

August 14, 2026

Dear Dr. Altadonna,

Thank you for sharing your thoughts regarding Endangered Species Act (P.L. 93-205). Your feedback is essential as we work together to shape policies that benefit Pennsylvania and our country.

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) was signed into law by President Richard Nixon on December 28, 1973. The ESA aims to provide for the conservation of threatened and endangered species, which the statute defines as those “in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.”

Once the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (FWS) or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) determine a domestic or foreign species is at risk of extinction, the agencies list the plant or animal as eligible for protections provided by the ESA. The ESA requires federal agencies to aid in the species’ conservation, develop recovery and habitat conservation plans, and monitor the status of the species every five years.

As a proud conservationist, I support the intent of the ESA to conserve and protect species and their habitats. However, over the last 50 years, the ESA has been used as a tool to hinder critical economic development activities while doing little to recover endangered or threatened species.

Since the enactment of the ESA and its precursors – the Endangered Species Preservation Act of 1966 and Endangered Species Conservation Act of 1969 – over 1,700 animals and plants have been listed as endangered or threatened, but only 55 species have been successfully recovered and delisted. A 3% recovery rate over the last 50 years is concerning and underscores the need for targeted reforms. I look forward to working with my Senate colleagues to improve the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species.

It is an honor and a privilege to serve our great Commonwealth in the United States Senate. I appreciate having the benefit of your comments on this important matter. I am always grateful to hear from my constituents.

Sincerely,

Dave McCormick
U.S. Senator