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6 OVERSIGHT HEARING ON:

7 NO ROAD MAP, NO DESTINATION, NO JUSTIFICATION:

8 THE IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACTS OF THE REORGANIZATION

9 OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

10 Tuesday, April 30, 2019

11 House of Representatives,

12 Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations,

13 Committee on Natural Resources,

14 Washington, D.C.

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18 The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m.,
19 in Room 1324, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. T.J. Cox
20 [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

21 Present: Representatives Cox, Grijalva, Dingell;
22 Gohmert, Bishop, and Gosar.

23

24 *Mr. Cox. The Subcommittee on Oversight and
25 Investigations will now come to order.

26 The Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations is
27 meeting today to hear testimony on "No Road Map, No
28 Destination, No Justification: the Implementation and
29 Impacts of the Reorganization of the Department of the
30 Interior.''

31 Under Committee rule 4(f) any oral opening statements at
32 the hearing are limited to the Chairman and the Ranking
33 Minority Member. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that all
34 other members' opening statements be made part of the hearing
35 to record today if they are submitted to the clerk by 5:00
36 p.m.

37 Hearing no objection, so ordered.

38

39 STATEMENT OF THE HON. T.J. COX, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
40 FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

41

42 *Mr. Cox. One of the first things Ryan Zinke did after
43 becoming Secretary was try to implement a massive solution in
44 search of a problem. The weakness in that approach to
45 reorganizing the 70,000-employee Department of the Interior
46 became clear early in the process.

47 We have not seen data to show that there is a problem.
48 We have not seen data to prove that a reorganization was the
49 way to solve the problem, nor have we seen a cost benefit
50 analysis or workforce planning data; no measurable goals; no
51 comprehensive plan. And that is worth repeating. A massive
52 reorganization, and we have seen no plan. The Department has
53 provided no plan to know if the reorganization is achieving
54 its goals. We have not seen a timeline.

55 In 2018 the Government Accountability Office laid out
56 what agencies need to do if they want to -- if they want the
57 reorganization to be successful. Unsurprisingly, the
58 recommendations include all the basic considerations that I
59 mentioned, which has not been provided by Secretaries
60 Bernhardt or Zinke.

61 Before being elected to Congress last year, I owned a
62 couple of businesses and a community development
63 organization. And as a businessman I can tell you that --

64 with confidence -- if I tried to tell company investors or
65 shareholders that I was going to reorganize the company
66 without showing them evidence of a need to do so, or a way to
67 measure that success, a plan, I mean, I would be laughed out
68 of the room. And yet that is precisely the case at the
69 Department of the Interior.

70 The actions that have been taken so far in the name of
71 the reorganization have already had significant impacts.
72 Starting in 2017, dozens of the most experienced, the most
73 effective employees were moved out of their positions into
74 positions for which they had no qualifications or interests,
75 and with very little notice. Most felt the moves were
76 punitive or based on political ideology.

77 The Office of the Inspector General was not able to
78 determine whether the law was broken because documentation
79 was so shoddy.

80 These moves have lowered morale, created a culture of
81 fear, and forced people and institutional knowledge out of
82 the agency. And this was perhaps not an accident.

83 About 60 million of funding has been diverted for the
84 reorganization at a time of major proposed cuts to the
85 agencies. And that kind of money could fund critical
86 infrastructure projects for people in the Central Valley of
87 California, who desperately need clean drinking water. It
88 could have helped a number of national parks address their

89 maintenance backlogs. It could have helped fund more than
90 enough people to help Interior get rid of its FOIA backlog to
91 allow the American people to know what their agency is doing.

92 To try to uphold our constitutional prerogative to
93 provide oversight on this major undertaking, this Committee
94 has repeatedly sought information from Interior. We have
95 been repeatedly denied.

96 And most recently we tried to make it as easy as
97 possible for them. In March 2017 President Trump issued
98 executive order 13781, directing the heads of each executive
99 agency to submit to the Office of Management and Budget a
100 reorganization plan within 180 days. On April 10th, Chairman
101 Grijalva and I sent an official document request to Interior
102 asking for that plan. Not all correspondents, not all
103 records, not even two documents, just one single document.
104 We know it exists, we have the email that says it is ready
105 for final delivery. We even gave Interior the file name of
106 the document so they didn't have to spend time looking for
107 it. It is "Agency Reform Plan - Final 91217.pdf." I am not
108 sure how much easier or quicker we could have made it, but we
109 still don't have it.

110 If Secretary Bernhardt wants to implement the Zinke
111 reorganization plan, he needs to start by providing Congress
112 with a complete justification and a plan. He needs to work
113 with Congress, this Subcommittee, the American people, and

114 Interior employees, and -- instead of seeing us as obstacles
115 to overcome.

116 A reorganization can do a lot for an agency if it is
117 done right. Let's work together to make sure it is.

118 [The prepared statement of Mr. Cox follows:]

119

120 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

121

122 *Mr. Cox. And with that I now recognize Ranking Member
123 Gohmert for his opening statement.
124

125 STATEMENT OF THE HON. LOUIE GOHMERT, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
126 CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

127

128 *Mr. Gohmert. Thank you, Chairman Cox, for holding this
129 hearing. And that -- for two reasons: first, because
130 transforming the Department of the Interior is an important
131 topic that does deserve additional congressional scrutiny;
132 second, because this hearing falls completely within the
133 jurisdiction of this Committee, which I hope will continue
134 through the 116th Congress.

135 The reorganization of the Department of the Interior is
136 just a small part in a larger effort of this Administration
137 to overhaul the entire Federal Government to make it more
138 efficient and effective. In fact, in the Department of the
139 Interior, as the Chairman alluded to, there is a tremendous
140 backlog of \$10 billion or more in simple maintenance repair
141 with what property the Department of the Interior has. Yet
142 in recent years the trend has been to acquire more and more
143 property without even bothering to repair and maintain the
144 property it had.

145 I welcome the reorganization. I think it is overtime
146 that is -- past time that such should have been done. And it
147 is consistent with the directive. March 2017 President
148 Donald Trump issued Executive Order 13781, directing the head
149 of each agency to submit reorganization plans in order to

150 improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of
151 that agency.

152 In response to this executive order, former Secretary
153 Ryan Zinke, when he was not having to answer claims against
154 him that kept him busy and cost him a tremendous amount of
155 individual money, he began undertaking bold reforms,
156 modernizing the way the Department of the Interior operates.
157 I am confident the new newly-confirmed Secretary, David
158 Bernhardt, will be able to continue and complete the historic
159 reorganization of the Department.

160 Ultimately, this reorganization will result in reduced
161 bureaucratic redundancy, increased federal accountability,
162 improve coordination between the federal government, State
163 agencies, and local governments, while spending less money.
164 I too look forward to seeing the reorganization plan.

165 The Department of the Interior has already made headway
166 on this reorganization by transforming the past management
167 structure of the Department, which consisted of 8 bureaus, 49
168 regions, each operating in a unique patchwork of boundaries,
169 and to 12 unified regional boundaries based on watersheds and
170 ecosystems.

171 This approach will allow the Department to move away
172 from the one-size-fits-all solutions and focus resources on
173 better serving their new regional boundaries. These new
174 management plans will decrease redundancy while making

175 coordination between different land management agencies more
176 efficient.

177 Moving the decision-makers of the Department closer to
178 the field will add an increased level of accountability not
179 available within the current model of concentrating
180 bureaucracy in D.C. Many decision-makers within the
181 Department of the Interior are located thousands of miles
182 away from the land and people that their decision will
183 affect.

184 For example, the Bureau of Land Management oversees
185 nearly 385,000 miles of public lands; 99 percent of this land
186 is in western States and Alaska. Why should these lands
187 continue to be managed by decision-makers inside this
188 beltway?

189 While several details of the reorganization plan remain
190 unconfirmed, I am afraid, based on the title of today's
191 hearing, the majority merely intends to spend time
192 criticizing and tearing down the plan. That said, I hope we
193 don't miss the opportunity to truly explore how the
194 Department of the Interior can evolve to better serve the
195 American people, participate in a fruitful discussion.

196 Historically, agency reorganizations have not been a
197 partisan issue. Many different agencies and bureaus have
198 attempted reorganization plans throughout this Nation's
199 history by both Republican and Democratic administrations.

200 There is much that could be done to transform the Department
201 of the Interior to better address the challenges it will face
202 in the 21st century, and I am glad we are holding the hearing
203 today to explore those options, and I look forward to hearing
204 testimony today.

205 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

206 [The prepared statement of Mr. Gohmert follows:]

207

208 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

209

210 *Mr. Cox. Thank you. I would like to introduce our
211 witnesses.

212 Mr. Scott Cameron, the -- is the Principal Deputy
213 Secretary for Policy Management and Budget at the Department
214 of the Interior.

215 Mr. Michael Bromwich is the Founder and Managing
216 Principal of The Bromwich Group. After the Deepwater Horizon
217 spill, Mr. Bromwich spent 18 months at the Department of the
218 Interior, leading the reorganization of the Minerals
219 Management Service.

220 Ms. Jamie Rappaport Clark is the President and CEO of
221 Defenders of Wildlife. From 1997 to 2001 she was the
222 Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

223 Mr. Harold Frazier is Chairman of the Cheyenne River
224 Sioux Tribe, based in South Dakota. Chairman Frazier also
225 serves as President of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's
226 Association.

227 Under Committee rules oral statements are limited to
228 five minutes, but your entire statement will appear in the
229 hearing record.

230 The lights in front of you will turn yellow when there
231 is one minute left, and then red when time is expired.

232 After witnesses have testified Members will be given the
233 opportunity to ask questions.

234

235 And with that, the Chair now recognizes Mr. Scott
236 Cameron.
237

238 STATEMENT OF SCOTT CAMERON, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT
239 SECRETARY FOR POLICY MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, U.S. DEPARTMENT
240 OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, D.C.

