



January 24, 2017

Dear Senator Toomey and Senator Casey,

On behalf of the more than 5,000 Audubon members across the seven-county region of southwestern Pennsylvania, we are writing to strongly urge you to reject the nomination of Scott Pruitt to head the Environmental Protection Agency.

As one of the oldest and largest environmental education and conservation engagement organizations in Pennsylvania, Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania works daily with people of all backgrounds to help them to understand and appreciate the natural world around them. Our classes and programs teach critical thinking skills that enable our constituency to make informed decisions on environmental issues.

We firmly believe that the appointment of Scott Pruitt, Oklahoma Attorney General, would be a major step backward in the gains our country has made in addressing critical environmental issues. Pruitt has a long and troubling history of challenging environmental regulations and rules intended to protect the air and water quality of his state—and the very health of the people he serves. We waited eagerly for his confirmation hearing in the hopes of gaining clarity and understanding of his past positions and a better understanding of his intentions should he be confirmed to lead the EPA. Unfortunately, the results of those proceedings have us issuing our first formal call for the Senate to reject a cabinet nominee in our 100-year history. We will be urging our members, and all concerned people in Pennsylvania, to contact you to reiterate our concerns.

Specifically, although Pruitt now acknowledges the existence of Climate Change, his position that “human activity, in some manner, impacts that change” is inadequate. While we can debate the solutions, that debate must start with an acknowledgement of the facts. His past statements that the science is “far from settled,” combined with his tepid acceptance of the human role in climate change, leads us to believe he will continue to challenge regulations intended to protect the environment.

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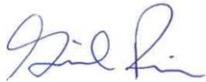
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Additionally, Pruitt's belief that states and local jurisdictions are better suited to address environmental issues (as opposed to federal agencies) misses the basic concept that air and water pollutants do not recognize, or stop, at state boundaries. As a Pennsylvania Senator, you understand that the water quality of the Monongahela River and the air quality blowing in from Ohio, is already degraded before it crosses our state line. National and International action is the only way to protect the environment.

Given the new administration's stated desire to eliminate the Climate Action Plan, Waters of the US rule, and Paris Agreement, the United States needs an EPA Secretary that understands and accepts the science and can effectively advocate for good policy. Scott Pruitt is not that person.

Please block this nomination and help to protect our environment and the health of future generations.

Respectfully,



Gwilym A Price, III
President



James A. Bonner
Executive Director