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**Statement of John Gilroy, Director, U.S. Public Lands, The Pew Charitable Trusts,
Regarding H.R. 823, the *Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act*,
For the Record of the legislative hearing held on April 2nd, 2019**

The Pew Charitable Trusts seeks to preserve ecologically and culturally diverse U.S. public lands and rivers through federal and state administrative protections, legislative designations, the defense of bedrock conservation laws, and restoring America's National Parks System. To accomplish these goals, we work closely with conservation groups, recreation organizations, local businesses, local governments, and other stakeholders to develop collaborative proposals for public lands protection.

Pew supports the CORE Act (H.R. 823). Pew supports the strong conservation provisions in the bill – which would protect 400,000 acres of public land in Colorado through new wilderness designations in places like Mount Sneffels and Hoosier Ridge, mineral withdrawals in the Thompson Divide, and the preservation of recreation and conservation management areas in places like Tenmile Range that honor current opportunities for hiking and mountain biking.

In addition, the bill honors the military legacy of the state and the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division through the designation of the Camp Hale National Historic Landscape. It would also preserve important wildlife conservation areas like the Porcupine Gulch Wildlife Conservation Area, which includes Colorado's only migration corridor over Interstate 70 for elk, bear, mule deer, and other wildlife.

The CORE Act improves upon four previously introduced lands bills: the *Continental Divide Recreation, Wilderness, and Camp Hale Legacy Act*, the *San Juan Mountains Wilderness Act*, the *Thompson Divide Withdrawal and Protection Act*, and the *Curecanti National Recreation Area Boundary Establishment Act*. It reflects years of coordination with hikers, campers, ranchers, sportsmen, elected officials, recreation groups, counties, and local business and energy companies. These individuals and groups came together to achieve consensus on appropriate protection for individual landscapes, suitable boundaries for those protections, and a program that would support local communities through the leasing and energy generation of excess methane in existing or abandoned coal mines in the North Fork Valley.

Pew appreciates the opportunity to submit these views for the Subcommittee's consideration, and we would welcome the opportunity to work with the Committee to improve these bills. Please contact John Seebach at (202) 540-6509 or jseebach@pewtrusts.org if you have any questions regarding our views on this legislation.