Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2019

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chair
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies Appropriations
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies Appropriations
1124 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair McCollum and Ranking Member Joyce:

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) is a very popular and successful conservation program that has strong support in Congress, the conservation community, and among private landowners including farmers, ranchers and foresters across the United States. NAWCA is a unique, public-private partnership-based program that matches non-federal and federal funds to protect, restore and manage wetlands and associated habitats for migratory birds and other wildlife. We greatly appreciate the subcommittee's past support for NAWCA and we urge your continued advocacy of this valuable program.

Since enactment in 1989, the success of NAWCA stretches far beyond the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. A large number of wildlife species, as well as people, benefit tremendously from healthy wetland systems that are the result of on-the-ground conservation made possible by the program. Wetlands have a proven ability to help prevent flooding, reduce the severity of storm surges and mitigate the damaging effects of soil erosion. Wetlands also improve water quality by working with underground aquifers to filter out pollutants.

NAWCA is one of the government's most cost-effective conservation programs. Traditionally, federal dollars invested in NAWCA are matched by more than three dollars from non-federal partners including corporations, private landowners, non-profits, state governments and local organizations. In the last 30 years, federal funding of over $1.6 billion has leveraged over $4.68 billion in partner contributions. Regional Joint Ventures, established to support the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, play a substantial role in encouraging investments by fostering collaborative efforts to successfully implement NAWCA.

The U.S. has lost roughly half of its original wetlands and continues to lose over 80,000 wetland acres each year. NAWCA is helping to reverse this trend of wetland loss.

We commend the support your subcommittee has provided this program in the past and would like to reiterate the features that few federal programs can match:

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- **NAWCA creates jobs and stimulates the economy**. Outdoor recreation generates over $887 billion of economic output each year. In many cases, this economic activity is vital to the incomes of rural Americans. One study suggests NAWCA, on average, directly spurs the creation of 7,500 new jobs annually in the United States, generating nearly $840 million in worker earnings each year.

- **NAWCA is a voluntary and non-regulatory conservation program**. Farmers, ranchers and other private landowners support the program, and every project is voluntary. Incentives allow willing landowners to restore wildlife habitat and conservation practices to their private lands.

- **NAWCA fosters conservation efforts by the non-federal sector**. 6,000 corporate, small businesses, non-profit, state and local entities have more than doubled NAWCA dollars with matching funds. More than 2,833 on-the-ground conservation projects have been implemented in all 50 states, Canada, and Mexico to restore, protect, and manage more than 29.8 million acres.

- **Congress is involved in approving which projects are funded**. The final approval body in the project selection process is the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission. The seven-member body includes four Members of Congress.

- **NAWCA has strong support from the states**. All 50 state wildlife agencies are active partners in the program.

- **Demand for NAWCA continues to exceed available funds**. Demand for the program in the U.S. outstrips available funding on a yearly basis. NAWCA remains a very popular program among landowners interested and willing to restore and conserve wetlands habitat.

NAWCA represents a reasonable, cost-effective approach to wildlife conservation. While we understand the fiscal constraints this year, we would like to point to this program's demonstrable success at developing non-federal funding sources and diverse partnerships for the conservation of wildlife habitat. It deserves the subcommittee's endorsement for the most practical funding level. Thank you again for taking the time to consider our views and recognizing the importance of future funding for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act.

Sincerely,

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

ROGER MARSHALL
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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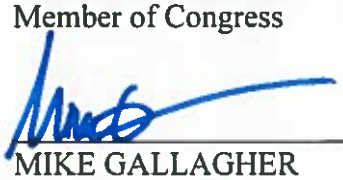

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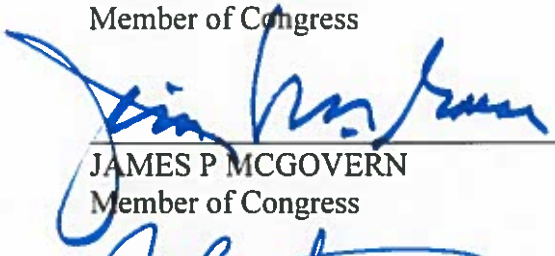

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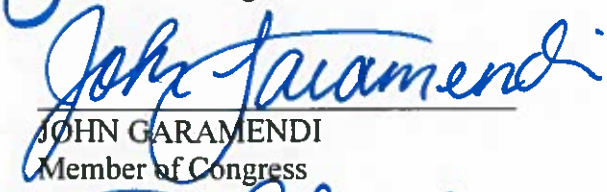

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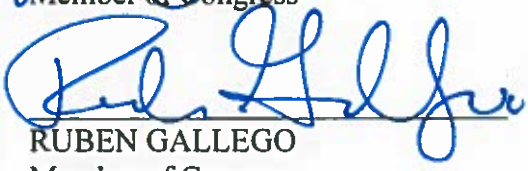

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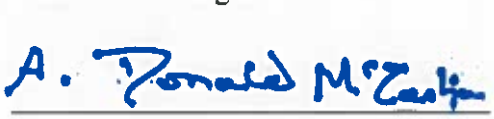

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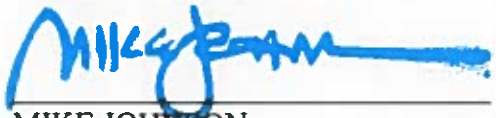

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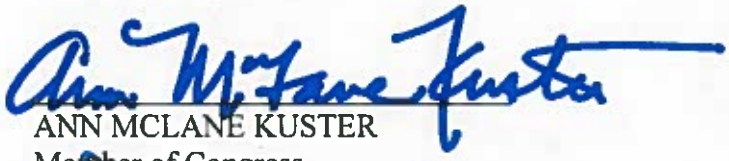

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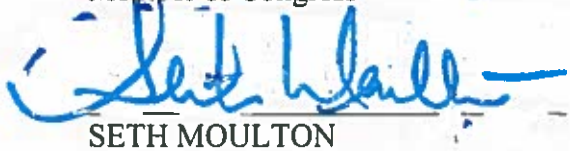

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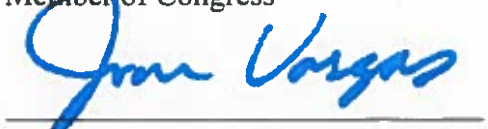

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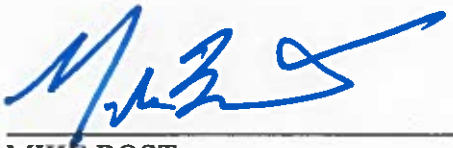

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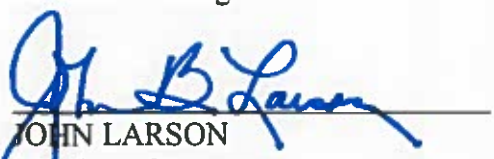

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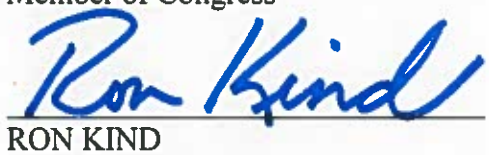

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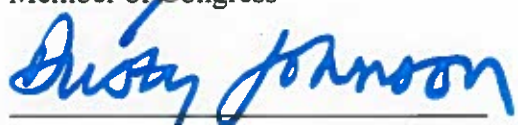

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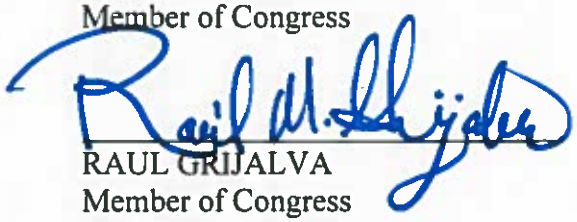

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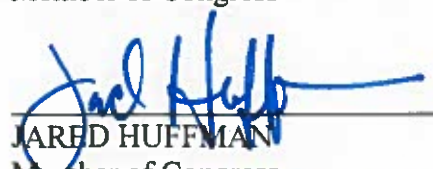

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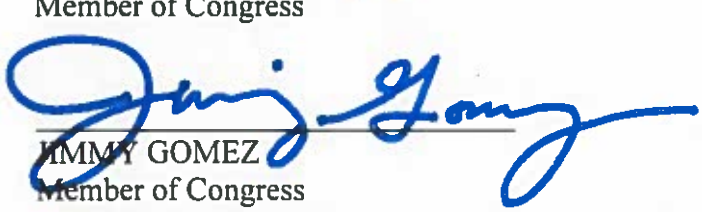

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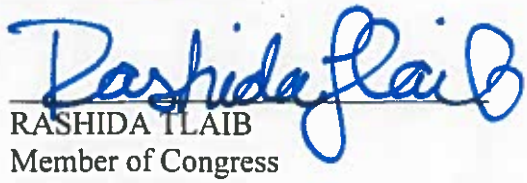

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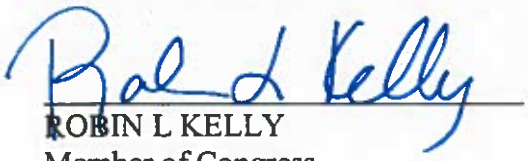

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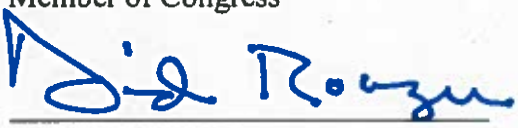

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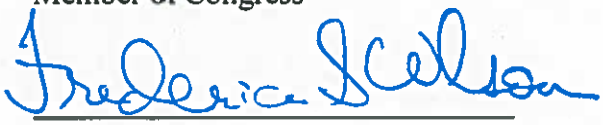

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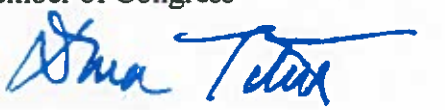

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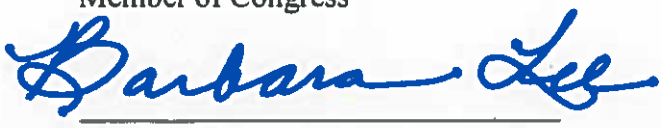

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