241

242 *Mr. Cameron. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking
243 Member Gohmert. I am delighted to be with you this morning
244 to discuss that Department of the Interior's reorganization
245 effort. I do have a few opening remarks, and I appreciate
246 that my full written statement will be submitted for the
247 record. So thank you for that.

248 The Department's reorganization is in response to
249 President Trump's 2017 executive order to reorganize the
250 executive branch to better meet the needs of the American
251 people in the 21st century. Our agency's reform plan
252 highlights the need to modernize and plan for the next 100
253 years of land and water resource management.

254 The first and very significant step we took toward
255 reorganization was to create 12 unified regions that align
256 most of our bureaus within shared geographic boundaries and,
257 more importantly, shared geographic perspectives. After much
258 input from the Department's career senior executive staff,
259 Congress, Governors, and external stakeholders, including
260 consultations with Indian tribal leaders, the map was
261 finalized and the unified regions took effect on August 22,
262 2018.

263 Importantly, these new unified regional boundaries
264 replaced a confusing array of 49 separate but overlapping
265 regional boundaries among our 9 bureaus and offices.

266 Reorganization makes it easier for the public and our
267 partners to do business with us by, first, reducing the
268 confusion that the many different bureau boundaries caused.
269 The new structure enables improved coordination among
270 federal, State, local agencies, and provides a structure for
271 delegating more decision-making authority to regions to
272 better serve the needs of our customers and partners,
273 especially on matters affecting multiple bureaus.

274 We will also create more opportunities for employee
275 career advancement and movement across bureaus by promoting
276 cross-bureau collaborative work within each region. We will
277 improve efficiency by sharing resources for common
278 administrative services, such as information technology,
279 human resources, and procurement. Indeed, we are in the
280 process of receiving and analyzing three independent
281 contracts to evaluate those management functions of the
282 Department.

283 After the unified regions were established we asked
284 current bureau career executive leaders in the 12 regions to
285 form regional executive committees and to select one of their
286 peers as a Regional Facilitator. The Regional Facilitator
287 temporarily serves as a central point of contact in each of

288 the unified regions. The members of the 12 regional
289 executive committees are responsible for sharing information
290 and exploring how to work with each other more closely on
291 programmatic and administrative support teams within their
292 unified regions.

293 We have also proposed moving elements of the Bureau of
294 Land Management and the U.S. Geological Survey's headquarters
295 operations west to bring them closer to the public that they
296 interact with most frequently.

297 As a result of the reorganization the Department is
298 better positioned to accomplish our mission and serve the
299 needs of your constituents. Our staff will be able to do
300 their jobs better as we increase our ability to share
301 knowledge and resources across our bureaus. We will reduce
302 risks to the organization and the confusion that is
303 introduced through inconsistent policies for things like
304 cyber security, acquisition, and human resource management.

305 We are proceeding deliberately and intentionally on all
306 aspects of reorganization. We will develop new performance
307 measures to evaluate our success and return on investment.
308 We will consider results over time and on a regional basis to
309 determine our success and to identify areas where we still
310 need to improve.

311 The key here is flexibility. We are looking for an
312 approach that will allow us to fine-tune our management

313 strategies from region to region, reflecting the local needs
314 of the people we serve in the region.

315 I look forward to answering your questions and to
316 working with the Committee to implement the Department's
317 vision for the reorganization and modernization. And thank
318 you for the opportunity to testify this morning.

319 [The prepared statement of Mr. Cameron follows:]

320

321 *****INSERT 1*****

322

323 *Mr. Cox. Thank you so much Mr. Clark (sic).
324 The Chair now recognizes Chairman Harold Frazier.
325

326 STATEMENT OF HAROLD FRAZIER, CHAIRMAN, CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX
327 TRIBE, EAGLE BUTTE, SOUTH DAKOTA

328

329 *Mr. Frazier. Thank you, Chairman. I am honored to be
330 here today, and I thank you for allowing me the time to
331 address you and your Committee.

332 When this reorganization happened, us Tribes in the
333 Great Plains area -- and I am sure throughout the United
334 States -- we were never properly consulted. When they come
335 to the region, Great Plains region, we were given a picture
336 of a map. That is all we were given. We weren't given any
337 plans of the purpose of -- and how or why this change is
338 needed, or how it is going to benefit our people. It was
339 never done. That is all we were given.

340 I have been in office going on my sixteenth -- or my
341 fourth term. And one of the things I have learned is that
342 every reorganization on behalf of Indian people has never
343 worked. I will give you example: the Bureau of Indian
344 Education.

345 You know, they restructured, they created a new agency.
346 But one of the things they didn't do is take all the
347 functions from the BIA, or transfer any of them. And what
348 that caused is a lot of -- no personnel at our schools.
349 Right now on Cheyenne Eagle Butte High School we haven't had
350 a math teacher in five years.

351 I went to a meeting several weeks back and I was told
352 that in February of -- or, no, this fall of 2018 the BIE was
353 only filled 23 percent of positions. And today they are at
354 43 percent. So we question that. Where is that money? If
355 they were allocated 100 percent for salaries, where is that
356 money? Is that money going to go to fund this
357 reorganization? Is this money -- is this the -- coming off
358 the children, the backs of our children, their future that is
359 going to pay for this reorganization that will never benefit
360 Indian people, or will never work?

361 You know, we are always left behind as Indian people.
362 We are not rocks. We are not trees. We are human beings.
363 We live and breathe, just as every American in this country.

364 If there is going to be a reorganization, one of the
365 things that I think would work -- but it should come from a
366 grassroots level up. Instead, many times it comes from
367 Washington, it comes down, and they have no idea, no clue of
368 what is happening at the local level. And that is something
369 that I think that has always failed.

370 Today we feel that we are being abandoned by the Federal
371 Government. We have big issues of roads. No infrastructure.
372 But yet the BIA or -- nobody is there to help us.

373 I mean we just got through some flooding that damaged a
374 lot of our roads on our reservation. And one morning I got a
375 call that we had to shut another road down. And I could not

376 think of anybody to call, because everybody that I have
377 talked to have never come through for us. So we truly feel
378 that we are abandoned today.

379 And, you know, we have treaties with the Federal
380 Government. We are sovereigns. We need to be treated as
381 such. Right now we don't even know -- we haven't had a
382 permanent superintendent at our agency for the past four or
383 five years. We don't even -- we rotate our area directors.
384 So everything that is happening today is not working for our
385 people. It is just a waste of time and money.

386 I mean if there is truly going to be reorganization,
387 then we truly, as Indian people, need to be consulted. We
388 need to be involved, because that is our lives. Our people's
389 lives are at stake. We need to know and dictate where our
390 future is going to take us. A lot of times we are just
391 ignored.

392 And like I mentioned earlier, when we -- when they come
393 to Rapid City with this map, and it was my turn to talk, I
394 walked by them and I faced the wall of the building and I
395 talked to that wall, because that is the way we are treated
396 by the BIA and by the Federal Government. We have no voice,
397 we have nothing.

398 But yet we were here first. You know, this is our
399 country. This is our home. From beginning of time we have
400 always lived in this country and will never leave. We have

401 nowhere else to go.

402 So I thank you for allowing me the time, and thank you
403 for allowing me to be here. So thank you.

404 [The prepared statement of Mr. Frazier follows:]

405

406 *****INSERT 2*****

407

408 *Mr. Cox. Thank you, Chairman Frazier.

409 The Chair now recognizes Mr. Michael Bromwich.

410

411 STATEMENT OF MICHAEL BROMWICH, FOUNDER AND MANAGING
412 PRINCIPAL, THE BROMWICH GROUP, WASHINGTON, D.C.

413

414 *Mr. Bromwich. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Chairman
415 Grijalva, Ranking Member Gohmert.

416 I served in the Federal Government for a total of 14
417 years. Most recently I served as the country's top offshore
418 drilling regulator in the Department of the Interior, from
419 June 2010 through late 2011. My testimony will focus on the
420 first principles that should guide a significant government
421 reorganization, and how they were applied to the
422 reorganization we undertook at Interior following the oil
423 spill.

424 First a bit of background. In late April 2010 the
425 Deepwater Horizon rig was conducting exploratory drilling in
426 the Macondo well in the Gulf of Mexico. The rig experienced
427 a violent blowout that killed 11 people and injured many
428 others. It was a human tragedy of major proportions, but
429 also an enormous environmental tragedy.

430 In early June 2010 I was asked by President Obama to
431 lead the agency responsible for the oversight of offshore
432 drilling, at the time known as the Minerals Management
433 Service, or MMS. We took immediate steps to modify the rules
434 governing offshore drilling, but we also looked at whether
435 the government's organizational structure for managing it was

436 the right fit for the risks that it posed.

437 We ultimately concluded that it was not, but not before
438 we developed a detailed understanding of the way the agency
439 operated and the costs and benefits of changing that
440 structure. The agency was responsible for three very
441 different missions: collecting royalties and revenues for
442 the offshore program; making balanced resource decisions; and
443 developing and enforcing regulations governing offshore
444 activities. These three missions conflicted with each other,
445 and the history of the agency demonstrated that revenue
446 collection was emphasized at the expense of the other
447 missions.

448 By the time I arrived at DOI six weeks after the initial
449 explosion, discussions had already begun about reorganizing
450 MMS to eliminate its structural conflicts. But I was given
451 the discretion to decide whether or not to do it.

452 I don't take reorganizations lightly. I have a bias
453 against them. They are disruptive, expensive, frustrating,
454 and they tend to depress morale. They create uncertainty and
455 divert resources. They frequently fail to achieve their
456 objectives.

