluted rivers in the country.

198 Pollution was killing thousands of water fowl every year and
199 threatening the local walleye and perch population. It was a drag
200 on the economy. Today, the river is now home to the Detroit River
201 International Wildlife Refuge, our country's only international
202 refuge. The refuge is a huge driver of our local economy and is
203 home to 30 species of waterfowl, 117 kinds of fish, and over 300
204 species of birds, a huge turnaround in the not-so-distant past.

205 I mentioned the walleye population that was threatened.
206 Today, the river is part of the Walleye Capital of the World with
207 anglers from across the country coming to the region. It didn't
208 happen by accident. It happened because we passed laws like the
209 Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act,
210 established the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and dedicated
211 significant resources to cleaning up our air and our water.

212 As we discuss the impact of our outdoor recreation on our
213 economy, I hope the committee will remember the story of the

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214 Detroit River and will protect the Clean Water Act and will
215 strongly support federal investments in cleanup and conservation.
216 It not only helps our environment, it helps our economy as well.
217 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

218 [The statement of Mrs. Dingell follows:]

219

220 *****COMMITTEE INSERT 3*****

221 Ms. Schakowsky. And I yield back.

222 Mr. Latta. Thank you very much. The gentlelady yields
223 back. And at this time, the chairman of the full committee, the
224 gentleman from Oregon, is not here, but when he arrives we will
225 recognize him for his opening statement. And at this time, the
226 chair will recognize for 5 minutes the gentleman from New Jersey,
227 the ranking member of the full committee, for 5 minutes.

228 Mr. Pallone. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today's hearing is
229 on the effect of outdoor recreation on the U.S. economy. It is
230 an opportunity to celebrate outdoor recreation. Nothing gets
231 families clamoring to be outdoors more than a day at the beach.
232 And in my district with the beautiful beaches of Monmouth County,
233 tourism was up more than five percent in 2016 due to the great
234 weather we had last summer. When tourism increases, our local
235 economy thrives. This hearing also gives us the opportunity to
236 highlight the clear link between the economy and environmental
237 stewardship. Supporting outdoor recreation means taking
238 meaningful action to protect the environment. If we don't take
239 care of our environment the benefits of outdoor recreation to the
240 economy and to the American people will vanish.

241 Severe weather events are increasing, having devastating
242 effects on communities across the country. Superstorm Sandy
243 wrecked shore towns in New Jersey and badly hurt our economy. The
244 storm caused catastrophic property damage, destructive shoreline

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245 erosion, and many deaths. Temperatures are increasing and
246 precipitation patterns are changing. Not only does this affect
247 ski and snowboarding resorts, it leads to water shortages and
248 increases the risk of fires. It also means more heat advisories
249 and air quality warnings, forcing more people to stay indoors and
250 avoid outdoor activities.

251 We are also seeing an increase in vector-borne diseases like
252 Zika, as mosquitoes and ticks migrate northward, increasing
253 health risks and again giving people a reason to stay inside.

254 So at the same time, as we pay tribute to outdoor recreation's
255 positive effects on our economy we would be remiss if we did not
256 acknowledge existing environmental concerns, including climate
257 change, and consider how recent federal policy initiatives could
258 exacerbate those concerns. It is hard to know where to start.

259 Just yesterday, President Trump issued an executive order
260 instructing a review of national monument designations as an
261 attack on the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National
262 Monument designations by Presidents Obama and Clinton and perhaps
263 others. This attack comes despite the fact that counties with
264 protected lands have faster economic growth than those without
265 such protections. Therefore, also yesterday, my colleagues and
266 I wrote to the Interior Secretary seeking to ensure protection
267 of these vital national lands.

268 Then there is the Trump administration and Republican

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269 efforts to slash funding for the EPA, the Department of Interior,
270 and other federal agencies that have a mission to keep our water
271 and air clean and federal lands protected and open to the public.
272 Republicans are also attempting to rollback efforts to curb carbon
273 pollution, exit the Paris agreement, privatize public lands, and
274 allow coal production and oil and gas drilling in national parks.

275 Concerns also have been raised over the decline in
276 international visitors to the United States in response to the
277 administration's travel ban. Thirty five percent of
278 international visitors go to national parks and monuments while
279 in the United States. The administration's actions can seriously
280 harm tourism and the outdoor recreation economy. If we
281 want the outdoor recreation industry to thrive we must protect
282 the land, water, and wildlife resources that are the foundations
283 of outdoor activities. The outdoor recreation economy is
284 dependent on funding for protection of and access to public lands
285 and waters.

286 So while I was pleased that this committee was able to pass
287 the Outdoor Recreation Act last Congress, which elevated the issue
288 of outdoor recreation and gave it the bipartisan support it
289 deserves, I want to stress that there is more work to be done.
290 Damage to the environment leads to damage to outdoor recreation
291 hurting the U.S. economy, so let's work to address the changing
292 climate and protect our shoreline, streams, and federal lands.

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293 Thank you. And I don't think anybody else wants my time so I yield
294 back.

295 [The statement of Mr. Pallone follows:]

296

297 *****COMMITTEE INSERT 4*****

298 Mr. Latta. Well, thank you. The gentleman yields back the
299 balance of his time and that will conclude the member opening
300 statements. The chair would like to remind all members that
301 pursuant to committee rules, all members' opening statements will
302 be made part of the record.

303 Again I want to thank our witnesses for being with us today
304 and taking the time to testify before the subcommittee. Today's
305 hearing will consist of two panels. Our first witness panel for
306 today's hearing will include the Honorable Don Beyer who is the
307 representative from Virginia's 8th District. The gentleman will
308 not be answering questions today from the subcommittee.

309 The second panel of witnesses will have the opportunity to
310 give opening statements followed by a round of questions from the
311 committee members. Once we conclude with the opening statement
312 on the first panel we will take a brief recess for the second panel
313 to be seated. We appreciate you all being with us today, and at
314 this time the gentleman from Virginia's 8th District is now
315 recognized for 5 minutes to give opening statement. Good
316 morning.

317 ?STATEMENT OF HONORABLE DON BEYER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
318 FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

319

320 Mr. Beyer. Good morning. Thank you, Subcommittee Chairman
321 Latta, Ranking Member Schakowsky, for holding this hearing and
322 for inviting me to be here to give testimony on this really
323 important Outdoor Recreation. No one ever said the great
324 indoors. John Muir said everybody needs beauty as well as bread,
325 places to pray in and play in where nature may heal and give
326 strength to body and soul. So beyond their impact on our hearts
327 or minds, our outdoors are powerful economic drivers that give
328 rise to a vast outdoor economy.

329 I have had a long relationship with this outdoor economy.

330 I am glad, Mr. Chairman, you mentioned Outward Bound. I am
331 a 1971 January graduate of Outward Bound in the White Mountains
332 of New Hampshire. I lost 33 pounds in 26 days eating everything
333 I could find. I started section hiking the Appalachian Trail in
334 2002. I was always going to through hike it, but I decided the
335 happy marriage was more important than through hiking the AT. But
336 I am up to 1,481 miles right now, so as long as you guys keep the
337 calendars and the voting schedule okay I will finish in 2020. My
338 legs -- and then I started the Pacific Crest Trail and the
339 Continental Divide Trail.

340 So people like me, the hikers, bikers, climbers, skiers,

341 snowboarders, RV owners, paddle boarders, we spend billions each
342 year getting outside. To reiterate, Chairman, your numbers, 887
343 billion in spending, 124 billion in tax revenue, and almost 8
344 million jobs. And our policies towards public lands should
345 reflect this tremendous economic success.

346 So with Representatives Dave Reichert, Peter Welch, Cathy
347 McMorris Rodgers, and I on the House side, and Senators Gardner
348 and Shaheen on the Senate, we recognize this impact when we
349 introduced the Outdoor Rec Act. Incorporating data on such a
350 sizeable share of the economy will ensure that we adopt policies
351 which will help foster growth and prosperity. You know, without
352 this data we are left to wonder about say the Appalachian Trail's
353 contributions to the GDP.

354 So back to the napkin math. A good pack goes for at least
355 \$200, a good sleeping bag another \$200, an inexpensive one-person
356 tent \$75, durable hiking shoes around \$120, although mine was much
357 higher. A good headlamp \$27, pack liner 45, Swiss Army knife \$16,
358 trekking pole \$70; we will let Jeremy talk about how much a good
359 snowboard costs. None of this will even account for clothing,
360 food, basic first aid, cooking supplies, a sleeping pad, or all
361 the technical weather gear.

362 Over 2,200 miles, a through hiker on the Appalachian Trail
363 will eat at countless small town diners, delis, coffee shops,
364 Pizza Huts, even rent the occasional room for a night off the

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365 trail. And you multiply that times 2,700 successful through
366 hikers a year and you are talking about literally billions of
367 dollars. And though the trail itself is very long, this is just
368 to look at one small portion of our outdoor economy.

369 Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, I believe in the importance
370 of data and measurements. As a businessman you can't manage what
371 you don't measure, and Werner Heisenberg pointed out that anything
372 that we measure we change. So these numbers if we quantify them,
373 it enables us to enact responsible public policy to grow our
374 economy, create jobs, and foster appreciation and enjoyment of
375 our great outdoors. So this is what the Outdoor Rec Act
376 accomplishes by getting the Bureau of Economic Analysis at the
377 Department of Commerce to quantify the value of the outdoor
378 recreation economy.

379 So from the green vistas of the Shenandoah National Park,
380 the boulder fields up on Mount Washington and the ankle-breaking
381 routes on the Hundred-Mile Wilderness in Maine, which I traversed
382 last summer, this nation has been blessed with majestic national
383 bounty. But our public lands are much more than beautiful parks.
384 They are also a source of health both physical and financial and
385 they are an economic engine that must continue to grow.

