

The Honorable Howard P. “Buck” McKeon

Statement for the Record to the House Committee on Natural Resources

Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands

In Support of

H. R. 1818 – The Mount Andrea Lawrence Designation Act of 2011

March 28, 2012

Good morning, Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Grijalva, and members of the committee. Thank you for holding this hearing today and the opportunity to testify on legislation I introduced, H.R. 1818, the Mount Andrea Lawrence Designation Act of 2011.

I had the honor to personally know and work with Andrea Mead Lawrence on several occasions, especially for the protection of the Eastern Sierra. I have introduced this legislation at the request of my constituents in the Eastern Sierra of California who recognize the significant accomplishments of Andrea personally, but more importantly the lasting positive legacy she left on the region. I would ask unanimous consent to insert into the record numerous letters of local support for designation of Mt. Andrea Lawrence.

Andrea Mead Lawrence was born in Rutland County, Vermont on April 19, 1932 where her life-long love of winter sports and appreciation for the environment was fostered. A skilled skier, she competed in the 1948 Winter Olympics in St. Moriz, Switzerland as well as the 1956 Winter Olympics in

Cortina d'Ampezzo Italy. She also served as the torch lighter at the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley, California. In the 1952 Winter Olympics in Oslo Norway, she won two Gold Medals in the Olympic special and giant slalom races. To this day, she remains the only United States double-gold medalist in alpine skiing. For her significant accomplishments, she was inducted into the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1958, at the age of 25.

These remarkable achievements at a young age, however, were just the beginning of a life of service to her community and environmental preservation. In 1968, Andrea moved to Mammoth Lakes in the spectacularly beautiful Eastern Sierra of California. It was in this special region she spent the rest of her life working to protect the area's natural treasures.

Never one to rest on her accomplishments, she founded the Friends of Mammoth to maintain the beauty and serenity of Mammoth Lakes and the Eastern Sierra. She served for 16 years on the Mono County Board of Supervisors, where she worked tirelessly to protect and restore Mono Lake, Bodie State Historic Park, and other important natural and cultural landscapes of the Eastern Sierra. As a member of the Great Basin Air Pollution Control District, she worked to reduce air pollution caused by the dewatering of Owens Lake. In 2003, she founded the Andrea Lawrence Institute for Mountains and Rivers to protect the environment and the economic vitality of this important region.

In 2008, she testified before the Mono County Board of Supervisors in favor of the Eastern Sierra and Northern San Gabriel Wild Heritage Act, a bill enacted the day before she died on March 31, 2009 at the age of 76. Andrea left a rich legacy of a family of five children, including Quentin Lawrence who will testify today, four grandchildren, as well as a distinguished record in skiing and, most importantly, her tireless efforts have left a better legacy for the people who live and recreate in the Eastern Sierra.

Andrea Mead Lawrence's life philosophy is summed up in her quote "Your life doesn't stop by winning medals. It's only the beginning. And if you have the true Olympic spirit, you have to put it back into the world in meaningful ways." Mr. Chairman, in light of the remarkable life and work of Andrea Mead Lawrence, it is very fitting to name Peak 12,240 "Mt. Andrea Lawrence" both in her honor and as a visible point of inspiration for future generations.