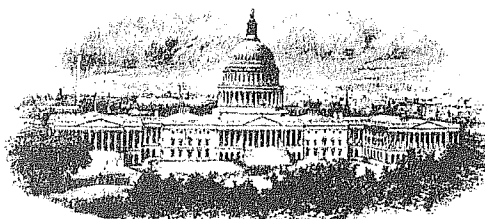


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CHAIRMAN  
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RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY

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

October 2, 2007

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, II  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

One week ago, H. R. 3663, the so-called "Protect America's Wildlife Act" was introduced in the House. I want to express to you my strongest opposition to this ill-conceived, misguided, unnecessary and highly discriminatory piece of legislation.

Since the establishment of this Republic more than 230 years ago, the states -- not the federal government -- have had primacy over all wildlife within their borders. H.R. 3663 ignores this and would usurp Alaska's sovereign authority to manage its wildlife by banning the elimination of predatory wolves from aircraft. This is an unprecedented federal intrusion into traditional state management of fish and wildlife. The Governor of Alaska correctly noted in her letter (attached) that the sponsors of this legislation "have threatened the very foundations of federalism and the states' ability to manage their own affairs as they see fit."

Moreover, while the proponents of this bill misrepresent its intent by masquerading with such terms as "hunting" and "fair chase," in reality the State's program is nothing more than predator control. There are more than 10,000 gray wolves living in my state. These wolves have never been threatened or endangered, and they reproduce at an average rate of up to 40 percent each year. This thriving population of extremely efficient predators kills thousands of the caribou and moose on which rural and Native Alaskans depend for survival. The State's science and abundance-based predator control program minimizes this threat to subsistence peoples' food supply, while maintaining a healthy, viable wolf population.

This is about ensuring food security for Alaska's subsistence peoples. It has nothing to do with "hunting." As such, any discussion over the issue of "fair chase" is also irrelevant. However, I would explain to the sponsors of this egregious legislation that because Alaska has fewer miles of paved roads than the District of Columbia, but is more than twice the size of Texas, aircraft are the only efficient means of carrying out the program. These are the facts and to outlaw this practice has as much legitimacy as banning predatory control efforts or depredation programs in the State of West Virginia.

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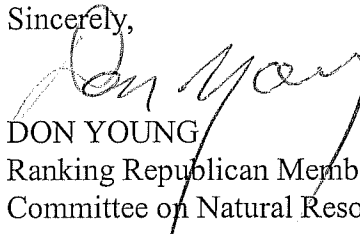
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What I find most interesting is that the very groups who have consistently opposed the opening of ANWR under the guise of protecting caribou are now more than willing to allow these animals to be systematically slaughtered by literally throwing them "to the wolves." There is no question that this cynical and disingenuous campaign will generate thousands of dollars in donations. More importantly, however, it will also, if enacted, take food out of the mouths of my constituents and their children.

As the Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, I urge you to give this legislation the time and attention which it deserves -- which is none. I would be happy to work with you in a bipartisan way to accomplish that goal.

Sincerely,



DON YOUNG  
Ranking Republican Member  
Committee on Natural Resources