457 Reorganizations are too often undertaken for reasons of
458 executive vanity. They are developed and implemented in
459 haste, inadequately vetted, based on inadequate analysis and
460 insufficient consultations with stakeholders, including the

461 personnel responsible for implementing them. They are a way
462 for a new executive or executive team to put their imprint on
463 an organization, whether the changes make any sense or not.
464 Those are bad reasons for undertaking a reorganization, but
465 those are the reasons that many are undertaken.

466 In the case of MMS we became convinced that a
467 reorganization was necessary and appropriate, but only after
468 careful study and consideration of less disruptive
469 alternatives. I want to emphasize that when we began the
470 process there was no preordained outcome. We did not decide
471 on the reorganization that was ultimately implemented and
472 then work backwards to justify it. Instead, we undertook a
473 detailed process, together with outside consultants who were
474 experts in organizational diagnosis and reorganizations. We
475 considered a number of less sweeping changes, including
476 changes to staffing levels, enhanced training, and other
477 organizational tweaks.

478 In the end our analysis and discussions pointed to a
479 broad reorganization, and my prepared statement goes into
480 detail into the various steps we took during the process.

481 Throughout the process we were extraordinarily open
482 about what we were doing. We were open with the agency's
483 personnel, with DOI, with the Congress, and with the public.
484 We spoke frequently about what we were doing and why we were
485 doing it. The broad contours and most of the specifics of

486 the reorganization were embraced by Members of Congress of
487 both parties.

488 In the more than seven years since the organization was
489 completed, its wisdom has been demonstrated. I have just
490 told in very abbreviated form the story of a rare species: a
491 successful government reorganization. As I said at the
492 outset, I know very few of the details of the proposed and
493 far broader DOI organization that is the subject of this
494 hearing, but I gather I am not alone, because the details of
495 the reorganization have not been shared widely with agency
496 personnel, the Congress, or the public, including local
497 stakeholders, communities, and Native American Tribes.
498 That's a problem.

499 I am aware of no internal or external studies of any
500 kind that have made the affirmative case for the proposed DOI
501 reorganization. I am aware of no analyses or studies that
502 have presented the anticipated benefits of the reorganization
503 and balanced them against anticipated costs.

504 A number of questions should be asked about the proposed
505 reorganizations, questions that I have detailed in my
506 prepared statement. Without addressing those issues, it is
507 hard for me to see how DOI gets the internal and external
508 buy-in necessary to achieve long-term benefits from the
509 proposed reorganization.

510

511 Thank you very much for your time and attention, and I
512 am happy to answer any of your questions.

513 [The prepared statement of Mr. Bromwich follows:]

514

515 *****INSERT 3*****

516

517 *Mr. Cox. Thank you, Mr. Bromwich. And the Chair now
518 recognizes Ms. Jamie Rappaport Clark.
519

520 STATEMENT OF JAMIE CLARK, PRESIDENT AND CEO, DEFENDERS OF
521 WILDLIFE

522

523 *Ms. Clark. Thank you, Chairman Cox, Chairman Grijalva,
524 Ranking Member Gohmert, for inviting me to testify on this
525 important topic.

526 With more than 20 years of service with the Federal
527 Government I have personal experience with reorganization
528 initiatives and with leading mission-driven organizations. I
529 believe the Administration's current effort to reorganize
530 Department of the Interior distracts from its vitally
531 important mission, wastes scarce fiscal and human resources,
532 disrupts the essential and lawful functions of Interior
533 bureaus, reduces staff capacity, and seriously undermines
534 employee morale.

535 To succeed there must be clarity, not only on the
536 problems posed by the existing structure, but how the
537 proposal will measurably improve performance. Impacts to
538 personnel and operations must be explicitly considered.
539 Transparency and public engagement across all affected
540 sectors is vitally important. The Administration has not
541 satisfied these fundamental criteria. Their plan suffers
542 from a lack of crucial details, transparency, accountability,
543 and public engagement. They have never really described a
544 compelling need for reorganization.

545 Consideration of critical questions about the scope,
546 purpose, impacts, benefits, and risks of such a radical
547 transformation have not been reconciled. In the absence of
548 clear and compelling information, many critical questions
549 still remain.

550 Will the Department involve the public, Congress, and
551 stakeholders in its reorganization efforts? As the
552 Department directs staff and resources away from mission
553 critical activities, it is doing so without seeking
554 legitimate input from affected constituencies.

555 Will reorganization undermine the authority and missions
556 of Interior bureaus, agencies, and officials? A unified
557 military command is fundamentally inappropriate for
558 coordinating Interior bureaus. A distinct mission and
559 responsibilities for each bureau are established by law.
560 Those missions sometimes align, but sometimes diverge or even
561 conflict. And that is by design. Certainly, bureaus can and
562 should coordinate their actions better to achieve timely
563 outcomes, but they cannot be legally subordinated to the
564 control of a single unified regional directorship.

565 The Administration's proposal of 12 unified regions cut
566 through watersheds, they cut through States, and even
567 individual public lands units, confounding management and
568 complicating relationships with partners. Overlaying new
569 regions atop current agency boundaries will fracture

570 relationships developed with stakeholders over many years.

571 Although Interior touts the new regional overlay as a
572 reduction in the total number of regions, it will actually
573 require additional bureaucratic structure. It requires the
574 creation of a new regional office and staff structures, for
575 some bureaus, by as much as 50 percent.

576 Is reorganization a vehicle to deliver the
577 Administration's controversial policy agenda? Given this
578 Administration's agenda of energy dominance on the public
579 domain, and continuous attacks on our conservation laws and
580 regulations, it is fair to question whether their purpose is
581 to support their policy priorities and weaken the
582 effectiveness of conservation programs, rather than to
583 achieve objectives of efficiency and public service in
584 carrying out the Interior Department's complex and multi-
585 dimensional mission.

586 Will reorganization displace or reduce staff or distract
587 department employees from their mission-critical duties? The
588 Department's talented and dedicated career employees are
589 their greatest asset. Supporting and investing in them is
590 key to their mission success. Interior has not only rejected
591 this principle; its actions repeatedly indicate a belief that
592 public employees are liabilities, unnecessary bureaucracy,
593 rather than essential to the Department's important mission
594 and their success.

595 Will reorganization siphon critical resources needed to
596 fulfill essential responsibilities for natural resources
597 management and protection? At a time of shrinking
598 appropriations for conservation, for science, for recreation,
599 and other vital management programs at Interior, it is
600 irresponsible to invest scarce resources into a process that
601 will likely fail to improve government performance and
602 provide a fair return to taxpayers.

603 The Department of the Interior does not need
604 reorganizing. It needs leadership. After more than two
605 years in office they should focus instead on filling vacant
606 high-level positions, including the Directors of the Fish
607 Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the National
608 Park Service, the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and
609 Parks, with qualified professionals, and addressing the
610 critical conservation and resource management challenges we
611 face today.

612 We respectfully urge Congress to suspend this damaging
613 effort. Pushing forward with this will be the detriment of
614 the Department, our natural resources, and the Nation. Thank
615 you.

616 [The prepared statement of Ms. Clark follows:]

617

618 *****INSERT 4*****

619

620 *Mr. Cox. Thank you, everyone, for your valuable
621 testimony. The Chair will now recognize Members for
622 questions.

623 And under Committee rule 3(d), each member will be
624 recognized for five minutes. And with that I would like to
625 recognize myself for the first five minutes.

626 Mr. Cameron, Chairman Grijalva and I asked for a single
627 document, the only single document I know exists that could
628 resemble a comprehensive plan, because the executive order
629 required it. We haven't gotten it, and I know it was
630 completed. It was prepared for delivery. And I went to the
631 trouble of locating it in your files for you just to make it
632 as easy as possible. But somehow you can't seem to find it
633 and get it to this Committee. Committee Staff has asked you
634 to prioritize it for this hearing over other requests.

635 I can only conclude that some review process among
636 political appointees is holding it up. What is the delay is
637 one (sic). I certainly hope you are not trying to -- and I
638 don't mean to say that you are hiding anything, but we have
639 asked for this document, it has not been produced for this
640 Committee, for this Congress, for public consumption.

641 *Mr. Cameron. Mr. Chairman, thank you for that
642 question. I am aware of that specific request. And our
643 Office of Congressional Relations is in the process of
644 producing a response for the Committee.

645 I think it is worth pointing out that the document in
646 question was actually a submission from Secretary Zinke to
647 OMB. And as such, it didn't represent a final document in
648 terms of representing the views of the White House.

649 *Mr. Cox. So I am going to take it that is a commitment
650 to providing the Committee with that document. And can you
651 give us a date for that delivery?

652 *Mr. Cameron. Sir, I am not in a position at this point
653 to promise you that we are going to give you the document. I
654 will promise you that we will be responding to the letter,
655 and I hope shortly.

656 *Mr. Cox. Thank you.

657 Chairman Fraser, is there any evidence at all -- and I
658 think you already testified to this remark, but I just want
659 to hit the point again that this reorganization improves
660 services to federally recognized Tribes?

661 *Mr. Frazier. What was that?

662 *Mr. Cox. Is there any evidence that you have seen so
663 far that the reorganization will improve services to
664 federally recognized Tribes?

665 *Mr. Frazier. No. Like I mentioned, all we were given
666 was a map and no other details was given to us. I don't
667 believe it is going to improve services to the Tribe.

668 *Mr. Cox. And, Mr. Cameron, can you elaborate on that?
669 There seems to be just -- absolutely, from what the Chairman

670 is speaking to us about, just no coordination, no
671 notification, no conversation.