386 So again, thanks for allowing me to testify on the importance
387 of outdoor recreation. I have raised four kids and now two
388 grandkids on the simple ethic that no child should be left inside.

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389 And I know you have a wonderful panel of witnesses who can
390 reinforce why it is so important for us to pay attention to this
391 enormous economic sector. Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, thank
392 you.

393 [The statement of Mr. Beyer follows:]

394

395 *****COMMITTEE INSERT 5*****

396 Mr. Latta. Well, I want to thank the gentleman for his
397 testimony today. And as you rattled off all the different things
398 and the costs, I will need you to probably talk to my wife to
399 explain what our credit card bill looks like sometimes when I am
400 out buying and why I need it. But I want to thank you again for
401 your testimony and for your love of the outdoors. So thanks for
402 being with us today.

403 At this time that will conclude our first panel, and at this
404 time I would like to ask for our second panel to come up to be
405 seated and we will just take a quick recess as they get their seats.

406 [Whereupon, at 10:26 a.m., the subcommittee recessed, to
407 reconvene at 10:28 a.m., the same day.]

408 Mr. Latta. Well, thanks very much and welcome back. Thank
409 you again for your patience and for all of the time for you being
410 with us today. We now move into our second panel for today's
411 hearing. Each witness will be given 5 minutes for an opening
412 statement followed by a round of questions from our members.

413 For our second panel we have the following witnesses: Ms.
414 Amy Roberts, executive director of the Outdoor Industry
415 Association; Ms. Ginger Mihalik, executive director of the
416 Baltimore Chesapeake Bay Outward Bound School at Outward Bound;
417 Mr. Jeffrey Tooze, the vice president of Global Customs & Trade
418 at Columbia Sportswear; Mr. Marc -- I hope I pronounce your last
419 name correctly, is it Berejka? Berejka, director of Government

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420 and Community Affairs at REI; Mr. Jeremy Jones, founder and
421 president at Protect Our Winters; and Mr. James Landers, vice
422 president of Government Affairs at the Recreation Vehicle
423 Industry Association. Again we appreciate you all being here
424 today.

425 And we will begin our panel with Ms. Roberts and you are now
426 recognized for 5 minutes for your opening statements. And you
427 will see a yellow light comes on, that is the 30-second light,
428 and the red is at the 5-minute mark. But thanks again for being
429 with us today.

430 ?STATEMENTS OF AMY ROBERTS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OUTDOOR INDUSTRY
431 ASSOCIATION; GINGER MIHALIK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BALTIMORE
432 CHESAPEAKE BAY OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL, OUTWARD BOUND; JEFFREY
433 TOOZE, VICE PRESIDENT, GLOBAL CUSTOMS & TRADE, COLUMBIA
434 SPORTSWEAR; MARC BEREJKA, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY
435 AFFAIRS, REI; JEREMY JONES, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, PROTECT OUR
436 WINTERS; AND, JAMES LANDERS, VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT
437 AFFAIRS, RECREATION VEHICLE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

438

439 STATEMENT OF AMY ROBERTS

440

441 Ms. Roberts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the
442 committee, for calling this hearing today and highlighting the
443 important role of the outdoor recreation industry and America's
444 great outdoors on the United States economy. Outdoor Industry
445 Association is the national trade association for suppliers,
446 manufacturers, and retailers and we have more than 1,200 members
447 nationwide.

448

449 Many members of Congress are familiar with our 2012 Outdoor
450 Recreation Economy Report and those numbers have become the gold
451 standard for measuring outdoor recreation's impact on the U.S.
452 economy. Our new economic report released just 2 days ago shows
453 a very strong and growing sector that is critical to America's
economic well-being and the livelihood of Americans. Our 2017

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454 report shows that outdoor recreation contributes \$887 billion in
455 consumer spending annually. This means that Americans spend more
456 on outdoor recreation than on pharmaceuticals and gas and fuels
457 combined.

458 7.6 million American jobs depend on outdoor recreation.
459 More American workers are employed by outdoor recreation than by
460 computer technology, construction, finance, or insurance. As a
461 multidimensional economic sector, outdoor recreation fuels
462 employment in other sectors such as manufacturing, finance,
463 retail, transportation, food service, tourism and travel.

464 Demand for advanced outdoor technical apparel, footwear, and
465 equipment drives innovation and entrepreneurship. It creates
466 jobs for highly skilled workers in diverse fields. The outdoor
467 industry also contributes a combined 125 billion every year in
468 taxes, 60 billion in local and state and 65 billion in federal
469 tax dollars. Unfortunately, outdoor recreation assets reap very
470 little of that through reinvestment back into our shared public
471 lands and waters, the infrastructure needed for the outdoor
472 recreation economy. Businesses in our industry are no
473 different from businesses in other sectors. They rely on
474 certainty that they can have access to adequate infrastructure
475 to plan their investments and grow jobs. The outdoor activities
476 that the outdoor industry represents are as diverse as the
477 companies who make up our industry. From hiking, hunting,

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478 fishing, skiing, biking, surfing, paddling, ATV and off-roading
479 to snowmobiling, camping, boating, climbing, and horseback
480 riding, there is an outdoor activity for everyone.

481 The growth in our sector makes sense and our annual Outdoor
482 Foundation Participation Report shows that outdoor recreation
483 participation grew, adding 1.6 million participants from 2015 to
484 2016. The report also shows that half of all Americans
485 participated in at least one outdoor recreational activity in
486 2016. So that equates to 144 million participants who went on
487 a total of 11 billion outdoor outings and that is a lot of hiking
488 boots and water bottles.

489 Our public lands and waters belong to every American and they
490 are the foundation of our outdoor recreation economy. Preserving
491 access is imperative to enhancing the industry's economic and
492 social impact and ensuring that every American's ability to get
493 outside whether close to home or on a weekend adventure.

494 In order to ensure the growth and success of the outdoor
495 recreation economy, policymakers must protect America's public
496 lands and waters. These assets are foundational to our sector.
497 We ask you to invest in local and federal recreation
498 infrastructure and programs to ensure all Americans have access
499 to public lands and waters, and to promote outdoor recreation as
500 part of a public health policy and national economic discussions.

501 Your committee has been integral in the Outdoor Recreation

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502 Jobs and Economic Impact Act, which passed last year with
503 bipartisan support by unanimous vote, and I think that is
504 something to note that this is a very bipartisan industry. We
505 hope that this official government data will shed light on
506 business and land management policies that can help us continue
507 our trend of growth and success.

508 I want to thank the committee on behalf of the outdoor
509 industry, as the bipartisan REC Act is the first step to elevating
510 awareness about the impact of the outdoor recreation economy. It
511 underscores the imperative for leaders and lawmakers to protect
512 and invest in policies that grow their infrastructure on which
513 outdoor recreation economy is built. Thank you for your time and
514 attention to our growing industry.

515 [The statement of Ms. Roberts follows:]

516

517 *****INSERT 1*****

518 Mr. Latta. Thank you very much, and Ms. Mihalik, you are
519 recognized for 5 minutes.

520 ?STATEMENT OF GINGER MIHALIK

521

522 Ms. Mihalik. Thank you, Chairman Latta and Ranking Member
523 Schakowsky, for holding this hearing today, and good morning to
524 all of the members of the committee. It is an honor to be before
525 you today. My name is Ginger Mihalik and I am proud to represent
526 Outward Bound USA at this hearing. For over 75 years,
527 Outward Bound has educated thousands of students in outdoor
528 classrooms across the United States. I am proud to serve as the
529 executive director of the Baltimore Chesapeake Bay Outward Bound
530 School which is but one of 11 schools. We use the wilderness to
531 provide unparalleled opportunities for discovery, personal
532 growth, self-reliance, teamwork, and compassion. This, paired
533 with our proven curriculum, produces remarkable documented
534 results, strength of character, ability to lead, and a desire to
535 serve.

536 Outward Bound schools in Colorado, California, Maine,
537 Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, New York, North
538 Carolina, Oregon, and Pennsylvania use the power of these amazing
539 places to serve over 40,000 students a year. The programs in each
540 of these schools all teach students to be compassionate, resilient
541 leaders that are equipped with the skills needed to improve
542 themselves and our world.

543 Outward Bound schools design programs to respond to the needs

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544 of their specific community and the needs of the times. For
545 example, locally, my school responded to violence between police
546 and youth. Nationally, Outward Bound has designed a program
547 specifically to address the needs of veterans returning home.

548 For many veterans, returning home can be as stressful as
549 shipping out. Although they are safely removed from the dangers
550 of war, they are also removed from the routine, the sense of
551 purpose, and the camaraderie that their years of service provided.
552 Experience in conflict zones can cause veterans to lose touch with
553 their skills, to lose confidence in themselves, and to disengage
554 from the families and communities that welcome them home.

555 Our week-long Outward Bound Veterans expeditions provide a
556 unique setting with physical and mental challenges which create
557 a sense of purpose and accomplishment while building trust in
558 other members of the expedition. In 2016, we were able to take
559 553 veterans on 47 wilderness expeditions which included
560 everything from rafting in Oregon to backpacking and rock climbing
561 on the Appalachian Trail to dog sledding in Minnesota.

562 Over the course of each trip, veterans work in a group to
563 overcome shared obstacles and achieve shared goals in a non-combat
564 setting which helps to build the skills and connections needed
565 to transition back to life at home. Results of a recent study
566 at the University of Texas showed that our veterans program helps
567 to increase overall mental health, interpersonal relations,

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568 resilience, sense of purpose, and greater interest in personal
569 growth. Many returning veterans are reticent to seek help
570 through traditional mental health avenues and Outward Bound
571 Veterans has proven to be an effective therapeutic alternative.

