

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2600

December 19, 2014

Mr. Brian Sybert
Executive Director
Montana Wilderness Association
80 South Warren Street
Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Brian:

As a fifth generation Montanan and an incoming member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, I am committed to finding balanced solutions that foster the robust and environmentally-friendly development of our natural resources, including oil and gas, coal, renewable sources of energy, and mineral deposits. By delaying construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, issuing costly greenhouse gas regulations, potentially listing the Greater Sage Grouse as an endangered species, and issuing a burdensome regulation on hydraulic fracturing, the Obama Administration has unfortunately made resource development in Montana even more difficult. I believe this must change.

The people of Montana deserve federal policies that enhance responsible resource production, not obstruct it. Montana has been experiencing part of an energy revolution in the Bakken formation; however, most energy development has been occurring on state and private lands. As technology improves and exploration and production expand further west in Montana, we have an opportunity to further strengthen our energy sector. Likewise, Montana is home to the most recoverable coal reserves of any state, vast nonfuel minerals and substantial renewable energy potential. Yet, the federal government's outdated permitting processes and job-killing regulations obstruct development. Smart reforms would create jobs, strengthen Montana's economy, and protect Montana families from high energy costs.

I believe Montanans are best positioned to develop sensible reforms to the federal government's policies that impact resource development. I therefore kindly request your thoughts on what specifically Congress should do to increase development of traditional and renewable resources in our state while ensuring we remain good stewards of our environment. As part of your input, I request your perspective on increasing development on federal lands, including possible recommendations for the release of Wilderness Study Areas. Because I plan to promptly provide recommendations to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I request your written response by January 23, 2015.

Thank you in advance for your feedback. I look forward to working closely with you and other Montanans on this and other important issues to our state. Please email your formal written responses to my staff member, Meghan Marino, at Meghan.Marino@mail.house.gov or Meghan_Marino@Daines.Senate.gov, active January 5, 2015.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
Member of Congress (MT)