

Committee on Resources

Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans

Statement

Testimony by Congressman Jim Barcia on
H.R. 529 before the Subcommittee
on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee,

When a person tries very hard to follow all the rules and regulations of an intricate system of Government and succeeds in following all the rules and regulations of that intricate system, they should be rewarded with the benefits of achieving what they set out to accomplish. Unfortunately, that was not the case with my constituent, Jere Brunette.

Mr. Brunette saved up and planned for years to take the hunt of a lifetime to Tajikistan in 1995. Prior to his trip he researched and then applied for and obtained the appropriate license with the Fish and Wildlife Service and upon returning filed the appropriate paperwork to import his Marko Polo Argali trophy.

He was very careful to make sure that he filled out all the correct paperwork and forms because this was very important to him. It was so important that he paid for an official government game warden to accompany him on his hunt and make sure that the species had sufficient numbers.

At the time, Tajikistan was in a state of civil unrest and for reasons unbeknownst to me, Mr. Brunette and the Fish and Wildlife Service, Tajikistan did not provide the Service with the proper information on the survival of the species for 1995 and still has not. They did, however, provide the information for 1996 and 1997. And, it is my understanding that the Service has issued import permits for Marco Polo Argali taken in Tajikistan for the hunting seasons of 1996 and 1997.

If the populations of Marco Polo Argali were sufficient for the Service to issue import permits for these years, I would have to think that the populations were in a similarly good condition the year before when Mr. Brunette harvested his Argali, particularly since he was given the license.

This is a case in which, my constituent has done all that he could reasonably be expected to do. The fact that he has not been able to comply with the 1995 requirements was totally beyond his control.

Accordingly, H.R. 529, drafted in close consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service and Members of this Committee, would remedy this grave injustice that has plagued Mr. Brunette for the past four years. Jere has been left both disappointed and heartbroken to be unable to bring this outstanding trophy sheep home.

I would be grateful if you would support this very narrow bill that would allow the Fish and Wildlife

Service to approve Mr. Brunette's permit for importation of this trophy.

Thank you for your consideration.

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