572 We at Outward Bound share a belief with this subcommittee.
573 Outdoor recreation provides a space for self-discovery. I have
574 witnessed truly remarkable transformations happen among our
575 students in the outdoors. I have watched an inner city youth view
576 the horizon for the first time. I have watched grown men cry at
577 the beauty of a wilderness sunrise. And I have witnessed a
578 veteran who had lost his legs in war find himself and his ability
579 to lead again at the stern of a canoe on the Potomac River.

580 As a double amputee he lost his confidence in what he was
581 able to do and believed that he could never complete an expedition.
582 Once in his canoe he soared. He was the strongest paddler, he
583 quickly found his rhythm in the boat, he had the support of his
584 crew on land, and he ultimately found the confidence he had lost.
585 These experiences are powerful and are impossible to recreate in
586 any other place than the outdoors.

587 Thank you again, Chairman Latta and Ranking Member
588 Schakowsky, for the invitation to be here today. I look forward
589 to answering any questions.

590 [The statement of Ms. Mihalik follows:]

591

592

*****INSERT 2*****

593 Mr. Latta. Thank you very much. And again thanks for being
594 with us today. And Mr. Tooze, you are recognized for 5 minutes
595 for your opening statement.
596

597 ?STATEMENT OF JEFFREY TOOZE

598

599 Mr. Tooze. Chairman Latta, Ranking Member Schakowsky, and
600 members of the subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to
601 testify on matters of importance to the 142 million Americans who
602 recreate outdoors each year and the compelling numbers that you
603 have already shared with us and Amy shared as well from the updated
604 Outdoor Recreation Economy Report released just a couple days ago.

605 I am proud to be here today on behalf of Columbia Sportswear
606 Company, based in the beautiful Pacific Northwest and in the great
607 state of Oregon. I currently serve as vice president of Global
608 Customs and Trade and have been with the company for over 16 years.

609 Columbia Sportswear Company is a true American business
610 success story that parallels the evolution of outdoor recreation
611 as a vital and integral part of American culture and America's
612 economy. What began in 1938 as a small company purchased by a
613 family that had just immigrated from Nazi Germany, it has grown
614 to become a global leader in the outdoor recreation industry with
615 \$2.4 billion in annual sales and supporting over 4,200 jobs across
616 38 states and an additional 2,300 jobs across the globe. In 2016,
617 the company ranked number 882 on the Fortune 1000, and next year
618 the country will celebrate its 20th anniversary as a publicly
619 traded company.

620 While most people are very familiar with our Columbia

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621 Sportswear flagship brand, many are less aware that the company's
622 brand portfolio also includes Mountain Hardwear, SOREL, and
623 prAna. Each of our brands targets specific consumer segments
624 within the outdoor recreation industry. Columbia Sportswear
625 Company's rich heritage features storylines of immigration,
626 entrepreneurship, innovation, and perseverance.

627 Today, the company's four brands and respective 4,200
628 hard-working American employees pursue a single unified mission
629 -- we connect active people with their passions. We do that by
630 designing innovative performance apparel, footwear, and
631 accessories that enable people to enjoy the endless variety of
632 healthy outdoor recreational activities available across this
633 great nation and in any climate, any weather, and any day of the
634 year.

635 We also support the efforts of more than 400 nonprofits
636 around the country that are working to improve access to outdoor
637 spaces and preserve the natural beauty of our parks, trails, and
638 wetlands, so that they will be there for the next generations to
639 enjoy. We pride ourselves on designing products that deliver
640 real performance benefits and at accessible prices that put them
641 within reach of consumers at all income levels.

642 However, unlike many of the other 90 countries where our
643 products are sold, the United States assesses among the highest
644 import tariffs on our categories of products making them more

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645 expensive for U.S. consumers than they would otherwise need to
646 be, and also stifling innovation of new, highly technical and high
647 performance products and hampering our ability to keep our prices
648 within the reach of the broadest consumer base possible. In fact,
649 U.S. duty rates on our products typically range from 7.1 percent
650 to as high as 67-1/2 percent with an overall industry average of
651 approximately 15 percent.

652 These duties in the U.S. date back to the 1930s and are no
653 longer relevant as means to protect manufacturing jobs that
654 migrated to other countries more than 30 years ago. Yet to this
655 day, the apparel and footwear industry and especially the outdoor
656 industry pays a disproportionate share of the U.S. duties. For
657 example, the amount of duties paid by Columbia Sportswear Company
658 in 2016 ranked it 49th out of 375,000 U.S. importers. We would
659 much rather rank 49 on the Fortune 1000.

660 We and all of the thousands of companies in the outdoor
661 recreation industry are trying to expand the market of our
662 products and promote increased outdoor recreation. But we are
663 hindered by these high tariffs and in our ability to invest in
664 more family-wage U.S. jobs such as product innovation, design,
665 development, supply chain operations, digital commerce,
666 marketing, finance, legal, human resources, and several other
667 critical functions of our companies.

668 We encourage Congress to reevaluate and modernize the

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669 outdated and antiquated duty structure in order to bring current
670 with today's global market realities and to help ease the
671 unnecessary cost burden that is being borne by the outdoor
672 recreation industry and American consumers. We are proud to be
673 a leader in the outdoor recreation industry, an industry that
674 embraces values that are foundational to America's heritage, its
675 culture, and to ensuring a thriving future for all Americans.

676 I thank you for the opportunity to testify and I look forward
677 to your questions.

678 [The statement of Mr. Tooze follows:]

679

680 *****INSERT 3*****

681 Mr. Latta. Well, thank you very much for your testimony.
682 And Mr. Berejka, you are recognized for 5 minutes for your opening
683 statement.
684

685 ?STATEMENT OF MARC BEREJKA

686

687 Mr. Berejka. Thank you. Chairman Latta, Ranking Member
688 Schakowsky, members of the subcommittee, again thanks for the
689 chance to testify on behalf of REI Co-op. I am proud to appear
690 alongside my recreation industry colleagues and share the great
691 news about our sector's economic impact.

692 REI was founded almost 80 years ago as a co-op in Seattle
693 when 23 climbers came together to get good deals on climbing axes
694 from Europe and other great gear. Today, REI has 145 stores in
695 36 states, plus over 16 million co-op members across the country.
696 We buy gear and apparel from over 1,000 firms distributed across
697 the United States and we get thousands more Americans into the
698 outdoors with classes, outings, adventure travel trips.

699 If there are two thoughts I want to leave with you today they
700 are these: First, the more we understand about the outdoor
701 sector, the more we can create jobs and opportunity. Second, the
702 outdoors significantly enhances all Americans' quality of live
703 and contributes to a stronger America overall.

704 As a jumping off point on behalf of the co-op's members, let
705 me profoundly thank the committee for passing the Outdoor Rec Act
706 last year. It will ensure that the United States measures our
707 sector's contributions with more authority and more detail. This
708 law, this new law, is foundational to our path forward.

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709 My industry colleagues have spoken to the latest economic
710 assessment. I won't repeat those details. But let me say that
711 in my experience, whenever we share this data, policymakers are
712 hungry to learn how we can use the data for economic development.
713 The outdoor sector has so many positive economic attributes. We
714 are made up of thousands of main street and entrepreneurial
715 businesses. We have prominent brands like REI, but the reality
716 is our jobs are spread across businesses large and small. In
717 rural towns it is often the case that recreation is the economic
718 lifeblood. We are also an innovative sector, and in this
719 country we consider ourselves the hotbed of innovation and outdoor
720 products across the globe. Back in Seattle, REI employs
721 designers, specialists in materials science, specialists in
722 advanced manufacturing. We also buy dozens of hot innovative
723 products from those who are working on outdoor electronics,
724 high-tech apparel, advanced camping gear.

725 We also run a sustainable business. In REI's own operations
726 we work to minimize our environmental impact. Since the year
727 2008, we have grown revenue by 78 percent; over that entire period
728 our energy consumption has gone up by less than 5 percent. We
729 are also now 100 percent powered by renewable energy. We invest
730 in nonprofits, volunteerism, consumer education to protect the
731 public lands because healthy public lands are the infrastructure
732 that our sector relies on.

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733 Policymakers want to learn how to create these innovative,
734 main street, entrepreneurial businesses. For instance, I know
735 of economic development activities bubbling away in Arkansas,
736 Oregon, Washington, and Utah; with data generated by the Rec Act
737 we should be able to develop our economy, our rec economy, even
738 faster, so again thank you for your work on the legislation.

739 We also need to recognize the enormous spillover benefits
740 of outdoor recreation. In some ways, you can think of our sector
741 as adjacent to health care, but at the front end. An increasing
742 body of science shows that time outdoors, whether it is exercising
743 or just rejuvenating, it is good for you. It is low-cost
744 preventive medicine. In some exciting research that REI has
745 backed at Cal Berkeley, people are finding that time outdoors can
746 mitigate PTSD symptoms in returning vets.

747 Our sector also fosters positive community development. We
748 know that towns with great outdoor opportunities attract
749 businesses, not just outdoor businesses but businesses of all
750 types. We know that access to safe green spaces in cities makes
751 neighborhoods more cohesive, strengthens the social fabric. We
752 know that when more people walk and bike to jobs or to transit
753 our transportation networks are more sustainable.

754 Lastly, the outdoors, we should be proud, is also part of
755 healthy childhood development. There is an increasing body of
756 research that shows that kids open their minds in unique ways when

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757 they have outdoor opportunities. All of these attributes in the
758 long run contribute to a healthier economy, healthier people,
759 healthier communities, and a stronger United States of America.

760 We have limited time here today, but REI looks forward to
761 working with the committee. We are fond of saying that united,
762 outside we are united. We look forward to working on these issues
763 in that united spirit.

