

ANDY BARR
SIXTH DISTRICT, KENTUCKY
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND MONETARY POLICY
RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION
AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA, THE PACIFIC,
CENTRAL ASIA, AND NON PROLIFERATION



2430 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4706

2709 OLD ROSEBUD ROAD, SUITE 100
LEXINGTON, KY 40509
(859) 219-1366

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

November 14, 2023

Dear Chairman Tiffany and Ranking Member Neguse,

Thank you for hosting today's hearing which includes my legislation, H.R. 5582, the *White Oak Resilience Act*. This bipartisan bill addresses the critical shortages faced by the white oak population, underlining its vital importance to the environment, the economy, and the Commonwealth of Kentucky's signature bourbon industry. The bill's key provisions range from authorizing the Department of Interior (DOI) and the Forest Service to actively participate in white oak restoration projects to harnessing private investment and establishing a white oak restoration fund to support white oak regeneration.

Without intervention today, the American white oak population will begin to decline significantly within the next 10 to 15 years, with more extreme declines over the next several decades. Due to shifts in land management and ecological changes, older white oak trees are not being replaced by younger white oak trees at a pace that will support long-term sustainability.

In order to restore the long-term viability of America's white oak forests, and maintain the economic, social and environmental benefits they provide, we need active, cross-boundary collaboration, participation and support from industry, resource professionals, policymakers and others. The *White Oak Resilience Act* is a result of that collaborative approach, and I am proud of the efforts we are pushing on this very important issue.

Thank you to our witnesses before the Committee today for their expert testimony and I look forward to continuing to work with the Natural Resources Committee on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Barr".

Andy Barr
Member of Congress