672 *Mr. Cameron. Mr. Chairman, so I had a opportunity to
673 have a conversation with the Assistant Secretary of Indian
674 Affairs staff before I prepared for this hearing, and my
675 understanding is that BIA held 11 formal tribal consultation
676 meetings and an additional 7 listening sessions with tribal
677 leaders around the country on the reorganization. Because we
678 respect the sovereignty of Indian Tribes, we were not willing
679 to impose, if you will, the involvement of BIA and BIE in the
680 reorganization effort on the Tribes. And since the Tribes
681 have not been particularly enthusiastic about the notion of
682 their bureaus being part of the reorganization, we, in fact,
683 have not included them.

684 I would suggest that, to the extent there is improved
685 coordination at a regional level with the other bureaus of
686 the Department, that that would give Indian tribal leaders,
687 you know, one-stop shopping, if you will, one regional
688 director to talk to, as opposed to being passed along from
689 the Fish and Wildlife Regional Director to the USGS Regional
690 Director to the Bureau of Reclamation Regional Director.

691 *Mr. Cox. Chairman Frazier, any feedback with regard to
692 that?

693 *Mr. Frazier. Yes. You know what? The only time I
694 recall them coming these past several years was to Rapid

695 City, and then, like I mentioned, they only come one time
696 with a map. I don't see -- I never seen any documentation
697 that there was other consultation hearings or anything like
698 that.

699 I don't -- you know, most of the time what I seen is
700 just the decision-making -- because nobody is in a permanent
701 position, they are all in an acting capacity, is -- a lot of
702 our questions are -- their decisions are never made. I mean
703 we got to chase it, and all the way up here to Washington
704 sometimes.

705 *Mr. Cox. There is the point there, is -- as I am sure
706 you can see, Mr. Cameron -- is that one of the key
707 stakeholders just feels excluded from the process, regardless
708 of the hearings that you have had or the meetings that you
709 have had. The point is not getting across to the people that
710 we need to be talking to.

711 So I certainly hope that the feedback from these
712 meetings, the notes, the agenda, are going to be made part of
713 this plan and integrated with the plans moving forward.

714 I am out of time, so the Chair will recognize the
715 Ranking Member for five minutes.

716 *Mr. Gohmert. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

717 Mr. Cameron, with regard to the title of the hearing
718 today, are there no road maps, no destinations, and no
719 justification for DOI reorganization?

720 *Mr. Cameron. Thank you, Mr. Gohmert, for that
721 question. I would suggest that, actually, we do have all
722 aspects of that. We have -- essentially, the reorganization
723 has three parts: the unified region concept, which has
724 already initially deployed, if you will; there is the notion
725 of saving money to invest in Indian schools and other
726 departmental services by pursuing shared services in our back
727 office administrative functions to get some efficiencies
728 there; and the third prong is the notion of moving the
729 headquarters elements of BLM and the USGS west to be closer
730 to where the preponderance of those bureaus' activities is
731 taking place.

732 And I would add that there is a precedent for their --
733 Bureau of Reclamation is largely headquartered in Denver
734 right now.

735 *Mr. Gohmert. And I appreciate that, and I think it
736 will be tremendously helpful when Chairman Frazier doesn't
737 have to chase things to Washington. He can go much more
738 locally to have his input considered.

739 And even though, apparently, the 11 hearings and 7
740 additional listening sessions at tribal offices, gatherings,
741 and other venues may have indicated a desire not to have
742 reorganization, I would submit that BIA really does need some
743 reorganization efforts.

744 In fact, hearings that we have had in this Committee

745 since I have been here indicated that, for example, there was
746 an attorney working for the Clinton Administration that
747 specifically chose to leave out a provision in a contract
748 with an oil company for offshore drilling, which cost the
749 Federal Government \$10 billion and inured to the benefit of
750 people like British Petroleum. And that attorney that left
751 out that provision then went to work for British Petroleum.
752 We tried to subpoena that attorney, and were told, "Well, she
753 doesn't work for the government, so we can't facilitate
754 that." And then, not long after that, I found out she had
755 now come back to work for the Obama Administration.

756 We also know apparently Mr. Bromwich went to work for
757 DOI a couple of months after the Deepwater Horizon blowout.
758 Some of us recall that specifically, and we couldn't believe
759 that DOI wasn't doing more to go after British Petroleum.
760 And we found out in hearings here that they had nearly 800
761 egregious safety violations when Exxon or others had 1, 2, or
762 so, like that. How did they -- were they ever allowed to
763 keep going?

764 There were rumors of different bribes and things like
765 that, and we were assured by the Obama BLM Director and
766 others that the organization at that point was addressing all
767 those issues and, in fact, they were very careful to make
768 sure inspectors of offshore drilling that was under DOI --
769 that they sent two people out at a time to make sure that no

770 bribes were going on because one would surely report the
771 other if that occurred.

772 And shortly after it was disclosed at the hearing that,
773 actually, the two people that were sent out, the last
774 inspection of the Deepwater Horizon, were a father and son.
775 The BLM Director didn't last long right after our hearing
776 before being removed.

777 So it appeared clear to me, regardless of what report
778 you have internally, from an external perspective the DOI has
779 been in as much need of reorganization of any group I have
780 ever seen in my life. And from exposure to the Park Service,
781 which seems to be more about the Park Service -- same with
782 Fish and Wildlife, there too many people that work there that
783 are more about themselves to the detriment of the public, not
784 taking care of repairs.

785 We heard mentions of shrinking budgets, yet we know the
786 Land and Water Conservation Fund keeps growing and it keeps
787 being used to acquire property, rather than keeping up with
788 what we have.

789 So I would submit, just based on what I have seen in the
790 hearings over the years, we are deeply in need of
791 reorganization. But with the Chairman I sure desire to see
792 the final product as soon as we can get that, so that we can
793 do proper oversight. I would encourage you to make that
794 available, Mr. Cameron. Thank you.

795 *Mr. Cox. Thank you, Ranking Member Gohmert. And now I
796 would like to recognize the gentleman from Arizona for five
797 minutes.

798 *Mr. Grijalva. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Rappaport
799 Clark, a couple of -- just a general question.

800 I was thinking if there was an instruction manual on how
801 to fundamentally weaken an agency, this is what I think it
802 would recommend: start by creating an -- a crisis for key
803 agencies; move them as far away from Congress as possible to
804 minimize contact with appropriators and authorizers;
805 undermine those relationships; separate them from the
806 nonprofit community that helps them make informed decisions;
807 then make it clear to the workforce that they are not valued;
808 create a culture of fear to demand total loyalty; transfer
809 them to jobs for which they have no qualifications or
810 interest; send them to new parts of the country; uproot their
811 families and lives; quietly close or gut programs throughout
812 the agency; take away their decision-making authority and
813 voice within the Department; and put it in the hands of
814 political appointees; cut them out of the loop so they don't
815 even know what is happening in the areas they cover;
816 downgrade their performance ratings across the board,
817 claiming they could not possibly be good at their jobs.

818 Ms. Rappaport Clark, how do these attacks on workers
819 following this manual, which I think is going on, affect our

820 ability to protect endangered species, address climate
821 change, or, for that matter, fulfill all the other legal
822 mandates the DOI has?

823 *Ms. Clark. They don't, Mr. Chairman. It is incredibly
824 destabilized. Focus is not on the task at hand. Employees
825 are confused. Stakeholders are confused. Communication is
826 not flowing, and there is a culture of fear in the Interior
827 Department, clearly in the Fish and Wildlife Service, given
828 the reckless nature of senior executive reassignments with no
829 justification, with no information, with no conversation.
830 Another round is expected to be coming.

831 This is an agency, I believe, in crisis, which diverts
832 its talent, it diverts its responsibilities, it diverts its
833 attention to addressing species extinction, land management
834 needs, climate change, all of the water management, all of
835 the very important natural resource values that that
836 Department is trusted to oversee and take care of.

837 *Mr. Grijalva. Thank you. Mr. Secretary, Mr. Cameron,
838 when you were here just a few weeks ago I showed you this
839 email chain, which -- documents to all Senators and myself
840 were directed to be bottlenecked through two political
841 appointees who were handling nominations. You had a chance
842 since to learn about that email. Could you explain to me why
843 I was singled out? I don't have a role in the nomination of
844 -- I don't have a vote on the nomination of Bernhardt, didn't

845 have a vote, and can you tell us the status? When -- what
846 information you have since we saw you last?

847 *Mr. Cameron. Mr. Chairman, I didn't know anything
848 about that email chain back then, when you first showed it to
849 me, and I don't know anything more about it now. To the best
850 of my knowledge, you know, no Member of the Congress has been
851 singled out. We are trying to be very responsive. We
852 produced tens of thousands of pages of documents over the
853 last two years, sir, and --

854 *Mr. Grijalva. Mr. Cameron, you are a smart guy.
855 Everybody knows that. You should have anticipated this
856 question, and that raises questions about obstruction. Why
857 was one person singled out? We want -- I would like a date,
858 and why then am I singled out?

859 The email was sent by career staff. Which political
860 appointee directed career staff to send that email? And is
861 the directive still in place? And when will it be rescinded?

862 Those are questions that demand answers, and we have to
863 have them, as a Committee, because -- not just for myself,
864 but this can affect any Member of this Committee, where they
865 are singled out not to receive information. I think that
866 brought -- that -- whether it is one individual or not, it is
867 a precedent that I think needs to be dealt with.

868 I repeat the same request we had the last time. I think
869 it is vital information that we have. And when do you

870 anticipate giving us that information?

871 *Mr. Cameron. Mr. Chairman, I can tell you that
872 Secretary Bernhardt is very interested in having
873 conversations with the Congress. To my -- I believe he has
874 requested individual meetings with dozens of Members of
875 Congress, in the process of trying to get those scheduled
876 over the over the next several weeks. So we are actively
877 interested in engaging with the Congress, and I hope that you
878 and the Secretary will have an opportunity to have a
879 conversation.

880 *Mr. Cox. Thank you.