764 [The statement of Mr. Berejka follows:]

765

766 *****INSERT 4*****

767 Mr. Latta. Thank you very much for your testimony today.
768 And at this time the chair recognizes Mr. Jones for 5 minutes for
769 your opening statement. Thank you for being here.
770

771 ?STATEMENT OF JEREMY JONES

772

773 Mr. Jones. Good morning, Chairman Latta, Ranking Member
774 Schakowsky, and members of the Subcommittee on Digital Commerce
775 and Consumer Protection. My name is Jeremy Jones. I am a
776 professional snowboarder and founder of Protect Our Winters, a
777 nonprofit based in Colorado with over 150,000 members nationwide,
778 and the founder of Jones Snowboards, a snowboard company with \$8
779 million in annual sales.

780 10 years ago I founded Protect Our Winters because I have
781 spent my life in the mountains and I have witnessed the impacts
782 of climate change on our winters firsthand. Our mission is to
783 engage and mobilize the snow sports industry to lead the fight
784 against climate change.

785 The snow sports community deeply understands the threat that
786 climate change poses on its future. Snowpack is now confined to
787 the highest elevations and what should be falling as snow is in
788 fact falling as rain. Our seasons are noticeably shorter. We
789 understand that if we don't act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
790 we will see the end of winter as we know it. We are pleased that
791 the Rec Act passed last year with unanimous bipartisan support,
792 thank you.

793 Today I will speak to the importance of environmental
794 protection to ensure a prosperous future for the outdoor

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795 recreation economy. As the climate continues to warm our
796 winters, the snow sports industry is increasingly vulnerable.
797 According to the Outdoor Industry Association's 2017 Outdoor Rec
798 Economy Report, nationwide the snow sports industry generates 72
799 billion annually and supports 695,000 jobs. That means the snow
800 sports industry is responsible for almost 70,000 more American
801 jobs than our country's extractive industries.

802 Across the United States, average winter temperatures have
803 warmed almost two degrees Fahrenheit since 1895 and that rate of
804 warming has more than tripled since 1970. In the Sierra where
805 I live, the snowpack is projected to decrease up to 70 percent
806 by 2050. Ski resorts have lost over \$1 billion in revenue and
807 up to 27,000 jobs in low snowfall years the last decade. In recent
808 seasons, 50 percent of resorts are both opening late and closing
809 early. By 2010, 88 percent of resorts report utilizing
810 snowmaking to supplement natural snow cover to stay in business
811 which adds an additional 500,000 expense to their annual
812 operations. Unfortunately, climate change will decimate far
813 more than the snow sports industry. Our snowpack will not be
814 sufficient to keep stream temperatures low and warmer rivers will
815 diminish fish habitat, making fishing difficult. In Montana, it
816 is now prohibited to fly fish after 2:00 p.m. in the summer as
817 the waters are too warm. This rule has devastated the fishing
818 and guiding industry. Our rivers will have less water, reducing

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819 stream flow and making waters harder to navigate for kayaks and
820 canoes.

821 These changes are already impacting rural economies
822 nationwide and these are communities in places that you represent.
823 From the Oregon Cascades to the headwaters of the Cheat River,
824 from the Sangre de Cristo Range to the shores of Lake Michigan,
825 they rely on outdoor tourism for economic security.

826 I travel the world for my career. The climate change knows
827 no borders; it is the same story everywhere. Early on, my career
828 took me to Chamonix to ride the Vallee Blanche, a popular glacier
829 run in France. In 1920, they built the train to take you back
830 to town from the bottom of the glacier. As the glacier receded,
831 they put in a chair lift to take you from the end of the glacier
832 to the train.

833 When I first visited in 1990, it was a 20-minute hike from
834 the end of the glacier to the chair lift. Today, it takes an hour
835 to go from the end of the glacier to the chair lift to the train
836 which takes you back to town. We know glaciers are receding, but
837 this is occurring at an alarming rate. In the winter of 2010,
838 I hiked up the grassy slopes of an old ski area in British Columbia
839 with a friend. When I asked him why the resort wasn't open, he
840 said, it just doesn't snow here anymore. He is 30 years old. He
841 has seen winter diminish in his lifetime.

842 Now I call Truckee, California home. As the owner of a

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843 snowboard company, I run many small businesses that depend on a
844 stable climate and snowy winters. With every inconsistent winter
845 our community's economy suffers. Thanksgiving traditionally
846 marked the start of winter. Tourists are now hesitant to make
847 Christmas plans. This shortens our tourism season and the
848 community from local outfitters to restaurants on Main Street to
849 the resort employees pays the price. Snow is our currency.

850 Snowboarding has led me to a life outdoors. Just like
851 farmers and fishermen I have observed these changes daily for the
852 past 30 years. I am now a father. I constantly think about a
853 world my son and daughter will grow up in. Climate change is
854 changing places we play right now. In the future, what will these
855 places look like for my kids? Will they experience a lifetime
856 of snowy winters? I am deeply concerned about the future of
857 outdoor recreation.

858 In this hearing's announcement, Chairman, you said you look
859 forward to hearing how Congress can support the outdoor recreation
860 economy's growth and viability. I respectfully request that you
861 act on climate and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions to ensure
862 the future and prosperity of outdoor recreation.

863 [The statement of Mr. Jones follows:]

864

865 *****INSERT 5*****

866 Mr. Latta. Mr. Jones, thank you very much for your
867 testimony. And Mr. Landers, you are now recognized for 5 minutes
868 for your opening statement.
869

870 ?STATEMENT OF JAMES LANDERS

871

872 Mr. Landers. Thank you. Batting cleanup today --

873 Ms. Schakowsky. Is your microphone?

874 Mr. Landers. It is. Is that better? Okay. Batting
875 cleanup today, yes, J. Landers. I am with the Recreation Vehicle
876 Industry Association. That is the national trade association
877 representing all recreation vehicles, from the big motor homes
878 all the way down through the whole trailer system including the
879 little pop-ups and the sliding campers that go in the back of a
880 pickup truck.

881 So about a year and a half ago we did our first economic impact
882 study and what we found we were really surprised. We, the RV
883 industry, generates about \$50 billion for the U.S. economy. In
884 that process, we also discovered that we support about 290,000
885 jobs, and honestly, we are creating jobs faster than we can fill
886 them. All right, think about that. Let me take you back a few
887 years before that.

888 So during the Great Recession our industry got crushed. It
889 is a disposable income product, so the unemployment rate in
890 Elkhart, northern Indiana, was about 20 percent. I am happy to
891 report that right now we are at about 3.1 percent which is virtual
892 full employment. So as an example one of my biggest
893 manufacturers, Thor Industries, they are expanding their capacity

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894 at four of their plants; more than that, now they are adding six
895 new factories. Each factory is probably a hundred to 200
896 full-time, well-paying jobs. That is in northern Indiana, Idaho,
897 Oregon, so various states around the country. And I can tell you
898 they are not alone. There are plenty of other RV manufacturers
899 and suppliers that are expanding.

900 So what is really fueling this growth? Several things.
901 Retail and wholesale credit still readily available; interest
902 rates are still very reasonable; consumer sentiment is solid; gas
903 prices steady -- that is nice. U.S. citizens have chosen now to
904 stay home. They are not going abroad as much as they used to be,
905 so staying home and visiting the iconic lands of our country that
906 is where we love to see that.

907 And the last part is the demand is from Baby Boomers. We
908 know there are about 10,000 Baby Boomers retiring every day. And
909 the other side of that is the Millennials. Who knew, right? The
910 Millennials are looking at the convenience, the comfort, all of
911 the amenities in these new RVs, whether it be a motor home or a
912 trailer, and they are all about mobility and that is what we offer.

913 But we really do have some significant challenges. Our
914 research shows that 89 percent of people buy an RV to go camping
915 at some point. So of the 431,000 units that we put into the stream
916 of commerce last year, that means about 383,000 want to go camping
917 at some point and that is part of the problem. I can tell you

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918 now that the RV associated overnight stays in the national park
919 system is declining.

920 In the early and mid-80s, there were about 4.5 million RV
921 related stays at the national campgrounds. We are down to about
922 two million now, so it has been cut more than half. Why? The
923 biggest reason, we have all heard about this in the news,
924 infrastructure, right. The federal land agencies haven't
925 invested in their assets. Campgrounds are in terrible shape,
926 many of them. Marinas need work, the supply stores, the
927 bathhouses, the bathing facilities, they all need attention.
928 What we are really looking at is an Eisenhower-era campground
929 system trying to provide needs for the 21st century recreation
930 vehicle, and it is failing. It is just not working.

931 And as crazy as this sounds, the other big want that we have
932 come to recognize is both Baby Boomers and Millennials want WiFi
933 and broadband. I mean, even in the national parks, you spend the
934 day out hiking and camping and walking, snowmobiling, you come
935 back you want to connect, and especially the young Millennials.
936 The other part of this is that the state campground system and
937 the private campground system have invested in their facilities
938 and so people are choosing to go to the state parks instead of
939 the national parks and they are going to the private campgrounds
940 because they can get the amenities.

941 So what are we going to do about this? Well, the recreation

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942 vehicle industry along with several other, about 13 to 18 other
943 outdoor recreation trade associations formed a new trade group,
944 a new coalition called the Outdoor Recreation Industry
945 Roundtable, and this is the business side. Anything to do with
946 outdoor recreation, it is in this coalition. And what do we want
947 to do? Our charter is really to become a resource and a partner
948 with the federal agencies that deal with outdoor recreation.

949 We want to work with the agencies and Congress on three basic
950 things: ensure reasonable access to all public lands; we want to
951 establish a system of public-private partnerships, and
952 specifically for us of course we are interested in modernizing
953 and expanding the campgrounds; and we also want to encourage the
954 departments to encourage a culture of yes, first, instead of well,
955 maybe that is not really in my job description.

