

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 3, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
Vice Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
S-146A, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairwoman Mikulski:

With a two year budget agreement now in place, we understand that the Appropriations Committee is currently formulating legislation to fund the federal government for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2016.

Unfortunately, many of the appropriations bills approved this year have included deeply divisive policy riders that have no place in must pass legislation or in complicating the bipartisan cooperation necessary to pass such legislation. To avoid these harmful outcomes, we write to you to express our strong opposition to any riders that would gut America's foundational environmental laws and threaten our air, water, lands, and wildlife and urge you to bring forward legislation that is free of any harmful ideological riders.

Regardless of our opinions about any specific rider, it would be inappropriate to attach contentious policy riders to legislation to fund the government in FY 2016. Instead of undermining this legislation with irrelevant policy riders that have nothing to do with the nation's spending certainty, we strongly urge you to bring forward legislation free of controversial provisions to fund the federal government for the remainder of the fiscal year.

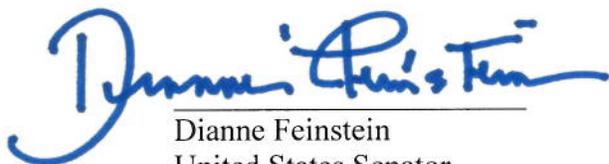
Sincerely,



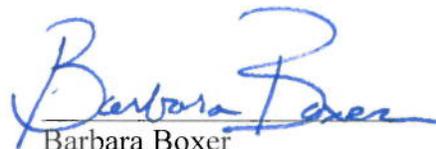
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Tom Udall
United States Senator



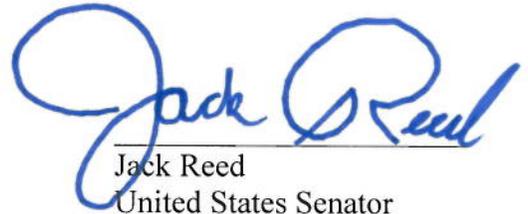
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



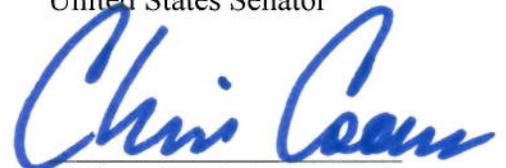
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Jeff Merkley
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



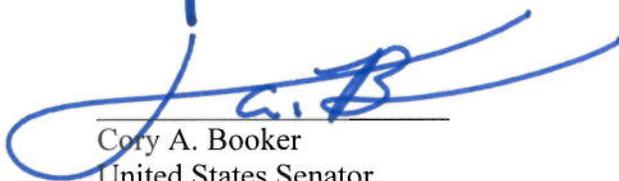
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



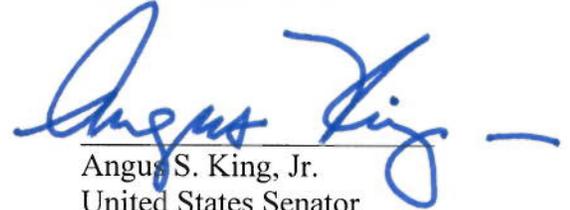
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator