



February 22, 2018

Mr. Sean Saville
Campaign Manager
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
1100 First Street NE, Suite 825
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Saville,

As Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, I am writing to you in support of the Alliance for America's Fish and Wildlife's efforts to implement the recommendation of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources. This funding recommendation would dedicate \$1.3 billion annually in existing revenue from the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters to the Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program to diversify funding for the conservation and management of all fish and wildlife.

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection has a public trust responsibility for the conservation and management of all fish and wildlife in the state. Over 600 vertebrate species and tens of thousands of invertebrate species call Connecticut home. The Connecticut Wildlife Action Plan addresses the needs of our state's fish and wildlife with a focus on species of greatest conservation need. However, there are insufficient funds to fully implement the Plan, to prevent future endangered species listings and provide for the needs of all species and habitats. In particular, a dedicated and sustainable funding mechanism is needed for many wildlife species that are not pursued by hunters, trappers, or anglers.

Ongoing efforts for species such as the New England cottontail and the wood turtle have demonstrated the value of proactive conservation and could serve as a model for the conservation of other species. Proactive conservation is a wise investment; it is good for wildlife, taxpayers, businesses, local communities, and our citizens. The *Recovering America's Fish and Wildlife Act (H.R. 4647)* would provide the resources needed for proactive conservation nationwide. It would lead to future success stories like those we are celebrating for bald eagles and bluebirds, peregrine falcons, fisher, and many more. Our fish and wildlife are among our most valuable resources and are an integral part of our heritage. Dedicated, sustainable funding is the key to ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy the diverse fish and wildlife that are part of our natural heritage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert J. Klee', is written over a horizontal line.

Robert J. Klee,
Commissioner