Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 22, 2016

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations, US House of Representatives
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations, US House of Representatives
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum,

As the Appropriations Committee begins its work to set fiscal priorities for FY 2017, we urge you to work in a bipartisan, bicameral way to ensure the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program is fully funded. The U.S. Department of the Interior has estimated that $480 million dollars will be necessary to fully fund PILT in FY 2017.

PILT provides critical resources to nearly 1,900 counties across 49 states to offset lost property tax revenue due to the presence of tax-exempt federal lands within their jurisdictions. These dollars go toward supporting many critical services that counties are required to provide on federal public lands, despite their inability to collect property taxes on federal lands.

Current discretionary appropriations for the PILT program are set to expire on September 30, 2016. Without the certainty of full PILT funding for FY 2017, we risk severely crippling counties' ability to provide essential services for tourists and residents such as education, law enforcement, search and rescue, road maintenance and public health.

Moving forward, we hope Congress can work together to enact a fiscally responsible, long-term and sustainable solution to fully fund PILT in FY17 and beyond. As counties across the United States work to balance their budgets, it is essential that we act to reaffirm the federal government's long-standing commitment to public lands counties by fully funding PILT.

We look forward to working with you to end the financial uncertainty facing thousands of counties nationwide, and we thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Jared Polis
Member of Congress

Dan Benishek M.D.
Member of Congress

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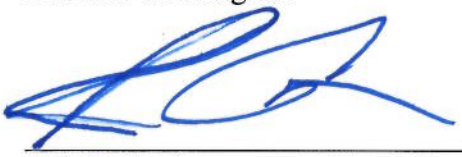
Paul Gosar
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

Scott Tipton
Member of Congress

Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress



Ralph Abraham, M.D.
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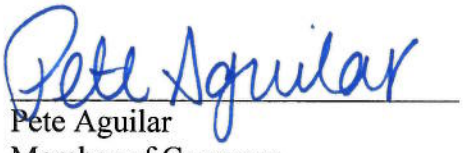

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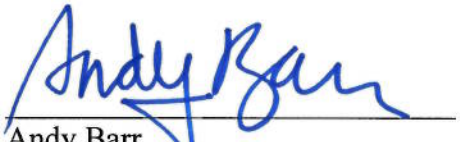

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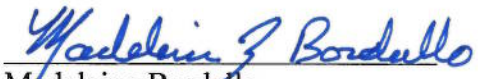

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Julia Brownley
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Ken Buck
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Lois Capps
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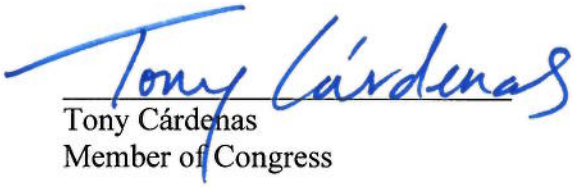
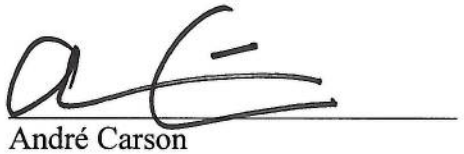
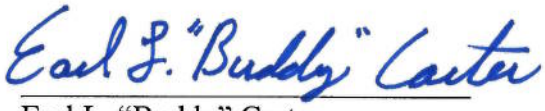


Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
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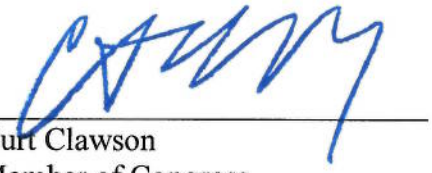

Curt Clawson
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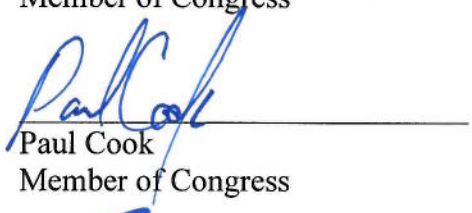

Paul Cook
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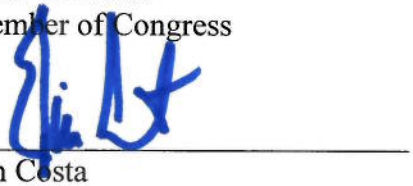

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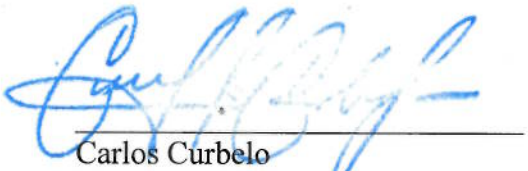

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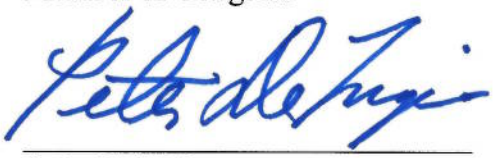

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Trent Franks
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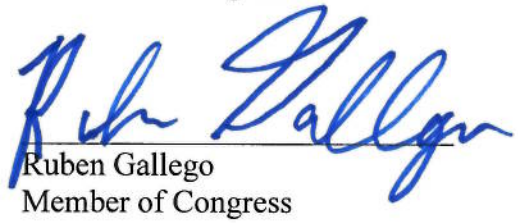

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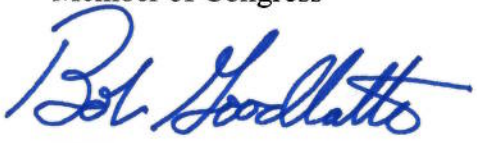

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