956 So to wrap up, the RV business is looking good. It is strong.
957 All the indications look like 2017 is going to be even a better
958 year, and we look forward to working with our fellow Outdoor
959 Recreation Industry Roundtable partners to work with federal
960 agencies making sure that all outdoor recreation experiences are
961 met and in fact exceeded. Thank you for your time.

962 [Statement of Mr. Landers follows:]

963 *****INSERT 6*****

964 Mr. Latta. Thank you very much for your testimony. I thank
965 all of our witnesses for testifying before the subcommittee today,
966 and I will recognize myself to begin the questions. And if I may,
967 Ms. Roberts, I would like to start with a question to you.

968 First of all, interested in your testimony and all of the
969 statistics that you quoted, especially how things have, really,
970 the exponential number of changes like from 2012 for the industry
971 of \$646 billion and then that changing to, in just 5 years' time,
972 to \$887 billion, and also the \$125 billion in taxes, and just on
973 what we are looking at the industry has generated out there.

974 So I guess when you look at all this information, how does
975 this information that we gather from the Outdoor Rec Act, how is
976 that going to affect the industry as it moves forward and what
977 do you think the role should be that we as policymakers should
978 have then?

979 Ms. Roberts. Thank you for the question, Chairman Latta.
980 The growth in the number between the 2012 report and the 2017
981 report really shows the growth in our industry over time. The
982 other thing that occurred is that this report has really become
983 the gold standard for how outdoor recreation is viewed and so we
984 are always approached to add new activity categories, which we
985 did in the report.

986 So, and then the other interesting bit of information is just
987 that the sample size for this report was actually quite a lot

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988 bigger, 70 percent larger than in our 2012 report. And so looking
989 ahead that is actually going to allow us to release data in the
990 next 6 months that shows the economic impact, jobs created, taxes
991 paid at the congressional district level, which I think will be
992 very informative as local communities and as this body and members
993 of Congress think about how do you develop an outdoor recreation
994 economy in your local community.

995 And for us that really means investing in outdoor recreation
996 infrastructure, investing in public lands, ensuring that the
997 facilities are there when Americans get outside to recreate that
998 they have places to go. And I think that is both places to go
999 near their homes so that outdoor recreation is a part of everyone's
1000 lives. Our goal is really to have an outdoor recreation
1001 opportunity within 10 minutes of everyone's homes as well as that
1002 people can aspire for the bigger adventures on the weekends.

1003 So we really are looking for both local policymakers, state
1004 policymakers, and then the federal government to see our economy
1005 as a growth sector as uniquely American. These jobs are not
1006 easily outsourced. We are going to take advantage of our amazing
1007 natural resources that are here in the U.S. and as a way to drive
1008 opportunity for rural communities but also urban areas.

1009 Mr. Latta. Thank you.

1010 Ms. Mihalik, if I could ask a couple of questions for you.
1011 Could you explain the program model that you use for Outward Bound

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1012 to help our veterans and service members as they come back to their
1013 respective communities? And, really, I want to thank you for all
1014 that you are doing for our veterans out there. Thank you.

1015 Ms. Mihalik. Oh, you are welcome. Thank you for the
1016 question. So Outward Bound has a curriculum that has been
1017 developed since 1941 when Outward Bound was founded in Wales, came
1018 to the United States in Colorado in '67, and we have used the same
1019 model that entire time. It has evolved a little bit over time,
1020 but essentially you are taking a group of people, and it could
1021 be veterans, it could be youth, it could be any adult, out into
1022 a wilderness setting and there is an intentional progression that
1023 the crew goes through in order to learn new skills.

1024 With veterans it can be a little more unique. Our
1025 instructors receive a lot of additional training on how to deal
1026 with the issues that they are working through, but you take them
1027 through three phases of a course. There is training, main, final,
1028 where you are trying to teach them the skills that they are going
1029 to need out in real life but in a wilderness setting. Things like
1030 communication, how do you support each other; how do you ask for
1031 what you need? The veterans find as they are on these courses
1032 together they get to practice those skills in a setting that is
1033 familiar to them. It is much like being in a war setting. They
1034 are in the trenches with their crew, they get to work through those
1035 skills, and then they learn how to transfer them back to their

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1036 day to day life.

1037 Mr. Latta. Thank you.

1038 Ms. Mihalik. Sure.

1039 Mr. Latta. And if I could turn to you, Mr. Berejka. In your
1040 testimony you mentioned that the outdoor recreation is an
1041 innovative sector. Can you highlight some of the innovations
1042 that come from this space and speak to the advancements in
1043 technologies that are being used to enhance outdoor recreation
1044 gear and apparel?

1045 Mr. Berejka. Sure. In fact, my buddy Jeff, here, probably
1046 has an example on the chair. They have invented a water repellent
1047 jacket that uses recycled materials and that imposes limited harm
1048 on the environment. One of the things we are very conscientious
1049 of as we produce these products is not just how we assemble them
1050 but what their end of life is. And so REI awarded Columbia our
1051 first ever Root Award for inventing the most sustainable, water
1052 repellent jacket we have ever seen. That is just one example.

1053 Mr. Latta. Well, thank you very much. And my time has
1054 expired and at this time I will recognize the gentlelady from
1055 Illinois, the ranking member of the subcommittee, for 5 minutes.

1056 Ms. Schakowsky. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to take
1057 this opportunity, today is take your daughters to work today, and
1058 I just wanted to introduce my adopted daughter for the day, Elena
1059 Tate. Stand up for 1 second, okay. Girls Inc., behind me, and

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1060 also acknowledge Lizzy Carroll who is here. Lizzy. Jeff
1061 Carroll, our chief of staff for the Democrats, his daughter.
1062 Thank you, Lizzy. Thank you, kids. I also wanted to
1063 apologize, although he is not here, to Mr. Bucshon who I called
1064 Mr. Mullin earlier, my colleague in Indiana next to where I have
1065 a home and next to my district. So let me talk a little bit
1066 about the environment -- and I appreciate the emphasis on
1067 environment that we heard from everyone -- from the standpoint
1068 very much of economics in our country which I think sometimes we
1069 don't think about. I was really interested in the statistics.
1070 Ms. Roberts and Mr. Jones talked a bit about that, all of you,
1071 really, about the contribution to our economy that is really
1072 dependent on our environment and then concerns about the changing
1073 environment. And so I want to turn to our witnesses and I want
1074 to start -- Mr. -- now I am going to try it. I have Berejka.
1075 Mr. Berejka. Berejka.
1076 Ms. Schakowsky. Berejka, okay.
1077 Mr. Berejka. It is a good Chicago Polish name.
1078 Ms. Schakowsky. Okay. I should know, Schakowsky, I should
1079 know that but --
1080 Mr. Berejka. Polish Lithuanian.
1081 Ms. Schakowsky. Yeah. So how concerned is your company
1082 then about the effect of climate change on the future stability
1083 and economic growth of the industry and your business in

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1084 particular?

1085 Mr. Berejka. I think REI Co-op identified climate change
1086 as a business risk probably 10 to 15 years ago. And so like the
1087 rest of the panelists, we are concerned that with the changing
1088 climate comes hotter, longer summers as well as shorter winters
1089 and that can affect the economic vitality of the industry for sure.

1090 Ms. Schakowsky. Mr. Tooze, I wondered if you wanted to talk
1091 about that at all. I know you were talking about tariffs and I
1092 want to talk about the climate.

1093 Mr. Tooze. Sure. Well, thank you. I appreciate that
1094 Ranking Member. I think one way, ours is pretty easy, you know,
1095 we make products to adapt to all these changes. We produce in
1096 over 90 countries around the world and a multitude of climates
1097 and we rely on the associations and what not to help address the
1098 things in a more macro level and then we make sure we protect our
1099 consumers.

1100 We kind of have this, we keep our consumers warm, dry, cool,
1101 and protected, and then I think, you know, but we also have to
1102 align our values with our consumers. Marc was just talking about
1103 this jacket here which we have won lots of awards on and it is
1104 actually waterproof-breathable, not just water resistant.

1105 Ms. Schakowsky. Does it come in any other colors? Just
1106 asking, never mind.

1107 Mr. Tooze. It is actually made from 21 water bottles. It

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1108 saved 13, one jacket saves 13 gallons of water because there is
1109 no dye using the process. It is PFC-free and it is still
1110 waterproof-breathable, very protective, and I think it is just
1111 a good -- and it is recyclable. So it is a good showcase of what
1112 we try to do as a brand to adapt to that.

1113 Ms. Schakowsky. Thank you. I wanted to -- many of the
1114 business leaders in our outdoor recreation industry recognize the
1115 threat of climate change and since 2013 more than 1,000 companies
1116 have signed the climate declaration as a call to action. And Mr.
1117 Chairman, I would like to request unanimous consent to introduce
1118 a copy of this declaration for the record including a list of the
1119 signatories from the outdoor industry.

1120 Let me just say one sentence here that I thought I marked.
1121 There must be a coordinated effort to combat climate change with
1122 America taking the lead here at home. Leading is what we have
1123 always done and by working together, regardless of politics, we
1124 will do it again. And I know the Outdoor Industry Association
1125 is listed here and I am hopeful that -- are all of you on this?
1126 I don't know. Anybody, okay.

1127 I am just about out of time, but I did want to say to Mr.
1128 Jones, so are you concerned by efforts to slash funding for the
1129 Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Interior, and
1130 other federal agencies with important missions regarding outdoor
1131 recreation?

1132 Mr. Jones. It is incredibly disheartening. I feel like,
1133 you know, the EPA, for example, is a great example of an agency
1134 formed by a Republican with bipartisan support and to see this
1135 become a political issue, I think, has been a huge problem. And
1136 we are really at this 11th hour. We have the solutions and we
1137 just need to embrace them and we need bipartisan support to do
1138 that. And at a time when the EPA couldn't be more important, to
1139 see 15,000 jobs potentially get slashed is really scary.

1140 Ms. Schakowsky. Thank you. I yield back.

1141 Mr. Latta. Thank you. And, without objection, the
1142 gentlelady's letter will be accepted for the record.

1143 [The information follows:]

1144

1145 *****COMMITTEE INSERT 6*****

1146 Mr. Latta. At this time the chair recognizes the gentleman,
1147 the vice chairman from Mississippi, for 5 minutes for questions.
1148 Thank you.

1149 Mr. Harper. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to each of you
1150 for being here. And this is such an important issue in every
1151 state, it is very important in my home state of Mississippi. We
1152 have some great homegrown success stories, companies such as
1153 Drake, and others like Longleaf and Mossy Oak that have really
1154 done a great job in this area for consumers. And Ms. Mihalik,
1155 I want to also thank you for the work with veterans. That is very
1156 important.

1157 And for me, personally, as a parent of a child with special
1158 needs who is 27 and has intellectual disabilities, has Fragile
1159 X syndrome, this is an important area too for us. And so we look
1160 at ways and encourage you as we look at things how we make sure
1161 that they are included in your calculations on doing these things.

1162 So at this time, Ms. Roberts, can I ask you a couple of
1163 questions if I may, what role do you believe that we play as
1164 policymakers to ensure continued growth and success of outdoor
1165 recreation?

1166 Ms. Roberts. Thank you for the question, Mr. Vice Chairman.
1167 You know, I do really think it is, you know, a few things. One
1168 is ensuring that we keep our public lands public and so that they
1169 are accessible by all Americans and Americans have the opportunity

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1170 to go out and enjoy our natural resources. I think it is funding,
1171 providing adequate funding for the land management agencies, so
1172 we do support full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
1173 And then adequate funding so that our lands are properly managed
1174 and that when Americans go out and they enjoy, whether it is to
1175 a national park, the BLM lands, Forest Service lands, they have
1176 an opportunity to have a great experience.

1177 To Jeff's comments specific to really the business side, it
1178 really is looking at some of the outdated tariff codes and ensuring
1179 that our products are properly classified and that we do look at
1180 reducing tariffs on products that are no longer made in the U.S.
1181 so that consumers have the opportunity to access our products,
1182 our products remain affordable, and I do think that would help
1183 drive the innovation that Columbia Sportswear, REI, other
1184 companies are doing in terms of product innovation that is both
1185 on the sustainability side, some of the areas that Jeff talked
1186 about, as well as innovation around just our own operations. So
1187 those are some of the things that I feel Congress can do.

1188 Mr. Harper. Great, thank you very much. And Mr. Landers,
1189 I agree that having enjoyed traveling with friends on occasion
1190 in a motor coach or a motor home, it is great unless you are the
1191 driver. If you are getting to ride on one it is a great
1192 experience, great opportunity.

1193 And the infrastructure issue is an important one that we face

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1194 in this country, so are you seeing development, and I know your
1195 concern is the outdated infrastructure within our national parks
1196 and certainly state parks. Are you seeing development on the
1197 private side that is maybe compensating for that and accounting
1198 for any of the reduced numbers that you stated?

1199 Mr. Landers. Yeah, absolutely. I mean, when you think
1200 about a private campground that is an entrepreneur who has started
1201 that business, they are going to invest in that business to get
1202 bigger, get better. I would venture to say that almost every
1203 private campground has WiFi right now and has broadband. So, and
1204 if you shift to the states, we know that some states are investing
1205 heavily in their park system because it is a cash cow. It can
1206 be.

1207 Mr. Harper. Sure.

1208 Mr. Landers. So yeah, for the states that are doing the
1209 right thing, the privates are all over this, and unfortunately
1210 at the national level we need --

1211 Mr. Harper. They need help.

1212 Mr. Landers. They need help. They need attention.

1213 Mr. Harper. Right.

1214 Mr. Landers. And really one of the biggest solutions, the
1215 potential solution is offering public-private partnerships
1216 where, you know, we can do things together at a faster pace.

1217 Mr. Harper. Thank you.

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1218 Mr. Berejka, if I could ask you. Did I come close on the
1219 pronunciation?

1220 Mr. Berejka. You did. We are honing in on it.

1221 Mr. Harper. All right, that is close. We are in the right
1222 ZIP code.

1223 Mr. Berejka. Yeah, absolutely.

1224 Mr. Harper. In your testimony you touch on the spillover
1225 benefits of outdoor recreation. Can you explain the benefits
1226 American consumers and participants will see as well as how
1227 outdoor recreations help other economic sectors?

1228 Mr. Berejka. Sure. To elaborate on a couple points in the
1229 testimony, one, like the folks at Outward Bound we are very excited
1230 about the health benefits of time outdoors and in particular time
1231 outdoors as it might address mental health needs. The research
1232 we are funding in California is looking at PTSD sufferers, and
1233 PTSD sufferers in particular enjoy enormous reductions in stress
1234 and anxiety from outdoor experiences.

1235 I like to think of getting folks like PTSD sufferers access
1236 to more hiking and biking and fewer pills and treadmills. If the
1237 American taxpayers spend less on pills for PTSD sufferers and more
1238 on getting them hiking, we will all be better off.

1239 Mr. Harper. Thank you very much. I appreciate each of your
1240 testimony. I yield back.

1241 Mr. Latta. Thank you very much. The gentleman yields back

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1242 and the chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, the
1243 ranking member of the full committee, for 5 minutes.

1244 Mr. Pallone. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a coastal
1245 district, so the outdoor recreation industry is very important
1246 to the communities I represent. So my questions are of Ms.
1247 Roberts. Your organization just released a report that
1248 highlights the role of beaches and beach-going activities for
1249 state and local economies. Could you just briefly share some of
1250 your findings on the economic role of the outdoor recreation
1251 industry for beach communities?

1252 Ms. Roberts. Thank you for the question. As I mentioned
1253 earlier, one of the areas of growth in the report from the 2012
1254 report to 2017 were really the water-based activities that we
1255 added. So we added sailing, surfing, other activities like that,
1256 and I think some of the reasons behind why we decided to add those
1257 activities has been the growth in those activities, the popularity
1258 of those activities.

1259 The broadening, the crossover between some of the
1260 water-based sports in the past, I think one thing you have really
1261 seen is the growth of stand-up paddle. And so we are starting
1262 to see more accessibility into those types of water-based
1263 activities from the beginner to the more advanced surfing and that
1264 was the decision making behind our process in terms of adding those
1265 activities.

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1266 And I think the thing there as well is just as these
1267 communities along the oceans start to transition economies and
1268 think about, you know, how do you grow your economy in the 21st
1269 century, we are starting to see more and more communities invest
1270 in tourism and recreation infrastructure that support Americans
1271 coming to those areas to recreate.

1272 Mr. Pallone. Well, thank you. Now in my district we are
1273 fortunate to have the Gateway National Recreation Area which
1274 includes Sandy Hook, which is a seven-mile stretch of coastline
1275 that hosts over two million visitors to its public beaches every
1276 year. According to the National Park Service, Gateway National
1277 Recreation Area generated more than \$247 million in economic
1278 output in 2016.

1279 But the problem is the sea level is already rising at Sandy
1280 Hook and predictions call for as much as six feet of sea level
1281 rise by the end of the century. Modeling by the Union of Concerned
1282 Scientists shows that with that much rise most of Sandy Hook will
1283 flood every day, and that is just one example. So Ms. Roberts,
1284 what might the economic effects be for the outdoor recreation
1285 industry from rising sea levels and loss of coastline from climate
1286 change?

1287 Ms. Roberts. Thank you. We are concerned about that and
1288 we do feel that Congress should take action to enact policy
1289 instruments that combat climate change. At the same time, we are

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1290 working at the state and local level to talk with local
1291 policymakers, state legislatures about what can be done. So I
1292 think there is both enacting policy instruments that reduce
1293 carbon, and I think it is also incentivizing cleaner economies,
1294 solar, these other fewer carbon emission producing energy
1295 development. So those are things we are looking at.

1296 I would say the other thing is that our industry is also doing
1297 its part in terms of our own operations. So whether or not that
1298 is producing more sustainable products, it is also thinking about
1299 our own operations as we transport product, as we build
1300 distribution centers. So the discussion within the outdoor
1301 industry is both how do we reduce our own carbon footprint, but
1302 also how do we advocate for climate policies that transition our
1303 economy to a cleaner sector?

1304 Mr. Pallone. Well, thank you. Let me ask you one more
1305 question. Climate change is not the only threat to our natural
1306 environment and outdoor recreation. In the first 100 days of the
1307 Trump presidency we have seen numerous attacks on the environment
1308 that threaten public health, ecosystems, and the outdoor
1309 recreation industry. In February, President Trump signed the
1310 repeal the Stream Protection Rule and this rule had protected
1311 streams near surface coal mining operations, like mountaintop
1312 removal mines, from heavy metal contamination. What are some
1313 popular outdoor recreation activities that make use of rivers and

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1314 streams, and can poor water quality impair those activities or
1315 make them less popular?

1316 Ms. Roberts. Thank you. Yeah, the activities that we have
1317 highlighted in our report would include any water-based
1318 activities, so it could be paddling, canoeing, and then of course
1319 fly fishing. So those are some of the activities that use streams
1320 and are dependent on clean waters.

1321 Mr. Pallone. All right. I mean, the rule that Trump
1322 repealed would have protected or restored nearly 6,000 miles of
1323 streams and 52,000 acres of forest over 2 decades, and those areas,
1324 in my opinion, have immeasurable ecological value and huge
1325 economic value as well. So thank you. I yield back.

1326 Mr. Latta. Thank you. The gentleman yields back and the
1327 chair now recognizes the gentleman from Indiana for 5 minutes.