881 *Mr. Grijalva. That still doesn't answer the question.
882 I yield back. Not at all.

883 *Mr. Cox. Thank you. The Chair now recognizes the
884 gentleman from Utah.

885 *Mr. Bishop. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the
886 witnesses for being here.

887 I assume that you will probably have to make sure that
888 your testimony is in writing, since very few members of the
889 Committee are actually here to hear you. We actually have 25
890 percent of the Committee in attendance until Mr. Gosar showed
891 up. That percentage just jumped up to 37 percent. It is not
892 a stellar performance by Congress by any means, but thank you
893 all. I appreciate you doing that. Let me ask some
894 questions.

895 Actually, I have heard some of the comments that have
896 come out from our witnesses calling reorganization
897 disruptive, expansive, frustrating -- expensive and
898 frustrating, which is also the verb or adjectives that can be
899 used for the status quo. Right now it is disruptive,
900 expensive, and frustrating, and much of the success --
901 certain reorganizations, I think, have been inflated
902 sometimes.

903 One of the witnesses said we had to chase this all the
904 way up here to Washington, which is one of the problems we
905 have with the Department of the Interior right now, which is
906 why the reorganization was established or presented in the
907 first place.

908 The Department of the Interior was established in 1848,
909 and it came out of bringing programs from three different
910 departments. At that particular time it was actually the
911 fifth department that was established. And to say that it
912 was done by design is really strange. It was done by
913 happenstance. In fact, even the BLM today, its job and
914 mission is totally different than the reason for which it was
915 created in the 1930s.

916 So what we do is -- really need to take a step back and
917 try and look at things and say how can we do something
918 intelligent and rational in this particular approach. So let
919 me ask a couple of specific questions about the topic matter

920 at hand.

921 Mr. Cameron, BIA, Bureau of Indian Education, and the --
922 what is it, the Office of Special Trustee for American
923 Indians, those are not part of any reorganization process
924 that is being proposed, right?

925 *Mr. Cameron. That is correct, sir.

926 *Mr. Bishop. Okay. So with that, I can still
927 understand why Chairman Frazier would be frustrated with BIE.
928 To illustrate, I think it shows the kind of disruption that
929 we have in that entire process here in Washington. We have
930 jurisdiction over BIA, as far as oversight is concerned, but
931 not over BIE, which is in the Labor Committee. If you can
932 figure out why that happens, and why that worked out, that is
933 another problem -- a question I always had.

934 I was very interested in Bureau of Indian Education
935 issues, but they were not in the purview, necessarily, of our
936 Committee -- but not legally because of that, simply by
937 tradition, which is one of the problems that Interior has
938 over the decades that have been there, is things have been
939 developed by tradition without legally thinking through them.

940 So Mr. Frazier, Chairman Frazier, I agree with what you
941 are saying about problems with BIE. I hope we can solve it,
942 which is also one of the reasons I hope Mr. Grijalva will
943 simply schedule a hearing for a backlog bill because some of
944 that money that goes from the -- curated in our park

945 maintenance backlog bill would also be extended in the House
946 version to the Bureau of Indian Education. It is an
947 important force of -- source of money to try and help change
948 and reform that system.

949 Mr. Cameron, let me also ask you. You talked about
950 benefits of -- in your written testimony of relocating and
951 DOI from Washington, D.C. Can you just simply explain some
952 of the long-term savings that a relocation would actually
953 realize?

954 *Mr. Cameron. Yes, Mr. Bishop. So there are a number
955 of types of savings.

956 For one thing, the rental cost in most cities in the
957 West is a lot cheaper than in the main Interior building or
958 in Washington, D.C., more generally.

959 Travel costs, travel time. Most of the airplane trips
960 are from the East Coast to the West Coast. If we had the
961 Geological Survey headquarters and BLM headquarters out West
962 somewhere, there would be a lot more one-hour plane trips
963 instead of four-hour plane trips.

964 Cost of living for our employees is a lot cheaper out
965 West in most locations than it would be here. And there is a
966 list of a dozen or so variables that we are looking at.

967 *Mr. Bishop. All right. Can you -- let's talk about
968 something specific. If we actually did increase the effort
969 on the local level to have better communications between all

970 these different stovepipe agencies and divisions, can you
971 tell me how that would possibly impact, let's say, like,
972 wildfire response, wildfire mitigation if we could coordinate
973 with the Forest Service?

974 *Mr. Cameron. Yes, Mr. Chairman - Mr. Bishop.

975 *Mr. Bishop. I like that much better, too.

976 [Laughter.]

977 *Mr. Cameron. So, typically, for most significant
978 issues multiple bureaus are involved. And the traditional
979 approach has been, if there are issues or conflicts between
980 bureaus --

981 *Mr. Bishop. Mr. Cameron, you have got 25 seconds to
982 say it. Tell me.

983 *Mr. Cameron. Okay. There will be closer coordination,
984 tighter coordination at the regional level, less decisions
985 kicked up to Washington.

986 *Mr. Bishop. Look, if you guys have not been conversing
987 or talking to people -- because I remember the first map,
988 which was done along county lines. Now it is done along
989 State lines. That came from conversations with the States.
990 I wonder if you have not been communicating why was Mr.
991 Cason out there -- Ms. Sloan was out in my particular area --
992 talking to people about it? We have had those conversations.

993 I am over -- I yield back.

994 *Mr. Cox. Thank you. We will now recognize the

995 gentleman from Arizona, Mr. Gosar, for five minutes.

996 *Mr. Gosar. Secretary, Cameron, what ways is the DOI's
997 reorganization going to improve on-the-ground responses? I
998 mean I can give you a number of ones from Arizona that we are
999 looking at: Fish Wildlife Service reaction in regards to Lake
1000 Havasu, and Forest Service is in part of it, but the RFP
1001 situation for large-scale landscape timber thinnings -- tell
1002 me how it is going to act on the ground, the reorganization.

1003 *Mr. Cameron. So I can give you one good example that
1004 is relevant, especially, I think, to Arizona. I know that
1005 you and the Chairman of the full Committee are both concerned
1006 about water resource issues in Arizona. Well, the invasive
1007 salt cedar, or tamarisk plant, causes major problems in
1008 riparian areas, in terms of depleting water supply. Well, it
1009 goes through BLM land, it goes through Fish and Wildlife
1010 Service land, it goes to park land, it goes through State and
1011 private land, it goes through Indian reservations. By
1012 increasing coordination at the regional level on a multi-
1013 bureau basis, we can make smarter decisions, we can allocate
1014 our resources more intelligently, and we can deliver better
1015 results for the American people.

1016 So that is just one example. Fire is another, forest
1017 management, water resource management in the Central Valley
1018 of California would be another.

1019 *Dr. Gosar. Yes, I think the only drawback to your

1020 plan, though, was that we would -- if we were a part of
1021 California, from Arizona, we would ask that the headquarters
1022 be in Arizona so that California came to Arizona for that
1023 aspect. No pun intended.

1024 [Laughter.]

1025 *Dr. Gosar. Now, how would the regional directors
1026 interact?

1027 *Mr. Cameron. So the bureau regional directors would
1028 continue to have their traditional chain of command to
1029 Washington. We would not be attempting to change any
1030 statutory delegations for any of the bureaus, contrary to
1031 what my former colleague at Interior felt a few minutes ago.

1032 But at the regional level we would have an Interior
1033 regional director who would be a coordinator in chief,
1034 convener in chief, to pull his or her peers together to deal
1035 with common issues so that, again, there is more decision-
1036 making by career senior executives at the regional level,
1037 fewer issues kicked up to Washington. This has worked in
1038 California, for instance, where Paul Souza, the regional
1039 director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, is coordinating
1040 the activities of the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S.
1041 Geological Survey.

1042 It is great to have one person being able to convene all
1043 the bureaus with equities in an issue, rather than kicking
1044 things up to Washington for decisions 3,000 miles away.

1045 *Dr. Gosar. So give me an oversight about
1046 accountability.

1047 I mean part of the problem that we have had in Arizona
1048 on a number of issues has been lack of accountability. Tell
1049 me how that response time is going to change. And what are
1050 the steps of accountability?

1051 *Mr. Cameron. So, by having -- we will be working on --
1052 for -- individual performance standards for the person who is
1053 charged with being an interior regional director in each one
1054 of the regions, and there will be specific expectations in
1055 terms of what that person's scope is or is not, on a region-
1056 by-region basis. And they would be reporting to the Deputy
1057 Secretary in Washington.

1058 So we will have accountability, but we will be not
1059 cutting out the bureau directors and the assistant
1060 secretaries. The traditional chains of command would also
1061 apply.

1062 *Dr. Gosar. So I am going to be more specific. We had
1063 this debacle in Lake Havasu, where we had a regional director
1064 overstep his direction, a totally illegal action. Give me a
1065 response of how, under the new guidelines, we would have
1066 resolution based upon an egregious attempt to supersede the
1067 rules and regulatory state (sic).

1068 *Mr. Cameron. So if there was a conflict between our
1069 bureaus, for instance at the regional level, the interior

1070 regional director would be charged with pulling people
1071 together, defining the nature of the conflict, narrowing it
1072 to the extent it could be, clarifying issues that would then
1073 be rapidly elevated to the Secretary's office in Washington,
1074 rather than letting things fester. And we would identify, I
1075 think, problems sooner and get them elevated faster if they
1076 couldn't be resolved at the regional level.

1077 *Dr. Gosar. End of the day, can't get resolution. What
1078 -- how do we look at redirecting or putting somebody in a
1079 position for success, instead of failure?

1080 *Mr. Cameron. One thing we can do is, by having the
1081 people who are making the decisions closer to the place where
1082 the decisions are going to have impact on the ground -- and
1083 that is part of the rationale for moving BLM and USGS
1084 headquarters West, so you will have more informed
1085 headquarters people, as opposed to people who are located
1086 thousands of miles away and have, you know, never been on the
1087 ground in Maricopa County, for instance, or St. George, Utah.

