



ALEX PADILLA

U.S. SENATOR *for* CALIFORNIA

The Outdoors for All Act

Below are quotes in support of the Outdoors for All from some of the organizations that have endorsed it.

“Now more than ever, access to outdoor recreation is imperative. As COVID variants continue to rage, people across our great nation need local places outdoors to work out, play, or merely have a moment of fresh air and solace. The Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program is essential to supporting local parks and local economies as well as mental and physical health by creating these healthy connections between people and the outdoors. Too many frontline communities and urban areas still do not have the resources they need to provide equitable or safe access to parks and outdoor spaces. LCV is proud to support the Outdoors for All Act to provide the badly needed dedicated funding for ORLP,” said **Benjamin Alexandro of the League of Conservation Voters**.

“Access to nature is a human right. No matter your zip code, income level, race or ethnic background, everyone deserves to enjoy outdoor experiences. Underserved communities across the country need better access to the economic and health benefits that quality parks, trails and green spaces provide. This is exactly what the Outdoors for All Act seeks to ensure. We are thankful to Representatives Barragán and Turner, as well as Senators Padilla and Collins, for demonstrating their commitment to ending persistent inequity in access to nature and the outdoors,” said **Tara Brown of the Wilderness Society**.

“The effects of the climate crisis are particularly harmful for low-income communities and communities of color, communities that already do not have the same access to nature and green space as their wealthier and whiter neighbors. By supporting the construction and improvement of urban parks across the country, the Outdoors for All Act will help build the healthy and safe communities with plentiful and equitable access to nature that our children need to thrive,” said **Kirin Kennedy of Sierra Club**.

“This bill will increase equitable access to parks in low-income communities and communities of color that do not typically have easy access to nature. Reading under a tree, watching a bee pollinate flowers, and doing cartwheels on the grass should not be limited to more affluent communities. Increasing green space in urban neighborhoods will make it possible for residents to engage in recreational activities that improve their health, while mitigating the effects of climate change, removing pollutants from the air, and reducing the effects of urban heat islands,” said **Damon Nagami of the Natural Resources Defense Council**.

“NLC applauds the introduction of the Outdoors for All Act, which would invest in local parks and advance equitable access to the outdoors in America’s cities, towns and villages. At a time when our residents need outdoor spaces more than ever, it is absolutely critical that we improve outdoor infrastructure and access to green spaces for all, particularly in communities hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you, Rep. Barragán, Rep. Turner, and Senator Padilla, for your leadership on this issue,” said **Kathy Maness of the National League of Cities**.

“American Hiking Society praises the introduction of the bipartisan Outdoors for All Act by Sen. Alex Padilla (D-CA), Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA-44), and Rep. Michael Turner (R-OH-10) which will expand access to public lands for underserved communities,” said **Kate Van Waes of American Hiking Society**.

“Most children of Black, Indigenous, Latino and other communities of color have been denied adequate green space with all of its benefits; we must prioritize these communities if we hope to ensure the health and wellbeing of the future leaders of our nation,” said **Maite Arce of Hispanic Access Foundation**.

“Low-income communities and communities of color continue to face significant disparities in access to healthy opportunities for outdoor recreation, including trails and other places for safe walking and bicycling. Representative Barragan and Senator Padilla’s bill will help address these disparities across the country,” said **Patrick Wojahn of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy**.

“We are pleased to see the reintroduction of the Outdoors for All Act, which would provide access to close to home outdoor recreation for more communities. Access to local parks and recreation facilities is an important equity issue and is a challenge we must prioritize. This Act provides a momentous commitment to the many substantial benefits outdoor recreation offers. We thank Senator Padilla and Representatives Barragán and Turner for their leadership on this issue,” said **Elvis Cordova of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy**.

“At Landforce, we have seen how working in Pittsburgh’s parks changes people’s lives as they build a better future for themselves, their families and their communities. Parks have the power to leverage incredible change for communities that have historically faced severe disinvestment, so we recognize the urgent need for this Bill,” said **Ilyssa Manspeizer of Landforce**.

“Trees and parks are natural infrastructure that provide life-saving protection from climate driven extreme heat and catalyze healthier more vibrant communities. Unfortunately, a map of tree cover and outdoor access in most American cities is too often a map of income and race as underserved neighborhoods suffer from a lack of outdoor access and adequate tree canopy due to decades of exclusionary and exploitative policies and practices. As we look to rebuild our communities, fight climate change, and address historical inequities, Tree Equity is not just an environmental justice issue, it’s a moral imperative. We applaud Senator Padilla and Collins and Rep. Barragan and Turner for their leadership in introducing this critical bipartisan and bicameral legislation. Parks and trees are essential to the health, wealth, and resilience of all communities and now is the time to close the gap so that

everyone can enjoy the benefits of access to the outdoors,” said **Joel Pannell of American Forests**.

“After what we’ve experienced over the last year and a half, the health and wellness benefits of parks and open spaces to the public are without question. What’s also without a doubt is the inequitable access to outdoor recreation opportunities for economically disadvantaged communities. The Outdoors for All Act is an important step in addressing this. Thank you, Senator Padilla, Senator Collins, Representative Barragán, and Representative Turner for championing legislative efforts that bring us closer to the just and equitable society that so many of us aspire towards,” said **Luis Villa of Latino Outdoors**.

“Increasing urban access to nature is an investment in youth, support for families, and the health of our communities,” said **Ben McCue of Outdoor Outreach**.

“The San Diego Mountain Biking Association fully supports the Outdoors for All Act particularly to support equitable access to trails and open spaces that are close to all communities,” said **Susie Murphy of The San Diego Mountain Biking Association**.

“The American Alpine Club is thrilled to support the Outdoors for All Act as it is reintroduced. We are grateful for the champions in Congress who are fighting for improved access to the outdoors for all people, as we believe the foundational connection between people in the outdoors is critical for both the mental health of individuals, and the protection of outdoor spaces into the future,” said **Mitsu Iwasaki of the American Alpine Club**.

“We commend Senator Padilla, Representative Barragán, and Representative Turner for their work on improving equitable access to the outdoors for all Americans. During a time of health crisis and uncertainty, the benefits of nature and outdoor recreation have never been more apparent, and we look forward to working together on passing the Outdoors for All Act through Congress. Onward!” said **Lexie Gritfeld of the California Outdoor Recreation Partnership**.

“The Outdoors for All Act is aligned with a core value of our design and planning practice – connecting people with nature and with each other. Parks are essential for a healthy community, but many neighborhoods lack high quality green spaces. We whole-heartedly support this bill, which would provide increased funding for parks in underserved communities,” said **Kara Roggenkamp of Pashek+MTR, Ltd.**

“Outdoor Alliance is thrilled to see Senators Padilla and Collins and Representatives Barragán and Turner reintroduce the Outdoors for All Act. All communities need access to nature and green space, and the Outdoors for All Act will create pathways for urban communities, including low-income neighborhoods that are underserved by parks, to develop access to outdoor recreation resources. We are pleased to see Congress working to build a future where all children, families, and communities can enjoy the benefits of nature,” said **Louis Geltman of Outdoor Alliance**.

“At REI, we believe every person deserves to enjoy the outdoors and connect to nature for their health and wellbeing. Yet systemic barriers prevent far too many communities from reaping the benefits of nearby quality parks. The Outdoors for All Act seeks to close this

nature gap by making the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Program permanent law, securing funding for green spaces in underserved communities so that everyone can enjoy time outside. We are proud to support this critical piece of legislation that will bring us one step closer to ensuring the outdoors is truly for everyone,” said **Marc Berejka of REI Co-op**.

“The East Coast Greenway Alliance enthusiastically supports the, Outdoors for All Act. As we look toward recovery in 2021 and beyond, our nation needs to make visionary infrastructure investments that spur strong economic recovery and a healthy, equitable future. We must support funding for urban parks in underserved communities. Everyone deserves safe and accessible access to the outdoors,” said **Niles Barnes of The East Coast Greenway Alliance**.

“The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Coalition applauds Representatives Barragán (D-CA-44) and Turner (R-OH-10), and Senators Padilla (D-CA) and Collins (R-ME) for prioritizing equitable outdoor access by reintroducing the Outdoors for All Act in both the House and Senate. Codifying the LWCF-funded Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program and providing a dedicated source of funding is key to support parks in underserved communities across the country. We are grateful for the bipartisan work to increase greenspace for those who need it most and for the inclusion of language that makes it easier for communities, including Native American Tribes, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian communities, to apply for this critical funding,” said **Lesley Kane Szynal of LWCF Coalition**.

“During the past few years, we have seen that our nation’s greenspaces can provide communities with fulfilling opportunities to experience the restorative powers of nature. We at the Continental Divide Trail Coalition applaud the reintroduction of the Outdoors for All Act, which will help ensure that parks, trails, and other outdoor spaces are equitably available to all,” said **Teresa Martinez of the Continental Divide Trail Coalition**.

“City Parks Alliance applauds Senators Alex Padilla and Susan Collins, and Representatives Nanette Barragán and Mike Turner for introducing the Outdoors for All Act. This bipartisan legislation helps address one of the biggest inequities facing urban America today: the lack of quality parks in underserved communities. The Outdoors for All Act will help expand outdoor recreation access, provide job opportunities, and engage and empower youth in the communities that are most in need,” said **Catherine Nagel of the City Parks Alliance**.

“The National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers applauds the introduction of the Outdoors for All Act. As state and territorial administrators of the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership and Land and Water Conservation Fund’s state grants programs, we see firsthand how this program can reduce barriers to the outdoors by investing in quality parks close to home. Especially important is the program’s stated goal of improving access to the outdoors in underserved neighborhoods and communities. The Outdoors for All Act will codify this program and provide the long-term certainty needed to result in lasting change,” said **Dr. Douglas Eiken of The National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers**.

“The Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership is a critical federal fund to ensure neighborhood, community led projects can be funded. This is especially important in

BIPOC communities that have been historically underfunded and need public investment to right the wrongs of historical inequity,” said **Rebecca Bear of the Seattle Parks Foundation**.

“The Outdoors Alliance for Kids applauds the reintroduction of the Outdoors for All Act. The evidence is overwhelming that spending time in nature is hugely beneficial to the mental and physical health of young people, but this past year made it clear that not all young people have equal access to those benefits. By targeting investment in urban park projects that benefit children, youth and families who have been disproportionately denied access to the outdoors, this legislation is an imperative response to the inequities highlighted during the pandemic,” said **Jayni Rasmussen of the Outdoors Alliance for Kids**.

“Access to the outdoors is essential for everyone, especially the 100 million Americans who don’t have a quality park within a 10-minute walk from home. I’m thrilled to see the introduction of the Outdoors for All Act in both the House and Senate today, and grateful to Representatives Barragan, Turner and Senators Padilla and Collins for their leadership in ensuring outdoor recreation to create healthier, more prosperous communities. Today’s action is an important step forward in ensuring the health, climate, and community benefits of parks are accessible to all,” said **Alex Schaefer of The Trust for Public Land**.