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United States Senate

COMMITTEES:
COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
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ENERGY AND
NATURAL RESOURCES
FOREIGN RELATIONS

March 18, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

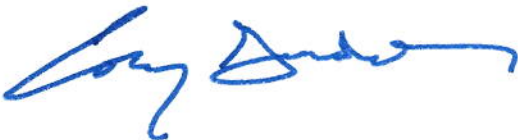
I am writing to request that you waive the remainder of the U.S. Forest Service fee payments to be paid in 2020 by ski areas leasing public lands, which will greatly assist ski areas in lost revenues related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Saturday, March 14, 2020, Colorado Governor Jared Polis issued an executive order requiring all ski resorts to close for a period of one week. At this time, because of recommendations from local, state, and federal agencies related to COVID-19, Colorado's ski areas, many who operate on public lands, will now be closing for the remainder of the ski season. Our ski industry in Colorado not only generates billions in local, state, and federal taxes, but the industry also serves as the primary economic driver in many of the rural towns they occupy. The economic impact from the loss of business due to early closure of the ski resorts will be devastating.

Across the nation, there are 122 ski areas on U.S. Forest Service lands – all of which will forfeit some sort of revenue for the remainder of the season. Historically, the month of March is the industry's second highest in revenue generation. Colorado Ski Country USA estimates that the 470 ski areas in the United States will suffer economic loss of over \$2 billion due to COVID-19.

This economic loss is unprecedented for the industry, and any relief would be welcomed news as they take all measures to comply with the health and safety guidelines related to this deadly pathogen. For these reason, I respectfully request that the U.S. Forest Service waive any remaining permit fees for the ski industry through the end of the calendar year. Thank you for your assistance with this important request.

Sincerely,



Cory Gardner
United States Senator

Cc: U.S. Forest Service, Chief Vicki Christiansen