1088 *Dr. Gosar. Thank you, Assistant Secretary.

1089 *Mr. Cox. Thank you so much. I will recognize myself
1090 again for another five minutes.

1091 But, you know, the questions that are being brought up
1092 naturally all go back to the same basic question -- is
1093 regarding the document. We have requested it, you have had
1094 20 days to review the doc -- that should be more than enough

1095 time.

1096 And, as you know, the deliberative process, it is not a
1097 legally defensible reason to deny Congress this document.

1098 And can you provide any type of legal justification
1099 whatsoever for withholding the plan?

1100 *Mr. Cameron. Sir, for once I am glad I am not an
1101 attorney, so I won't dare to go outside of my area of
1102 expertise. So I cannot provide that.

1103 *Mr. Cox. Thanks so much. And just back to the general
1104 questions again.

1105 Mr. Bromwich, any evidence at all that this
1106 reorganization strategy or plan is going to strengthen agency
1107 decision-making?

1108 *Mr. Bromwich. Well, if there is, we haven't seen it.
1109 And it is up to the agency to provide it.

1110 I looked at the reorganization website that DOI
1111 sponsors. There has been nothing posted on it since November
1112 1.

1113 One of the key elements of a reorganization, if it is
1114 going to succeed, is to continue to push information out to
1115 all of the stakeholders who are affected by it, most
1116 particularly the employees in the agencies that are going to
1117 be affected. And you can read through everything that is on
1118 the DOI reorganization website in less than half an hour.
1119 And as I say, it hasn't been updated in five months since

1120 November 1.

1121 So you can't handle a reorganization that is a mystery
1122 shrouded in another mystery. You need to be open about it.
1123 You need to provide the details of what you're doing. You
1124 need to lay out the costs and benefits that will be
1125 accomplished through the reorganization. None of that has
1126 been done.

1127 Mr. Cameron has done a very good job of talking in
1128 generalities, but they are only generalities. And without
1129 having the kind of analysis that undergirds a real and
1130 potentially successful reorganization, it is simply not going
1131 to work. If the reorganization that has been described by
1132 Mr. Cameron and has previously been described by Secretary
1133 Zinke were submitted to a board of directors of any major
1134 company in this country, it would be rejected flatly for lack
1135 of detail.

1136 *Mr. Cox. Thank you. Ms. Rappaport Clark, in -- with
1137 regard -- is there any evidence at all that the
1138 reorganization will provide -- or improve protection for
1139 endangered species, or other natural resources?

1140 *Ms. Clark. Mr. Chairman, I don't see it. And I will
1141 just echo what Mr. Bromwich just said. It is disturbingly
1142 sparse in details. And the coordination at the regional
1143 level, the coordination at the field level actually does
1144 occur. So sending headquarters people to the West isn't

1145 going to enhance interagency coordination and collaboration
1146 and resource sharing. It will undermine, actually, bureau
1147 director coordination if half are in the West and half are in
1148 the East.

1149 And it all -- at the end of the day, employees are
1150 confused, and important resources like endangered species,
1151 water, natural resources, lands are just a big confused mess.
1152 I don't see how it is organized in a way that will allow and
1153 support more efficient decision-making or stakeholder
1154 engagement.

1155 *Mr. Cox. Thank you so much. And Chairman Frazier,
1156 what do you think the Interior could do with the -- you know,
1157 there has been 60 million spent so far. What you think the
1158 Interior could do with an extra \$60 million?

1159 *Mr. Frazier. Well, with all of the flooding going on,
1160 I can think of two roads on our reservation that could use
1161 it. I think BIA route 12 and route 7 would sure use -- could
1162 use \$60 million. I think we done a engineering report on
1163 one, and it was going to be over 30 million, so we could
1164 better use that money on our reservations, and I am sure
1165 other Tribes throughout can use them, too.

1166 *Mr. Cox. Thanks so much. And with that I will yield
1167 back my time and now to Ranking Member Gohmert for five
1168 minutes.

1169 *Mr. Gohmert. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1170 And Chairman Frazier, I understood you to say that you
1171 didn't recall hearings and what not. But I can assure you
1172 the Committee would be very interested in any suggestions you
1173 or other Native Americans would have for suggestions about
1174 reorganization.

1175 I am one that doesn't really care if there wasn't a lot
1176 of internal proposals, especially from top people at DOI. I
1177 think it is a bureaucratic nightmare, and I think the
1178 treatment of Native Americans by BIA and others has not been
1179 what it should have been. So please consider this as a
1180 chance to get information. If DOI is not interested, I know
1181 from Chairman Cox, we would both -- and this Committee would
1182 be interested in any suggestions you have. So please keep
1183 that in mind.

1184 And with regard to the reorganization, you know, Mr.
1185 Cameron, I know you are aware that in recent years,
1186 especially the last Administration, but even going before
1187 that, the Department of the Interior has been plagued with
1188 harassment claims. And so I am wondering what a
1189 reorganization would do to help address some of these. Well,
1190 it is just far too widespread, the reports of workplace
1191 harassment.

1192 *Mr. Cameron. Yes, thank you for that question, Mr.
1193 Gohmert.

1194 So both under Secretary Zinke and now Secretary

1195 Bernhardt, there is considerable attention being paid on the
1196 part of the Department of workplace harassment issues.
1197 Totally unacceptable. The Department has a no-tolerance
1198 policy.

1199 When he was Deputy Secretary, Secretary Bernhardt
1200 directed all the bureaus to come up with action plans that
1201 would deal with the harassment issue. And he held quarterly
1202 meetings with those bureaus to track what they were doing on
1203 the harassment plans.

1204 We have -- I have personally participated in a series of
1205 site visits and meetings with employees to communicate the
1206 significance of the issue and the need to deal with it. So
1207 we are going on all on all cylinders to try to fix these
1208 problems, Mr. Gohmert.

1209 *Mr. Gohmert. Well, I figure any organization that has
1210 the kind of harassment claims that DOI has had needs
1211 reassessment and reorganization to try to avoid that. You
1212 also need reassignment of individuals, if they can't be
1213 fired. When I was in the Army the threat was also -- was
1214 always you are going to end up on the island at the end of
1215 the Aleutian -- just a small listening post. But there has
1216 got to be places. If you can't fire them -- they need to be
1217 reassigned if they are guilty of any type harassment and you
1218 are not able to fire them, but that ought to be part of any
1219 reorganization.

1220 And I would also tell you, with regard to the Park
1221 Service, I was absolutely appalled, being the guy that opened
1222 the World War II Memorial, when barricades had been rented or
1223 purchased and put up in an open air memorial to do nothing
1224 but harass the Nation's veterans that put their lives on the
1225 line. And it was clear, I mean there were -- whether it is
1226 Mount Vernon, where Federal Government only owned the parking
1227 lot, they did everything they could to make everybody's life
1228 miserable.

1229 I was really proud of Iwo Jima veterans. When I got
1230 over to try to open that memorial for them, the bus of World
1231 War II veterans had already just run over and busted up the
1232 barricade. They said, "We didn't let the enemy keep us from
1233 getting to the top of Mount Suribachi, and we weren't going
1234 to let a little wooden barricade keep us from the memorial."

1235 But those kind of harassment of the public in general --
1236 and I didn't -- everybody I talked to at the lowest levels of
1237 the Park Service had nothing to do with it. They loved
1238 working with people and trying to make things accommodating,
1239 but that came from high levels at the Park Service.

1240 I was part of a Christian gathering, maybe 200,000. At
1241 the last minute, high up in the Park Service, they ordered --
1242 they have one small opening, which forced people to stand in
1243 line for hours, and then they tried to close it down early
1244 because they didn't have enough water because they didn't

1245 anticipate the last-minute directive by the Park Service.

1246 So please keep in mind those kind of things as you look
1247 at the reorganization. I appreciate it.

1248 *Mr. Cameron. Yes, sir, absolutely.

1249 *Mr. Cox. We will recognize the gentleman from Arizona
1250 for five minutes.

1251 *Mr. Grijalva. Thank you. Mr. Cameron, in the
1252 testimony -- you said in response to the feedback that you --
1253 that the agency received from Tribes, that the Bureau of
1254 Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education, the Office of
1255 Special Trustee for American Indians would be left out of the
1256 reorganization.

1257 I have a letter here from a BIA regional office telling
1258 tribal leaders in my own district that the Department is
1259 closing an office and consolidating the workload to another
1260 office.

1261 We also heard from Chairman Frazier about the Great
1262 Plains lacking a permanent regional director after the last
1263 one was moved around several times.

1264 We have the communications from the National Congress of
1265 American Indians to Mr. Bernhardt back in December that DOI
1266 "has not consulted with Tribes regarding the overwhelming
1267 internal restructuring of BIA within the last two years.
1268 Much change has occurred within BIA, none of which was
1269 consulted on with Tribes."

1270 It doesn't sound to me like the Tribes are getting their
1271 wish of being left out of the reorganization at this point.
1272 I have been hearing that that is happening throughout
1273 Interior. Mr. Cameron, will you commit to giving this
1274 Committee a list of programs and offices that have been
1275 closed, consolidated, or reduced in staff by more than 30
1276 percent since January 20th of 2017, so that we can have that
1277 information?

1278 Since we don't have a plan, at least we know what the
1279 unspoken plan is at this point.

1280 *Mr. Cameron. Chairman Grijalva, I will be happy to
1281 take that back and see if we can pull together that
1282 information.

