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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

February 16, 2016

Senator Chris Edwards  
Chair, Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
900 Court Street N.E.  
Room 347  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chairman Edwards:

Please see the attached testimony I am submitting regarding legislation, HB 4040, that is pending before your committee. HB 4040 would ratify the recent decision by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to remove the gray wolf from Oregon's Endangered Species Act in November 2015. I was extremely disappointed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's recommendation to delist the gray wolf and the subsequent decision by the Commission to delist the wolf, and am troubled by the Committee's consideration of the bill.

In my thirty years in Congress, I have advocated for gray wolf recovery efforts and fought tirelessly to protect this critical species at the federal level. Most recently, I have been deeply involved in engaging with the federal Fish and Wildlife Service on their proposal to remove the gray wolf from the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Any decision to remove protections for species under the ESA must be guided by sound science. The Service released a politically charged proposal that is not supported by the best available science which has resulted in several delays in issuing a final rule.

Sadly, Oregon's decision to remove the gray wolf mirrors the controversy at the federal level. I urge you not to support HB 4040. The bill is designed to bypass judicial review of the Department's recommendation to delist the gray wolf which was not subject to an independent peer review panel. Legislation like HB 4040 is a heavy-handed approach that is not in the spirit of the collaborative process the state has undertaken thus far in gray wolf recovery efforts.

Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to discussing this with you in the near future. If you have further questions please get in touch with myself or my staffer, Megan DeBates ([megan.debates@mail.house.gov](mailto:megan.debates@mail.house.gov)) 202-225-6416.

Sincerely,

Peter DeFazio

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