

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 20, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

President-elect Joseph R. Biden
Biden-Harris Transition Team
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Vice President-elect Kamala D. Harris
Biden-Harris Transition Team
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 2023

Dear President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris:

Congratulations on your historic campaign and victory. We look forward to working with your administration. We write to support the nomination of our fellow Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition (SEEC) member, Congresswoman Deb Haaland, to serve as the Secretary of the Interior. SEEC is a 70-member coalition in the U.S. House of Representatives focused on advancing sustainable and just environmental policies across the Congressional agenda. Since joining Congress and our coalition, Congresswoman Haaland has demonstrated unwavering commitment to protecting public lands, addressing the climate crisis, and serving the needs of Indigenous communities across the country.

As Chair of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, Congresswoman Haaland has demonstrated thoughtful leadership and deep knowledge of our public lands. In this role she has also exercised oversight over agencies she would be managing if appointed to the role of Interior Secretary, furthering her direct experience with their operations. SEEC has long been a coalition of advocates committed to our public lands, and we were grateful when she joined a group of our members for an in-person tour of Yellowstone National Park to observe the impacts of climate change—a trip where her passion for the protection of our shared lands was abundantly clear. Time and again we saw her commitment to conservation and action to address climate change through our public lands, whether joining our coalition to highlight the impacts of climate change on our National Parks or briefing us on the ambitious conservation proposals outlined in her pioneering legislation, the *Climate Stewardship Act of 2019* and the *Thirty by Thirty Resolution to Save Nature*.

As a New Mexican, Congresswoman Haaland understands the West and the challenges it faces, a critically important qualification given the significant amount of land managed by the Interior Department in the Western United States. As an Indigenous woman, her nomination would be historically important, and she would bring perspective and direct experience to the work of serving Tribal communities in a way no office holder has before her. We echo the sentiments of long-time SEEC Member and Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee Raul Grijalva, who said, “It is well past time that an Indigenous person brings history full circle at the Department of Interior.”

Thank you for your time and consideration of this exceptional candidate. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide her our unwavering support for the role of Interior Secretary.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Gerald E. Connolly in black ink, featuring a stylized 'G' and 'C'.

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Paul Tonko in black ink, featuring a stylized 'P' and 'T'.

Paul Tonko
Member of Congress