



December 2, 2021

The Honorable Joe Manchin
Chairman
Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso:

On behalf of the RV Industry Association (RVIA), thank you for holding a full Committee hearing to hear testimony on critically important legislation, including the *Outdoor Recreation Act* (S. 3266), which will increase and improve outdoor recreation opportunities across the nation while improving infrastructure and driving economic growth in rural communities, as well as the *Outdoors for All Act* (S. 2887), the *Parks, Jobs, and Equity Act* (S. 2258), the *Recreation Not Red Tape Act* (S. 1874), and the *Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation (SOAR) Act* (S. 1229).

RVIA is the leading voice of the \$114 billion RV industry, representing approximately 470 manufacturers and component and aftermarket suppliers who together produce 98 percent of all RVs made in the United States.

A hearing on this legislation could not occur at a more vital time given the increased demand for outdoor recreation our country is experiencing. Looking to the RV sector for evidence of this significant demand increase, [a recently released survey](#) shows more Americans plan on RVing in the next year than ever before. The survey showed 72 million Americans planning an RV trip in the next year in an RV they own, rent, or borrow—an 18% increase over the 61 million reported in the same survey a year ago. To help meet this demand, recent RVIA data indicates that, through ten months of 2021, *more RVs have been built this year than ever before.*

Before the pandemic the RV industry was in a strong position, 2016-2019 were the 4 highest years for RV shipments—and that was before record numbers of new younger more diverse consumers turned to RVs in 2020. While many Americans have discovered RVs for the first time in the past year, the RV industry has been experiencing over 40 years of long-term growth that predates the pandemic. Access to the outdoors along with safe and adequate campground inventory must keep pace with the overwhelming demand from the American people.

This increased demand is encouraging, as outdoor recreation is a major force in the American economy. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2020 outdoor recreation generated \$689 billion in output and supports 4.3 million jobs. Within diverse communities around

the country, outdoor recreation on lands and waters plays a significant role in economic development, growth and resiliency, cultural vitality, and public health, particularly in rural America.

Outdoor Recreation Act (S. 3266)

The *Outdoor Recreation Act* recognizes this demand and takes crucial steps to address it by modernizing campgrounds, growing jobs, and ensuring all Americans have the opportunity to enjoy the many benefits of living an active outdoor lifestyle. Importantly, the bill provides gateway community assistance for outdoor recreation businesses and campgrounds, responsibly extends shoulder seasons, and brings much needed broadband to front country campgrounds to address safety issues and provide technologies that current and future park visitors require.

RVIA is also encouraged by the legislation's establishment of a pilot program for public-private partnership agreements to modernize campgrounds on Federal lands. Indeed, RVIA is a longtime advocate for public-private partnerships, where appropriate, as the best approach to effectively striking the necessary balance between achieving conservation needs and improving the experience for an ever-changing park visitor. These partnerships are a sensible, proven way to bring public land infrastructure into the 21st century, ensuring the federal government remains the owner of all public lands and preserving access and enjoyment of federal campgrounds for current and future generations of RVers to come.

Recreation Not Red Tape Act (S. 1874)

As outdoor recreation grows in popularity and economic impact, land management agencies need updated tools to protect and improve access to, and infrastructure on America's public lands and waters. The *Recreation Not Red-Tape Act* offers sensible, non-controversial proposals for identifying and appropriately managing important places for sustainable outdoor recreation across the country. RVIA supports efforts to update processes and policies on our national public lands and waters to improve the outdoor recreation experience for all forms of outdoor recreation.

Outdoors for All Act (S. 2887)

Many places across the country lack outdoor recreation opportunities. RVIA supports the *Outdoors for All Act* and efforts to expand access to outdoor recreation opportunities in cities and towns, particularly in underserved and low-income areas that need them the most. Campers and hikers will benefit from dedicated grant funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund to create and improve state and locally-owned parks and other outdoor recreation areas.

Parks, Jobs, and Equity Act (S. 2258)

Our national, state, and local parks have become vital spaces for fresh air, exercise, and relaxation during the coronavirus pandemic. While the physical and mental health benefits of parks are more obvious than ever before, many park agencies have unfortunately seen budget cuts. The *Parks, Jobs, and Equity Act's* \$500 million formula state grant program will create good jobs, spur economic development and expand outdoor recreation, all while addressing historic inequities in park access.

Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation (SOAR) Act (S. 1229)

The *SOAR Act* will make outdoor experiences more accessible by updating the permitting system that guides and outfitters need to operate trips on our treasured places. RVIA supports efforts to improve outfitter and guide permitting systems by simplifying processes, increasing flexibility in allowed activities, and reducing unnecessary costs of permit administration.

The *Outdoor Recreation Act*, *Recreation Not Red Tape Act*, *Outdoors for All Act*, *Parks, Jobs, and Equity Act*, and the *SOAR Act* along with other key pieces of outdoor recreation legislation are critical to continuing to attract the next generation of park stewards and outdoor recreation enthusiasts, and RVIA urges support for their favorable advancement and ultimate enactment into law.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record. If you have questions or if RVIA can serve as a resource, please contact Chris Bornemann, Director of Federal Affairs, at cbornemann@rvia.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay Landers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Jay" and "Landers" being capitalized and prominent.

Jay Landers
Vice President