1328 Mr. Bucshon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Landers, in your
1329 testimony you said that in 2016 the RV industry and we talked
1330 before, has the best year since the late 1970s. So why do you
1331 think the industry had such a remarkable comeback and what do you
1332 kind of attribute that success to?

1333 Mr. Landers. Thank you, Dr. Bucshon. Well, I elaborated
1334 on some of the points, the interest rates are low and -- but, you
1335 know, one of the other portions that I didn't mention was the fact
1336 that we have a 20-year old advertising program called Go RVing.
1337 And while it is focused on some television and video, we are now

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1338 all over the social media platforms. And again, this is driving
1339 not only the Baby Boomers, but we are opening up all sorts of
1340 markets with the Hispanic market, with the African American market
1341 and the Millennials and the Gen Xers. So honestly, we cannot
1342 build recreation vehicles fast enough to satisfy the demand.

1343 Mr. Bucshon. So you think it is probably, really, a big
1344 cultural shift on most in thought process of -- in the 1970s, I
1345 mean we had campers and every weekend we went to the lake. But
1346 I haven't done that in my own life, I had other things to do, but
1347 maybe my kids are starting to do that right? So maybe people are
1348 recognizing again the benefits of being out there and how
1349 enjoyable it is.

1350 Mr. Landers. Right. When you look at the campers from back
1351 in the '70s and '80s to the ones now, I mean now you are pushing
1352 a button and virtually both entire walls can expand, so some of
1353 the campsites that are in the campgrounds are not wide enough any
1354 longer and some of the vehicles are longer so you need the
1355 pull-through sites instead of trying to back something in there.

1356 I think that on the whole recreation vehicles now offer all
1357 of the conveniences that you have in your house. Some of these
1358 vehicles are extremely expensive, but most of them are really very
1359 affordable. And what we are finding is that more people are
1360 deciding to stay home. You know, if you went and you took a family
1361 of four and you flew somewhere you are paying for the airfare and

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1362 then you are renting a car and then you are eating at a restaurant
1363 every day and you are staying at hotels and you have all that in
1364 a recreation vehicle.

1365 Mr. Bucshon. And leading into that then, are there any
1366 barriers, you know, governmental barriers or other things that
1367 you see in the future as it relates to whether it is technological
1368 advances or other things that you see that Washington, D.C. can
1369 potentially be helpful to you all in your industry to further
1370 advance and expand your business?

1371 Mr. Landers. You know, when you ask that because it was just
1372 last week we ended up having a meeting with NHTSA, because my own
1373 concern is the autonomous vehicle industry is moving along very
1374 quickly and I personally feel like we are going to be there before
1375 you know it and I didn't want the industry to get caught behind.

1376 So invariably we get caught up in automobile, truck, bus,
1377 housing legislation regulations, but it is time for us to kind
1378 of get out a little bit further in front of, you know, everybody
1379 has this image of wouldn't it be fabulous to get in an RV and then
1380 preprogram it and then go in the back and have a sandwich and watch
1381 the game?

1382 Mr. Bucshon. That would be nice.

1383 Mr. Landers. That would be nice. We are not quite there
1384 yet but we are on the way, and we want to work with the
1385 Congress, with NHTSA, with everybody to make sure we have --

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1386 Mr. Bucshon. Good. And that is appropriate. I am glad you
1387 said that because this subcommittee has been having some hearings
1388 on autonomous vehicles and so the inclusion of your industry in
1389 that overall discussion may be something that comes out of this
1390 hearing and I appreciate that. So Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

1391 Mr. Latta. Thank you very much. And the chair now
1392 recognizes the lady from the Great Lakes State for 5 minutes.

1393 Mrs. Dingell. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have been on a
1394 camper. We lived in -- and my best friend now, whose husband owns
1395 hockey teams and started -- will only travel by recreational
1396 vehicle, and I am going to tell her I made that point today.

1397 But Michigan has got over 200,000 snowmobile trail permits
1398 and expenditures on snowmobiling equipment which totals \$235
1399 million. We have more hunters than any other state, and Lord
1400 knows I am married to one of them, and they contribute -- we don't
1401 agree on that one issue. And they contribute 304 million to local
1402 economies while hunting. That is a good thing. We have 3.9
1403 million acres of state forest, 150 state forest campgrounds,
1404 thousands of miles of trails, 7,500 hundred miles of river, and
1405 hundreds of miles of Great Lakes shoreline. So we obviously agree
1406 with all of you and care deeply. Certain policies, we are worried
1407 about what is happening here in Washington though and how we make
1408 sure that we are not putting the outdoor tourism economy in
1409 jeopardy.

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1410 Ms. Roberts, in your testimony you state that protecting
1411 America's public lands and waters are essential to ensuring the
1412 growth and success of the outdoor recreation economy. Would you
1413 agree that investing in conservation programs such as the Great
1414 Lakes Restoration Initiative has a positive impact on jobs?

1415 Ms. Roberts. Thank you for the question. Yes, we would
1416 agree with that.

1417 Mrs. Dingell. So the President's budget proposal looks to
1418 eliminate \$300 million in spending on the GLRI. Would zeroing
1419 that out budget hurt us both economically and environmentally?

1420 Ms. Roberts. We are concerned with proposed cuts to the
1421 Department of Interior and the Department of Ag, the Forest
1422 Service. Obviously we are interested in the Forest Service
1423 recreation. We would also encourage Congress to think about how
1424 we are currently funding wildfires and we think about changing
1425 that and there are several bills that have bipartisan support that
1426 would ensure that we don't take away from our recreational
1427 accounts to fund wildfires. So we do feel that adequate funding
1428 by Congress is important to helping our economy continue to grow.

1429 Mrs. Dingell. And could be hurt if we didn't.

1430 Ms. Roberts. Yes.

1431 Mrs. Dingell. Thank you.

1432 Mr. Jones, in your testimony you state that climate change
1433 will decimate not only your industry but other industries as

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1434 snowpacks will not be sufficient to keep stream temperatures low.
1435 What can Congress do to help mitigate manmade climate change, and
1436 then I am going to get political and really say should we remain
1437 in the Paris agreement?

1438 Mr. Jones. Yeah. I mean, I guess to end where you, or start
1439 where you ended, I mean we need bipartisan support for real action
1440 on climate. We believe it is a jobs producer, acting on climate.
1441 To not be in the Paris agreement along with 195 other countries
1442 would be very bad.

1443 So in short, I mean, our goal is to have real action from
1444 our elected officials to act on climate, and it is very hard to
1445 -- I feel like we look really short term right now and we are behind
1446 and we are losing jobs because of it and this issue is not going
1447 away. It is astonishing. I talked about this ski area in my
1448 testimony, in Canada where this guy had basically lost his ski
1449 area to climate change. It no longer snows and that was 12 years
1450 ago. And I thought like, well, I don't have an issue in my town
1451 on that. We have never not been able to open. And we are just
1452 coming off of a 4-year drought where we virtually couldn't open
1453 the bottom of the mountain, so real definitive action on climate
1454 at a policy level would be huge.

1455 Mrs. Dingell. Thank you. I only have a few seconds.

1456 So, Ms. Roberts, I am going to ask you about the Land and
1457 Water Conservation Fund which was created in the '60s, probably

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1458 by somebody I know and loved, which has provided recreation
1459 access, secured key, wildlife habitat, and protected the very
1460 outdoor resources that we are talking about today -- hunting,
1461 fishing, hiking.

1462 Can you tell me what your companies are saying and how you
1463 view the connection between that key program and the economic
1464 contributions your industry makes, please, in 9 seconds?

1465 Ms. Roberts. Sure. Thank you for the question. We had
1466 about 120 of our industry executives in town over the last couple
1467 days and advocating on behalf of the Land and Water Conservation
1468 Fund was a major effort and a major ask in all of those meetings.

1469 Mrs. Dingell. Thank you.

1470 Mr. Chairman, I still want to tell you, my favorite thing
1471 when I want to escape from this place, which is more often lately,
1472 is floating down the river in the inner tube, which none of you
1473 talked about and I did every single day as a kid. And your parents
1474 would kill you for like going out on the buoy and waiting for the
1475 freighter and going in the wake. It was great.

1476 Mr. Latta. Well, thank you very much. The gentlelady
1477 yields back and the chair now recognizes the gentleman from
1478 Pennsylvania for 5 minutes.

1479 Mr. Costello. Well, picking up where Mrs. Dingell went off,
1480 whether it is her floating down the river or a lot of people wanting
1481 to throw us all in the river, I think there is probably some

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1482 similarities there. But disposing of the levity there, let me
1483 ask a question of the panel with a little bit of context.

1484 Outdoor recreation is so diverse in scope and it means so
1485 much and I think that that is why it is so important to our country
1486 because people look at it and utilize it in many different ways.
1487 A good example in my district, the Schuylkill River National
1488 Heritage Area, for many years a portion of the Schuylkill River
1489 that runs through my district from Valley Forge National Park west
1490 towards the central part of the state had fallen victim to neglect.

1491 But through efforts of dedicated community leaders and
1492 volunteers, the area was transformed. Today, that National
1493 Heritage Area generates nearly 590 million annually and supports
1494 over 6,000 jobs. The resurgence of the health of the Schuylkill
1495 River and the connected landscape is a core reason outdoor
1496 recreation is flourishing in communities in my district.

1497 The commitment to revitalize the natural resources through
1498 the restoration of the Schuylkill River and the Schuylkill River
1499 Trail has given the region improved recreational assets and has
1500 been a trigger for economic development whether it is the free
1501 bike sharing program in the state of Pennsylvania, which was one
1502 of the first in the state, or kayak rental shops, fishing stores,
1503 restaurants, and hotels which have sprung up as a result.

