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CONTACT: [Jill Strait](#) or [Spencer Pederson](#)
202-226-2311

Overcoming Democrat Opposition, Republicans Pass Amendment and Motion-to-Recommit that Protect Youth and Taxpayers

WASHINGTON D.C., -- Today during Floor debate in the U.S. House of Representatives, Rep. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), on behalf of House Natural Resources Committee Republicans, successfully won on a Motion to Recommit (MTR) vote that made substantial changes to [H.R. 1612](#), the Public Lands Service Corps Act of 2009. Despite a Democrat-recommended "No" vote on the Lummis MTR, the motion ultimately passed by an overwhelming [387-21](#) after dozens of Democrats rushed to the well of the House to switch their initial "No" votes to "Yes."

Additionally, Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT) successfully offered an amendment to place a spending cap on the program and set a five-year sunset on the Act, which currently is permanently authorized with no expiration date. The Bishop amendment cut the cost of the bill in half and ensures that this program is subjected to periodic Congressional review and oversight. The amendment passed by a vote of [227-180](#).

Both the Lummis MTR and Bishop Amendment were vocally opposed by the Democrat Majority's Manager of the bill.

"I congratulate Rep. Lummis and Rep. Bishop for their successful efforts to protect young people and American taxpayers," said Rep. Doc Hastings (R-WA), the Ranking Republican Member of the House Natural Resources Committee. "Their hard work made a difference today and beat back Democrat opposition to these common sense ideas."

The Republican MTR offered by Rep. Lummis made the following four common sense improvements to H.R. 1612:

- **Protects Young People from Sex Offenders.** The Public Lands Corp program (PLC) employs young people (ages 16-25) in conservation oriented jobs on public lands. This provision would prohibit sex offenders from participation in the PLC and authorizes criminal background checks for participants, which is similar to protections found in the Americorps law.
- **Restores Focus on Wildfire Prevention.** Wildfires are one of the greatest threats to our public lands and the communities that surround them, which is why wildfire prevention following the bi-partisan Healthy Forests Act is a primary mission of the PLC. The Republican MTR restores the focus on wildfire prevention activities that is

in the current Public Lands Corps law, which H.R. 1612 would erase entirely.

- **Ensures Funds Used to Improve Public Lands, Not Political Activism.** Taxpayer dollars should not be used to subsidize political advocacy, which is why the third provision of the MTR requires that PLC work occur “on public lands” to ensure the focus is on improving lands rather than on political advocacy work.
- **No Taxpayer Funds to Groups Suing the Government.** The MTR blocks any group that has a lawsuit against the Departments of Interior, Agriculture, or Commerce from receiving grant money under H.R. 1612.

The final House vote to pass H.R. 1612 was [288-116](#).

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