

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0609

August 29, 2023

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore-Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Carper and Ranking Member Capito:

I would like to thank the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee for its continued work to promote economic development in America and prepare our rural communities for growth and success in the worldwide economy.

Today, I write to request your consideration of my bill, S. 2604, the Rural Outdoor Investment Act. I developed this legislation after hearing from many rural communities that for years have lacked the resources to strategically invest in outdoor recreation. The Rural Outdoor Investment Act would authorize \$50 million annually in recreation and economic development funding to rural communities across the country to revitalize and grow their economies and improve residents' quality of life through the outdoor recreation industry. An identical bill H.R. 5052 was introduced in the House of Representatives on the same day and referred to the House Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Financial Services, and Agriculture.

Over the past several decades, demand for outdoor recreation has grown — and the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this trend. Well-planned investments in outdoor infrastructure and related businesses are essential to boost rural economies and help them meet growing demand from locals and visitors, alike. This legislation would invest in outdoor recreation infrastructure, planning to support communities that seek to create an outdoor experience that meets expectations and grows Main Street, and business assistance to support recreation related businesses.


The bill enjoys support from the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, National Association of Counties, REI, National Wildlife Federation, Outdoor Industry Association, Conservation Alliance, Western Spirit Cycling, International Mountain Bicycling Association, Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals, National Marine Manufacturers Association, RV Industry Association, National Ski Areas Association, and National RV Dealers Association.

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Thank you for your consideration, I look forward to working with the Committee to catalyze economic development in Rural America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael F. Bennet". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator