

Flathead County
Board of Commissioners

(406) 758-5503



Brad W. Abell
Randy L. Brodehl
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February 19, 2021

The Honorable Steve Daines
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Representative Deborah Haaland / Secretary of the Interior

Senator Daines:

The Flathead County Board of Commissioners request that you vote against the Biden administration's nomination of Representative Deborah Haaland (D-NM) to the Secretary of Interior, for the following reasons:

- Flathead County is well known for its very productive grizzly bear population that has expanded onto our valley floor and is a regular threat to our citizens and visitors. Representative Haaland co-sponsored H.2532 which would provide federal protections of grizzly bears in perpetuity, ignoring the continued expansion and bear attacks by grizzlies in Northwest Montana and across the state. She is also quoted on *wildearthguardians.org* regarding humane trapping, "I don't think we should allow it on our public lands." Many of our citizens derive their income from trapping on public and private lands and would be damaged by having Representative Haaland act on her personal beliefs. Representative Haaland co-sponsored H.R.4348, to automatically give threatened species the same protections as endangered species, throwing every bit of data out the window regarding at-risk wildlife population management in Montana and banning the management of wildlife populations by our state.
- According to *abgjournal.com* Representative Haaland supports banning "large capacity magazines" and banning "military style semi-automatic rifles," which includes modern sporting rifles. Not only does this fly in the face of the Constitution of the United States of America, but it directly challenges the values that Montanans hold dear to their hearts.
- Since the Covid19 response, Representative Haaland has repeatedly called for the closure of national parks and public lands during the pandemic. With 3 million visitors coming to Flathead County every year to enjoy our public lands and Glacier National Park, she is supporting a very real collapse of our local economy and taking away the ability of the citizens of the United States to responsibly use our public lands and parks. Even if this was not enough of an attack on Flathead County, Representative Haaland does not seem to grasp the damage to our communities that we face every time we have a wildfire. During a conversation with Harvard Kennedy School's Institute of Politics, when addressing our wildfire crisis, she said, "That's what FEMA is for." FEMA does not address prevention or protection and is focused only on response to a wildfire after the initial attack. The Secretary of Interior must understand that wildfire prevention and protection is the Secretary's first line of defense, and it is too late to start planning after the alarm bells ring.

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- She continues her lack of understanding about the needs in Montana in her testimony that, "current agricultural practices are making global warming worse", and her public comments New Mexico PBS, "Those who fear job loss from a government-mandated transition are only trying to scare us." The Secretary of Interior must understand the local impacts of every decision they make.
- Representative Haaland was a co-sponsor of H.R. 109, which championed the New Green Deal. As you know, H.R. 109 is detrimental to the Treasure State's safe use and exportation of petroleum, coal, minerals, and our other natural resources. She also is the vice-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, who's mission statement calls for the elimination of fossil fuels. Representative Haaland also opposes the Keystone XL Pipeline and protested the building of the Dakota Access Pipeline. Both pipelines not only provide many thousands of jobs in Montana but allow producers to safely move our natural resources to refineries. On her website, and during her keynote speech at Netroots Nation, she pledged to oppose all new fossil fuel infrastructure and called for no new pipelines. In an article in *abqjournal.com*, she called for a ban on fracking. She continued her attack on Montana's fossil fuels by signing a petition in support of a global moratorium on new fossil fuel exploration. Her opposition is even more apparent through her comments in the Washington Post where she is quoted as saying, "it'd be great to stop all gas and oil leasing on federal lands."

The Flathead County Board of Commissioners request you reject President Biden's nomination of Deborah Haaland as Secretary of the Interior.

Sincerely,
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FLATHEAD COUNTY, MONTANA


Randy L. Brodehl, Chairman


Pamela J. Holmquist, Member


Brad W. Abell, Member