

Representative David Obey
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
H-218 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

July 11, 2008

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis:

As you may recall, over 25 sportsmen's organizations wrote you last September in opposition to language in the House Committee Report on the State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations bill that would have instructed the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) not to fund activities that involve recreational, sport or trophy hunting. The language was inserted at the request of organizations that are avowed opponents of hunting in the United States and worldwide.

The undersigned sportsmen's organizations appreciate that the Committee on Appropriations agreed to language in the Manager's Statement accompanying the 2008 Omnibus Appropriations bill, regarding USAID and hunting conservation programs in Africa and around the world. This language provides an opportunity for these USAID conservation projects to continue and asks them to come before the Committee and explain how these important conservation programs have seen success.

We request the Appropriations Committee includes report language that recognizes the valuable role that controlled, regulated sport and trophy hunting has in the advancement of international wildlife conservation efforts.

Tourist hunting has proven to be a valuable tool for the conservation of wildlife and habitat. These programs have proven to be particularly useful in the survival of African elephants, white and black rhinos, leopards, markhor, argali, and other threatened and endangered species. To block this revenue would do nothing for the conservation of species and would simply be one step further in a campaign to ban hunting.

The aforementioned 2008 Manager's Statement requires that USAID and their conservation partners will now have an opportunity to tell the Committee their conservation story and how revenue brought in by these hunters benefit the local native communities, encouraging them to conserve and manage wildlife populations responsibly. The CAMPFIRE and the LIFE Plus Projects in Africa are just two examples of working conservation programs that involve controlled, regulated sport and trophy hunting. These programs literally support the entire tribal system in many areas of Africa. Without them, millions of acres that are properly managed now would fall prey to poachers and the land would prove to have no economic value. Wildlife in this environment could otherwise be killed for food, over-hunted and poached.

Licensed, regulated tourist hunting provides tens of millions of dollars for the operating budgets of foreign wildlife departments, significantly reduces poaching, and creates incentives for local inhabitants to perpetuate biodiversity on hundreds of millions of acres where it is needed beyond

the borders of protected areas. In twenty-three African countries that allow licensed, regulated hunting, approximately 18,500 hunters generate over \$200 million annually in remote rural areas. The USAID programs are extremely important to the survival of many species worldwide, and we strongly encourage that this be formally recognized in the development and ultimate passage of the FY 2009 State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Bill.

Sincerely,

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Archery Trade Association
Boone and Crockett Club
Bowhunting Preservation Alliance
The Campfire Club of America
Catch-A-Dream Foundation
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Conservation Force
Dallas Safari Club
Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited
Mule Deer Foundation
National Assembly of Sportsmen's
Caucuses
National Rifle Association

National Shooting Sports Foundation
National Trappers Association
National Wild Turkey Federation
North American Bear Foundation
Pheasants Forever
Pope & Young Club
Quail Forever
Quail Unlimited
Quality Deer Management Association
Ruffed Grouse Society
Safari Club International
Texas Wildlife Association
U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance
Wildlife Forever
Wildlife Management Institute
Wild Sheep Foundation

