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August 7, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
U.S. Capitol, S-230
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate
U.S. Capitol, S-221
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

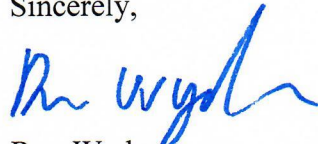
I write to respectfully request that Congress set aside relief to support the outdoor economy and provide funding specifically for outfitters and guides in the next COVID-19 package.

Congress has taken significant steps to advance multiple pieces of legislation to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. However, the outfitting and guiding businesses have largely been unable to access emergency funding during the pandemic. These businesses represent an important component of the outdoor economy, particularly in rural communities across the Northwest. Whether it's hiking, rafting, hunting or camping, fishing and boating, outfitters and guides and other seasonal small outdoor businesses are critical to keeping visitors safe, providing memorable experiences and preserving outdoor spaces for the future.

Because much of the outdoor economy operates seasonally, many outfitters and guides had to suspend parts of their season to maintain the health and safety of their communities. This also resulted in significant layoffs of their employees and lost revenue on already tight margins. According to the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, 88 percent of outdoor recreation businesses have laid off or furloughed a portion of their workforce and 26 percent are seeing a decrease in revenue of more than 50 percent compared to last year. Congress should recognize the enormous impact this pandemic has had on outfitters and guides by providing specific relief in the next package. As an example, relief from Federal land use fees would significantly prop up outfitters, guides, and other seasonal outdoor businesses with only a small cost to the government.

I stand ready to work with you to address this problem and make sure that the outdoor economy gets the assistance it needs during these challenging times.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator

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