



Ecological Society of America
1990 M St, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036

January 26, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
1233 Longworth House Office Building
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
233 Cannon House Office Building
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 2051

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leaders McConnell, Pelosi, and Schumer:

I am writing on behalf of the Ecological Society of America (ESA), the nation's largest society of professional ecologists. As a representative of over 10,000 ecological scientists, we ask you to protect the scientific integrity and independence of federal scientists. The scientific enterprise is composed of federal scientists, academia, nonprofit organizations and industry and is critical to keeping America at the forefront in scientific discovery and innovation.

Scientific research – and the free exchange of scientific knowledge, ideas, and data – must be valued and protected. Scientists, including scientists serving in the federal government, must be able to freely conduct their research, communicate their findings, publish their work, and ensure the accuracy of scientific information without fear of retaliation or restriction.

ESA and its members are committed to the integrity and availability of scientific research, and we want to emphasize our belief in the critical importance of the unrestricted sharing of scientific data and findings. Objective scientific findings play a crucial role in addressing a wide range of domestic and international challenges. Scientific knowledge is a critical element of decision-making, and unbiased scientific research is used to inform policies that serve the public interest. Without scientific integrity and independence, our nation would lose the benefits that science provides to the economy, policymaking, technological innovation, and society.

Congress has an opportunity to maintain America's leadership and prosperity, develop solutions to the challenges facing our nation, and encourage innovation. In order to realize these accomplishments, which will require scientific knowledge and expertise, it is imperative that the communication of scientific findings be made publicly available, scientific data be independent, and scientific integrity be protected.

Thank you for considering the critical importance of scientific integrity and independence. The Ecological Society of America looks forward to working with you and is available to provide assistance in any way we can.

Sincerely,

David M. Lodge
President

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