



1201 16th Street, NW | Washington, DC 20036 | Phone: (202) 833-4000

Rebecca S. Pringle
President

Princess R. Moss
Vice President

Noel Candelaria
Secretary-Treasurer

Kim A. Anderson
Executive Director

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U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 3 million members of the National Education Association, who teach and support students in 14,000 in communities of every description across our nation, we urge you to confirm Rep. Deb Haaland as America's next Secretary of the Department of the Interior. Votes on this issue may be included in the NEA Report Card for the 117th Congress.

As a Pueblo woman, 35th-generation New Mexican, and proud westerner, Representative Haaland has a deep appreciation for the richness and diversity of our nation's resources, and a unique understanding of the federal government's role in protecting public lands. She also understands the impact of climate change and knows that a robust climate agenda is an economic agenda as well.

Representative Haaland's values and experiences, including time spent ranching, hunting, and running a small business, align well with the Department of Interior's mission of conserving and managing our natural resources and cultural heritage, and honoring the nation's "trust responsibilities to American Indians, Alaska Natives and affiliated island communities to help them prosper."

Representative Haaland also understands how important it is that Bureau of Indian Education schools have the resources and support students need, especially in light of COVID-19's disproportionate impact on Tribal communities. Growing up in a military family and having attended 13 public schools, she recognizes the challenges of disrupted learning and will be an advocate for BIE students.

In the House, Representative Haaland has built a record of crossing the aisle; in fact, in 2019, she introduced more bills with bipartisan cosponsors than any other freshman member. Her relationships with Republicans in both houses enabled her to work with them on outdoor recreation and land and water conservation, military housing protections, and the missing and murdered Indigenous women crisis.

Representative Haaland will not only make history as the Department of Interior's first Native American Secretary—she will also be a path-breaking champion for public lands, wildlife, conservation, and Indian education who appreciates the concerns of Tribal communities, working families, and business owners. We urge you to confirm her as our nation's next Secretary of Interior.

Sincerely,

Director of Government Relations
National Education Association