1283 I would point out that, in every administration going
1284 back to 1849, there are always internal changes that are
1285 being made. At a micro-scale, offices are being opened,
1286 offices are being closed, staff or functions are being moved
1287 from one place to another. So, you know, it shouldn't
1288 surprise anyone that something should be happening -- could
1289 be happening in BIA or BIE over a period of time, but it is
1290 unrelated to the broader reorganization activity of the
1291 Department.

1292 I would also like to point out --

1293 *Mr. Grijalva. Oh, I will be surprised if we get that
1294 information promptly, to be honest with you, given the track

1295 record here. We don't have a plan. That is in some space
1296 that we are not -- we can't have access to it, even though it
1297 is an Oversight Committee, even though it is our
1298 jurisdiction.

1299 It seems to be a plan that is full of details after the
1300 fact. And while -- and even on this request about which was
1301 -- been reduced by 30 percent, we will wait and see how the
1302 leadership in Interior responds to that.

1303 I -- Mr. Bromwich, I was going to ask about
1304 reorganization and the issue of how successful it can be or
1305 can't be. You pointed out some points. If a reorganization
1306 for the purposes of efficiency, better response to the
1307 public, better enforcement, and appreciation for the legal
1308 mandates that an agency might have, if that was a
1309 reorganization heading in that direction, for efficiency and
1310 response, how do you plan for that?

1311 *Mr. Bromwich. Just --

1312 *Mr. Grijalva. Because what we are doing --

1313 *Mr. Bromwich. You plan for it by identifying what the
1314 inefficiencies and problems are. You identify the problems,
1315 and then you figure out a way to solve them. You don't
1316 announce a global reorganization in response to vague
1317 concerns. Maybe a small number, maybe a large number of
1318 specific concerns if the reorganization is not designed to
1319 address them.

1320 That is why you have to have an analysis of what the
1321 problems are. And if you are thinking of a reorganization,
1322 before you announce it you do that analysis. You publicize
1323 that analysis. You discuss the changes you are considering
1324 with the stakeholders, particularly your own employees who
1325 are going to be responsible for implementing it, and then you
1326 remain flexible in making adjustments to it, depending on the
1327 analysis that you do and the feedback that you get.

1328 What seems to have happened here is a -- people fell in
1329 love with a very ambitious reorganization plan without doing
1330 the very important -- the essential spade work to see what
1331 was necessary and how to accomplish it.

1332 *Mr. Grijalva. Would that fit the definition of a
1333 vanity plan?

1334 *Mr. Bromwich. Would it fit the definition of what?

1335 *Mr. Grijalva. A vanity plan that you said earlier --

1336 *Mr. Bromwich. Yes.

1337 *Mr. Grijalva. Okay.

1338 *Mr. Bromwich. Yes. You announce something with a big
1339 press release, a big set of statements, and then staff is
1340 left to fill in the details.

1341 *Mr. Grijalva. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

1342 *Mr. Cox. Thank you so much. We will now recognize the
1343 gentleman from Utah, Mr. Bishop.

1344 *Mr. Bishop. Thank you. Mr. Grijalva, that is the way

1345 everything is done around here. It is a vanity plan
1346 staging --

1347 *Mr. Grijalva. I work out of humility, sir, humility.

1348 *Mr. Bishop. Yes, right, okay.

1349 Mr. Cameron, let's talk about some of that spade work
1350 that happens. What does SES mean?

1351 *Mr. Cameron. Senior executive service.

1352 *Mr. Bishop. And did you not have one of those SES -- a
1353 two-day conference with those people on this plan?

1354 *Mr. Cameron. We did, sir. It was more than a year
1355 ago. We brought in all the regional --

1356 *Mr. Bishop. Did they have recommendations?

1357 *Mr. Cameron. We spent two days chatting with them,
1358 they gave us lots of ideas, and we modified our original
1359 conception of the plan based on their feedback.

1360 *Mr. Bishop. So you have implemented those types of
1361 things?

1362 *Mr. Cameron. Yes, sir. We are in the process of
1363 implementing them.

1364 *Mr. Bishop. And as you go and talk to interest groups,
1365 whatever they be, you have implemented those changes, the
1366 changes from the county lines to the State lines. Was that
1367 pushed by the States?

1368 *Mr. Cameron. It was pushed by the Western Governors
1369 Association, in particular.

1370 *Mr. Bishop. Look, I don't want to actually defend any
1371 bureaucracy in Washington, especially because the Department
1372 of the Interior, let's face it, if you were actually a
1373 business, you would have been bankrupt years ago.

1374 But you have not just been silent on these issues. I am
1375 just looking at this. You already have provided 27,000 pages
1376 of documents in response to questions about Secretary
1377 Bernhardt's schedule. The Committee has received 19,982
1378 pages from the DOI in response to inquiries on the Trump
1379 Administration's revisions on national monuments. You
1380 provided the Committee with telephone records of the Bureau
1381 of Safety and Environmental Enforcement Director, requested
1382 by the majority. DOI has provided a response letter to the
1383 majority seeking information documents related to their
1384 proposed reforms and a FOIA request. Outstanding Committee
1385 requests currently being negotiated include scheduling
1386 transcripts, interviews with four members of Secretary
1387 Bernhardt's staff regarding calendars. You have been sending
1388 stuff up to us. It is not just a void that happens to be
1389 down here.

1390 Now, look, I hope -- are you planning on a third round?
1391 Unfortunately, I have a life outside of this Committee, so I
1392 am going to have to leave after this one. I will apologize
1393 for leaving you alone there.

1394 But you are dealing with people. If government was

1395 producing widgets on an assembly line, you could give some
1396 kind of statistical data of what is or is not working. What
1397 you are dealing with right now is individuals, and how can
1398 you maximize the efficiency of those individuals, vis a vis
1399 the people that they are allegedly supposed to serve.

1400 From my personal experiences in dealing in the West --
1401 and I live in one of those States that 60 percent of us, 60
1402 percent of my State is controlled by you, you are the slum
1403 lords of Utah -- it is easy to work with the local officials.
1404 They live in the community. They know the situations. They
1405 usually are the most creative.

1406 On almost any time we have a problem, it is as those
1407 creations go up the food chain and end up in Washington.
1408 That is why we have the significant problem of how do we
1409 actually make Washington understand what is happening a four-
1410 hour plane ride away from what is going on.

1411 So the question is can you have good, decent people here
1412 in Washington make good, decent decisions? Of course, you
1413 can. Can you have good, decent people in the localities
1414 making good, decent decisions? Of course, you can. Can you
1415 have rotten officials in both places? Yeah, and we have.
1416 The question is what would give the propensity of a better
1417 organization? How can people at some point actually know how
1418 they can get to a solution and talk to somebody who's making
1419 a decision?

1420 Let's face it. I tell my constituents I have the
1421 greatest job in the world. You don't know what I do and you
1422 can't get a hold of me. And if you don't like the decisions
1423 our agencies do, what are you going to do, fly back to
1424 Washington and throw rocks at the window? It just doesn't
1425 happen.

1426 If those decisions are going to be made closer to where
1427 the people are, the propensity will be those decisions will
1428 be more reflective of what their decisions -- what their
1429 needs are, and there is an opportunity of getting some kind
1430 of feedback. It doesn't happen in the status quo. It hasn't
1431 happened in decades back here with the status quo.

1432 So this vision of what you -- can happen is something
1433 that I certainly hope is going to be pursued. Because you
1434 are talking about how we can give services to people. Not
1435 responding to lawsuits, not responding to special interest
1436 groups, but how you can get response back to people, and how
1437 they can have their input.

1438 Now, I would love to ask you some more questions on what
1439 you think you can do, like USGS going to Denver -- why you
1440 want to be in Denver I don't know, but the USGS going back
1441 there, what the possibility would be there. But I have only
1442 got 22 seconds. If you can say something in 15 seconds, go
1443 for it.

1444 *Mr. Cameron. You are absolutely right, your analysis

1445 of the situation. And by having people -- having decision-
1446 makers within a one-hour plane ride instead of a four-hour
1447 plane ride, you are going to have it easier for constituents
1448 to get the decision-makers, and you are going to have people
1449 who are making the decisions who actually understand what is
1450 happening on the ground.

1451 *Mr. Bishop. I don't want a one-hour plane ride, I want
1452 to walk around the block to him.

1453 I yield back.

1454 *Mr. Cox. Thank you very much, Mr. Bishop. And I will
1455 recognize myself for five minutes. And to continue along
1456 that same vein, you know, I would like to just add that over
1457 90 percent of Interior employees already work outside the
1458 D.C. region. And so, certainly -- in fact, what we kind of
1459 said before is this is really a solution in search of a
1460 problem.

1461 But with regard, you know, to the unified regions, the
1462 question is why 12 regions. And Secretary Zinke envisioned
1463 having, you know, Interior Regional Directors, or these IRDs
1464 in charge of each of these 12 regional unified regions. And
1465 in your testimony you said, "We're exploring what the
1466 permanent role might be for an individual designated as an
1467 interior regional director."

1468 And you are proposing to stand up an entirely new layer
1469 of bureaucracy without knowing what the people working there

1470 will do all day or what their authority will be. Is that --
1471 would that be a correct statement?

1472 *Mr. Cameron. Mr. Chairman, so we are looking at a
1473 small -- the focus would vary from region to region, because
1474 the issues in California are different from the issues in the
1475 southeast or the -- or from the Great Lakes, or from the
1476 northeast. So the particular portfolio of an interior
1477 regional director would vary, based on the needs of the area.
1478 California and Texas are very different.

1479 *Mr. Cox. Thanks. And any -- can you offer how these
1480 ideas will be selected? Will they be chosen by the executive
1481 resources board, which is stacked with political appointees
1482 and run by Mr. Bernhardt?

1483 And last year I think the plan was for Mr. Bernhardt to
1484 have veto authority over decisions made by the IRB. Or is
1485 that still the case?

