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Congress of the United States  
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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND  
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COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
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LIVESTOCK, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND CREDIT

June 25, 2014

The Honorable Dan Ashe  
Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Ashe:

I was pleased to see the June 24<sup>th</sup> announcement delaying the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) final decision on the listing of the northern long-eared bat under the Endangered Species Act. While this is a positive step in enhancing outreach and communication with local stakeholders, I remain deeply concerned about the crippling impact an endangered listing would have on many forest product industries.

In making a final decision, USFWS should consider the unintended but severe economic impact of an abrupt halt in forest management practices and summertime timber harvesting. In order to sustain business year round, the logging and construction industries depend on production at limited-access summer sites, and the reduction in business activity associated with a lost summer harvest could be devastating for many forest resource-based economies.

Like you, I am concerned about the health of native bat species. However, the fungal disease white-nose syndrome is believed to be the cause of the widespread decline in bat populations, not habitat destruction. To that end, I will work in Congress to support research to study this disease. Bats are critical for agriculture and ecosystem balance, but the way to protect this species is to examine and neutralize the diseases causing their demise, not to isolate their habitats.

I appreciate your decision to extend the comment period for the proposed listing, and I look forward to working with you to protect the habitat of the northern long-eared bat without constraining forest product industries or a county's ability to manage its own forest land. If you have any questions, please contact my Senior Legislative Assistant Abby Tinsley (202-225-6211 or [abby.tinsley@mail.house.gov](mailto:abby.tinsley@mail.house.gov)).

Sincerely,

Richard M. Nolan  
Member of Congress