

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

## HELP CONSERVE POLAR BEARS: OPPOSE H.R. 2327

Dear Colleague:

As leaders of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, we encourage you to take a close look at the realities of polar bear hunting before you support H.R. 2327, an effort to ban the importation of hunted polar bears taken legally from healthy populations of polar bears in Canada. Rather than protecting polar bear populations, an import ban could actually harm polar bear conservation and management in Canada, as well as the native arctic communities that depend on these hunts.

The Canadian government outlaws most polar bear hunting, with the exception that it grants the indigenous Nunavut communities quotas for polar bear hunts, based on scientific-based estimates of sustainability. The Nunavut traditionally sell a portion of these to sport hunters from the United States. They do this because U.S. hunters are willing to pay large sums of money for the privilege of bringing home a polar bear skin while donating the meat from the animals to the local communities for consumption. So, by offering a part of their quota to American sportsmen rather than hunting the bears themselves, the Nunavut are able to bring millions of dollars into their local economies and contribute some of that money to bear conservation efforts.

**Eliminating sport hunts will not reduce the total number of polar bears killed each year. It will, however, deprive the Nunavut of a critical source of revenue and deplete global funds for polar bear preservation.**

The Government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board together contribute about \$1,000,000 per year to polar bear conservation, in addition to providing local conservation staff. Another \$100,000 is generated in license fees, which is put toward international polar bear conservation efforts. Sport hunts bring in a total of \$2.5 million for Nunavut communities, many of which have little other economic activity.

For these reasons, a recent CRS report determined that a ban on polar bear trophy importation "is likely to seriously compromise successful Canadian community-based conservation programs."

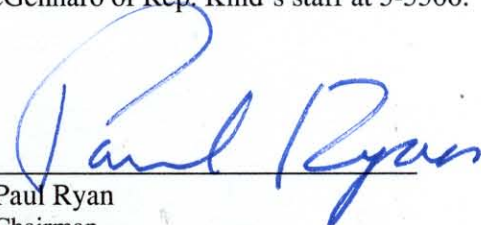
The Canadian government allows these hunts only where bear populations are stable. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service currently is undergoing a process to determine whether polar bears should be listed under the Endangered Species Act due to climate change and other factors. If it is found that these populations are unstable and that the bears should be listed, then a re-evaluation of the hunt would be warranted. Until that time, however, let us not compromise conservation efforts on the local, national, and international level.

Hunters have shown time and again that they are willing and effective partners in wildlife conservation. Therefore, we ask that Congress take a measured, responsible approach to ensuring that polar bears continue to thrive in the wild. For more information, please contact David DeGennaro of Rep. Kind's staff at 5-5506.

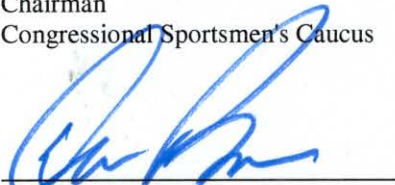


Ron Kind  
Chairman  
Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus

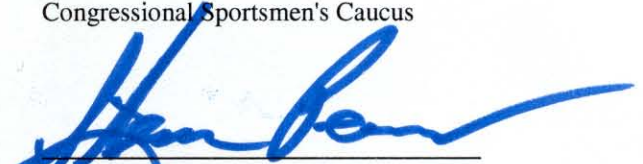
Sincerely,



Paul Ryan  
Chairman  
Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus



Dan Boren  
Vice-Chairman



Steve Pearce  
Vice-Chairman