1486 *Mr. Cameron. Well, ultimately, the Secretary of the
1487 Interior is responsible for virtually every decision at the
1488 Department. So, you know, the buck ultimately stops in the
1489 Secretary's office. If these are members of the senior
1490 executive service, which is the current plan, then by
1491 definition they would -- their selection would be approved by
1492 the Executive Resources Board.

1493 And it is worth pointing out there are career civil
1494 servants on the Executive Resources Board.

1495 I would also like to point out that since President
1496 Carter signed the Civil Service Reform Act in 1978 it has
1497 been policy that SESers should be rotating on a fairly
1498 regular basis. The OPM target is 15 percent a year, and that
1499 has rarely been realized.

1500 *Mr. Cox. Thanks. And with respect to the plan for Mr.
1501 Bernhardt to veto authority over decisions made by the IRD,
1502 is -- will that still be the case?

1503 *Mr. Cameron. Well, as Secretary, you know, ultimately
1504 he is responsible for all key decisions at the Department, as
1505 is the case now, and has been the case for 150 years. So
1506 yes, the Secretary ultimately has the ability within the
1507 constraints of law to change decisions that are made lower in
1508 the organization.

1509 *Mr. Cox. Thanks so much. And to each of the
1510 witnesses, is there anything else you would like to add? And
1511 we can start with Chairman Frazier.

1512 *Mr. Frazier. Thank you. You know, one of the things
1513 -- and I was just thinking back when we were talking about
1514 getting everybody back together, or how it would be easier
1515 for Tribes. This past spring, when we were having flooding,
1516 USGS has a measuring station down along the Moreau River,
1517 where I live, in the community of Whitehorse, South Dakota.

1518 One of the things is they come and they never did talk
1519 to us. And finally, one day we found out they were going

1520 down there to collect data, because we needed to be prepared
1521 for -- in case there was more flooding going to happen. The
1522 only way that they talk to us is I had to send a tribal
1523 police officer down to tell him that I was wanting to get a
1524 report what is going on.

1525 So even though a lot of these agencies do not
1526 communicate, do not consult with Tribes -- USGS, minerals --
1527 it seems like they don't have the experience to know issues
1528 of Indian Tribes and Indian people. So that is kind of a big
1529 issue, and it needs to be resolved, whether this
1530 reorganization happens or not, you know. And this is the guy
1531 to do it, I guess. So I am getting -- thank you.

1532 *Mr. Cox. Thank you.

1533 Ms. Rappaport Clark?

1534 *Ms. Clark. Thank you. I just have to say I think this
1535 is becoming more confusing.

1536 There seems to be some suggestion that decisions only
1537 happen in Washington. And there are 70,000 employees at the
1538 Interior Department, many of which, as you mentioned, are in
1539 the West. And there are qualified refuge managers, park
1540 superintendents, State directors of the Bureau of Land
1541 Management, all of whom work very closely and
1542 collaboratively.

1543 Are there conflicts from time to time? Yes. And I
1544 agree with Mr. Cameron that the buck does stop with the

1545 Secretary of the Interior. But moving and reorganizing to
1546 deal with undefined or ill-defined challenges, it seems to me
1547 to be really wrongheaded and reckless.

1548 And the notion that senior executive service folks are
1549 supposed to be moved around might be true based on a
1550 President Carter-signed memo, but, clearly, the way that it
1551 has been handled by this Administration with surprise letters
1552 and no consultation -- and the consultations that have
1553 occurred with the senior executives on this issue are
1554 lectures, not conversation.

1555 There is a culture of fear now, Mr. Chairman. And folks
1556 are not sharing their concerns, their thoughts, their
1557 contributions for fear of what will happen when they raise
1558 their head and offer opinions. The employees of the
1559 Department are not in a good place. And this reorganization
1560 isn't helping it.

1561 *Mr. Cox. Thank you so much. And with that I will
1562 recognize the gentlemen from Texas.

1563 *Mr. Gohmert. Thank you, Chairman. Well, I want to
1564 follow up on the question for -- the process of relocating
1565 headquarters staff positions West.

1566 Mr. Cameron, explain the process for relocating
1567 headquarters staff West.

1568 *Mr. Cameron. Thank you, Mr. Gohmert. So what we are
1569 doing is we are looking at -- we are having conversations

1570 with the leadership of USGS and BLM on this topic. We are
1571 identifying geographic options. USGS seems to be honing in
1572 on the Denver Metropolitan Area. BLM less so. I think there
1573 are more places in play. We are having conversations with
1574 the General Services Administration about the availability of
1575 office space in various locations, about the cost of office
1576 rent in various locations.

1577 We are -- BLM, in particular, I think, is having
1578 conversations with headquarters staff about who might want to
1579 move west and who might want to go on a voluntary basis. It
1580 is sort of dependent upon the selection of a city. So those
1581 conversations are being ongoing.

1582 Congress appropriated \$17.5 million in 2019. We only
1583 got that money around two months ago. So I think it is
1584 unreasonable to think that we would have it all spent and
1585 clearly defined by now. Besides, we have an obligation to
1586 communicate with the appropriators on what our plans are for
1587 spending that money.

1588 So those are just some of the things. We are -- we have
1589 -- in terms of benefit cost analysis on the administrative
1590 functions, we have gotten a report from one consulting firm
1591 on information technology, a second one on our procurement
1592 function, a third one coming out this summer on human
1593 resource management. And so we think we will have lots of
1594 intellectual fodder to make intelligent decisions to save

1595 money on back-office functions so we can have more dollars
1596 going to the front line.

1597 *Mr. Gohmert. Well, what are some of the benefits you
1598 have seen from the Bureau of Reclamation moving west?

1599 *Mr. Cameron. The vast majority of the headquarters
1600 operation for Reclamation has been in Denver for quite a few
1601 years. To Mr. Bishop's point earlier, it is just a lot
1602 easier for constituents to go to Denver from Utah or from
1603 Nevada or from Arizona or from Texas than to have to go all
1604 the way to Washington, D.C. if they have a problem.

1605 Also, the people who are located in Denver are much more
1606 familiar with Western issues because they are much more
1607 likely to get out on the ground, to Mr. Bishop's point, as
1608 well. So we think we have got better decision-making because
1609 we have got elements of headquarters outside of Washington in
1610 the vicinity of the people who are actually being served by
1611 those missions of the Department, and we anticipate with BLM
1612 and USGS there will be similar advantages.

1613 *Mr. Gohmert. Well, I know, from confronting people
1614 that work for Department of the Interior around different
1615 places in the country, one the most common expressions you
1616 hear in response to our questions is, "That is above my pay
1617 grade, I don't know." And so it would be nice to have the
1618 people who are making those decisions at their pay grades out
1619 there closer to what is happening.

1620 You mentioned previously that the Department of the
1621 Interior commissioned three external assessments examining
1622 human resources management. And further, makes a point --
1623 the USGS was mentioned a number of times in the hearing
1624 today. They were always considered the gold standard when it
1625 came to any type of measurement. And then we have had
1626 hearings in this room where we found out USGS had people that
1627 just commonly changed the actual measurements without any
1628 manner or means -- no explanation for why they were routinely
1629 changed from what they factually were.

1630 So I can't help but think that if people -- whether it
1631 is the 90 percent that are out in the field, if they have
1632 supervisors that are closer to them, that we will see better
1633 results and less misapplication.

1634 *Mr. Cameron. I think you are absolutely right, Mr.
1635 Gohmert. Having senior management closer to on-the-ground
1636 activity is always going to produce closer supervision,
1637 better communications, and we hope, quite frankly, that more
1638 decisions will be made by solid regional leaders, career SES
1639 leaders, and fewer decisions will be kicked up to Washington,
1640 where the opportunity to make a mistake is perhaps higher,
1641 because a decision-maker is remote and not as knowledgeable
1642 of local issues.

1643 *Mr. Gohmert. Okay, thank you, and I appreciate the
1644 Chairman having the hearing.

1645 *Mr. Cox. Thank you so much. I want to thank all the
1646 witnesses again for being here today.

1647 Our -- reorganizations are time-consuming and expensive
1648 efforts. As we have heard today, success depends on careful
1649 analysis and meaningful consultation with employees,
1650 Congress, States, Tribes, and local governments and other
1651 stakeholders. To date, Interior's reorganization has been
1652 done in the dark, without analysis and meaningful
1653 consultation. This Committee has yet to see any real
1654 information. And as a result, the Department is failing in
1655 its responsibilities to this country's citizens, native
1656 nations, and native peoples.

1657 And in failing in these responsibilities to its
1658 employees, it is also failing in its responsibility to manage
1659 its resources for nature's -- for our Nation's future
1660 generations. And that is just unacceptable.

1661 Secretary Bernhardt has an opportunity to course
1662 correct. I hope he takes that opportunity.

1663 I am going to ask unanimous consent to insert the
1664 following documents into the record: Defenders of Wildlife
1665 letter to Secretary Zinke dated May 29th, 2018; Great Plains
1666 Tribal Chairmen's Association, Incorporated letter dated
1667 August 20th, 2013; the GAO report 18-427, "Government
1668 Reorganization: Key Questions to Assess Agency Reform
1669 Efforts.''

1670 [The items submitted by Mr. Cox for the record follow:]

1671

1672 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

1673

1674 *Mr. Cox. The members of the Committee may have some
1675 additional questions for the witnesses, and we will ask you
1676 to respond to these in writing. Under Committee rule 3(o),
1677 members of the Committee must submit witness questions within
1678 3 business days following the hearing, and the hearing record
1679 will be held open for 10 business days for these responses.

1680 If there is no further business, without objection, the
1681 Committee stands adjourned.

1682 [Whereupon, at 11:40 a.m., the Subcommittee was
1683 adjourned.]