1504 There is a host of public policy considerations which I would
1505 like you to share with me as to what we need to focus on as

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1506 policymakers. Community planning, infrastructure -- we passed
1507 a water infrastructure bill which I think is very critical.
1508 Certain environmental protections, Ms. Dingell mentioned the LWCF
1509 which I and many others are strong supporters of from a
1510 recreational resource perspective. Mr. Bucshon mentioned how
1511 technology is playing an increasing role in the outdoor
1512 recreational movement, the role of riparian corridor buffers.

1513 And so here is my question. The multidimensional nature of
1514 outdoor recreation does fuel employment in a variety of sectors.
1515 Can you explain the positive ripple effects you see with the
1516 outdoor recreational industry as a catalyst for economic
1517 resurgence?

1518 And secondly, we talk about leveraging public-private
1519 partnerships; that can mean many different things. But with
1520 respect to your companies, organizations, and trade associations,
1521 how have you worked to employ this dual cooperation given the
1522 unique nature of the outdoor recreational opportunities in any
1523 given congressional district and what can we do to strengthen
1524 that? Related to that, what are the challenges that we face to
1525 make sure that we are providing an enhanced experience moving
1526 forward for all constituents? So I will keep it open-ended and
1527 ask all of you to just weigh in on that topic. Thanks.

1528 Mr. Landers. Well, it sounds like there was an investment
1529 in the river and the surrounding areas and it has turned into a

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1530 job-creating entity and an enjoyment for your local citizens. So
1531 what we are advocating as part of the Outdoor Recreation Industry
1532 Roundtable is that yes, these are assets and when invested in them
1533 it is a cash cow. It is a positive return. So we are trying to
1534 work with Interior and Agriculture to encourage them to work with
1535 us and generate some public-private partnership opportunities to
1536 get a better return.

1537 So I would tell you one quick story that I heard over the
1538 last couple days. The Blue River in Colorado is part of the Forest
1539 Service campground inventory and they ended up -- it was making
1540 money and it was great, but they ended up closing that whole
1541 campground because of the beetle kill. So instead of investing
1542 money to clear the trees that were causing potential danger they
1543 decided to close the whole thing.

1544 So not only did they lose the revenue, they lost the ability
1545 to -- they also said, oh, look, we have addressed part of the
1546 backlog by taking it off our books. So it was a double whammy.
1547 So investing in facilities and using public-private partnerships
1548 seems to be the way to go.

1549 Mr. Berejka. I will weigh in here also on the importance
1550 of public-private partnerships. Jeff spoke to how Columbia
1551 supports hundreds of not-for-profits. REI likewise supports
1552 hundreds of not-for-profits. Some overlap there, but between the
1553 two companies, you know, we are probably north of 500 different

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1554 not-for-profits that we support around the country. Those
1555 not-for-profits aren't just organizations they are people, and
1556 inside the organizations those people are extremely passionate
1557 about whether it is floating down a river or going on an RV trip.

1558 And so those nonprofit leaders can often find -- and it sounds
1559 like this was your experience on the Schuylkill -- they can find
1560 the best places for people to recreate and then with their
1561 volunteerism sort of be that leading edge of recreation
1562 infrastructure. But once they are at the leading edge, there is
1563 a role for government to come in and provide support for the
1564 infrastructure. I think all of us agree that recreation assets
1565 in today's day and age are infrastructure and it is an important
1566 role for government to be there as you consider infrastructure
1567 packages to include outdoors as infrastructure.

1568 Mr. Costello. That is a good point. Thank you. Mr.
1569 Chairman, I yield back.

1570 Mr. Harper. [Presiding.] The gentleman yields back. The
1571 chair now recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Green, for 5
1572 minutes for questions.

1573 Mr. Green. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I would like to
1574 thank both Chairman Latta and Ranking Member Schakowsky for
1575 holding today's hearing.

1576 Outdoor recreation including hiking, fishing, hunting are
1577 quintessential American traditions and I am glad that we are

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1578 taking time today to recognize the economic impact that this
1579 industry has and examine with our panel the benefits of the
1580 industry towards conservation. I have a very urban district in
1581 Houston, but all of us want to get out in the country because we
1582 are in a big city.

1583 And my experience is I learned to hunt with my father-in-law
1584 and fish, and my son and I did the same thing. And if I could
1585 show it to you, my son and two of our grandsons in South Texas
1586 actually got an alligator last weekend, and it shows my two
1587 grandsons, one of them straddling the alligator. I just hope he
1588 didn't use my grandsons as bait. So outdoors is important, and
1589 in Texas come late November, early December, we see lots of RVs
1590 going to South Texas where my son and his family actually live.
1591 And there are a lot of winter Texans down there that enjoy the
1592 -- so it is really important outdoor sports around the country,
1593 but particularly where I come from.

1594 In the early part of last century, many wildlife species were
1595 dwindling in numbers around our country. And at the behest of
1596 the firearms industry, Congress imposed an excise tax on the sale
1597 of firearms and ammunition products known as the
1598 Pittman-Robertson Act. Since its enactment, \$11 billion has been
1599 distributed to states for conservation and outdoor education
1600 under Pittman-Robertson, making the firearms industry the largest
1601 contributor to conservation and access. I bring this up because

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1602 I am surprised how many people do not know that hunting and
1603 conservation go hand in hand.

1604 And I would like to get a response from any of the panel on
1605 the Pittman-Robertson because Congress should be reauthorizing
1606 it. Anybody have a comment on it? No. Tell me about the ways
1607 your industry contributes to conservation efforts that most
1608 people don't about. I know REI obviously has a great record.

1609 Mr. Berejka. I mean I could elaborate. Of those 300
1610 organizations we support, the overwhelming majority are
1611 stewardship organizations that go into favorite places to
1612 recreate and they do the trail cleaning, they do the trail
1613 maintenance. They are the ones who are at the leading edge often
1614 of repairing infrastructure if it has fallen into disrepair.

1615 Ms. Mihalik. I will add that for Outward Bound one of the
1616 issues that we have struggled with when we open new course areas,
1617 so course areas anywhere, it could be a river or it could be a
1618 hiking trail where we want to take people, is often access. So
1619 we worked recently with the Chesapeake Conservancy to open a
1620 course on the Nanticoke River. There was not access to water.
1621 There was not access to campsites. But this is an amazing
1622 river in Maryland that people should be able to explore, so we
1623 were able to establish partnerships with the Conservancy, which
1624 is a conservation organization, National Park Service, and our
1625 local Department of Natural Resources to all come together to be

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1626 able to open that area, and now we take about 60 kids per year
1627 down that river.

1628 Mr. Green. Anyone else? Going back to the example of
1629 Pittman-Robertson, one of the areas I have concern about is the
1630 aging demographic of sportsmen. If current trends continue,
1631 state wildlife agencies will not be able to rely on the same level
1632 of funding as older hunters hang up their hats and aren't replaced
1633 by younger hunters. As an industry and as a legislative body,
1634 what can we do to ensure that our children and grandchildren have
1635 the same access or expanded access to natural resources that we
1636 have grown up with?

1637 Ms. Roberts. So as part of the outdoor industry's efforts
1638 we have a nonprofit called the Outdoor Foundation, and the Outdoor
1639 Foundation's mission is to encourage a new generation of youth
1640 to get outside and recreate and that includes all of the activities
1641 that we covered in our economic report. And so our industry has
1642 come together to fund nonprofits across the country who take kids
1643 outside. And one key element that we found early on through
1644 really pilot and error is that the importance of mentorship and
1645 create an opportunity for that bond to form, whether it is in a
1646 family or it is just an older person who is experienced, whether
1647 in fishing, hunting, rock climbing, any sort of activity that
1648 takes a youth outside but repeatedly exposes the youth to that
1649 experience. That is how you build a lifelong love of these

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1650 activities.

1651 And so what we have done is really bring together all of the
1652 industry's resources and then spend time ensuring that these local
1653 groups that are on the ground take these kids outside. And I think
1654 that is the most effective way to ensure that we do have the next
1655 generation that loves the land but also loves these activities.

1656 Mr. Green. Mr. Chairman, I know I am out of my time. But
1657 if I could give a commercial, I am the co-chair of the
1658 Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus along with my colleague Jeff
1659 Duncan from South Carolina, and we will soon be introducing the
1660 SHARE Act, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement
1661 Act, a compilation of a package of bills aimed at improving access
1662 to public lands and preserving and expanding sportsmen's issues.
1663 And I appreciate you letting me do the commercial.

1664 Mr. Harper. Very well done commercial too, Mr. Green.
1665 Seeing there are no other members here to ask questions for the
1666 panel, I want to thank each of you for taking time out of your
1667 busy schedule to be here and share your insights with us.

1668 Before we conclude, I would like to include the following
1669 documents to be submitted for the record by unanimous consent:
1670 a letter from Vista Outdoor and a letter from AMA. Seeing no
1671 objection, those are admitted.

1672 [The information follows:]

1673

1674

*****COMMITTEE INSERT 7*****

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1675 Mr. Harper. And pursuant to committee rules, I remind
1676 members that they have 10 business days -- I believe we may have
1677 something else we would like to submit for the record and I will
1678 recognize the ranking member.

1679 Ms. Schakowsky. Thank you. The Low-Carbon USA letter from
1680 U.S. businesses and an EPA fact sheet.

1681 Mr. Harper. And, without objection, those are admitted to
1682 the record.

1683 [The information follows:]

1684

1685 *****COMMITTEE INSERT 8*****

1686 Mr. Harper. And pursuant to committee rules, I remind
1687 members that they have 10 business days to submit additional
1688 questions for the record and I ask that witnesses submit their
1689 responses within 10 business days upon receipt of any questions.
1690 Without objection, this hearing is adjourned.

1691 [Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]