



March 10, 2020

Dear Senator McSally,

As faith community leaders in Arizona, we thank you for co-sponsoring legislation that would fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Land and Water Conservation Fund has been instrumental in protecting iconic, special places in Arizona such as the Grand Canyon and Saguaro National Parks, Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Coconino National Forest, Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, and San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area.

Now, we seek to support your efforts to use your leadership role in the US Senate to champion the freedom, beauty, and bounty of God's creation through good stewardship of our public lands.

You and your dog Boomer spend time hiking, and when you do, you may experience a sense of the sacred. One of the most important faith practices that is meaningful to so many of the communities we serve is to spend time learning, playing, and praying in the natural world. Parks provide places of sabbath. On public lands, we can draw closer to our Creator God by experiencing gratitude, awe, wonder, and delight in what God has made. Parks that receive investment from the Land and Water Conservation Fund tend to be accessible for diverse communities. From the saguaro, to the Gila monster, to the javelina, there is so much to discover.

As a veteran and a US Senator, patriotism is core to your identity. Parks inspire patriotism for many of the people we encounter in ministry. They are tangible reminders of the homeland our military so proudly defends. Arizona has an abundance of the spacious skies and purple mountains' majesty of which we sing. There are few greater experiences of freedom than the times when we are exploring our public lands. Many veterans experience time on our public lands as home-coming, and recreation there as a time of solace and healing.

As people of faith, we hold sacred our responsibility to protect God's creation for future generations. By conserving our public lands, we ensure our children, grandchildren, and generations-to-come have the opportunity to encounter God in the wild.

Right now, you have vital opportunities to champion the Land and Water Conservation Fund Permanent Funding Act (S. 1081) to ensure it crosses the finish line this year. We ask that you urge Senator McConnell to put this legislation up for a vote on the Senate floor. As Appropriations season approaches, you could also choose to vocally support robust funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

We are living in an extraordinary time when our communities need to connect with God's creation more than ever. As you consider how to build on your recent momentum and use your leadership role, please know that we are praying for you. Please do not hesitate to call on faith communities to support your efforts to protect God's creation.

In hope,

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