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Comments: To whom it may concern,

As a lifelong avid wilderness user, I oppose the current legislation. Wilderness areas are some of our nation's most special places, and as someone who has spent hundreds of hours in some of the most remote parts of the country, I fully understand the desire to protect their "wilderness character". However, I find the language of the current proposed legislation to be overly restrictive. Rock climbers are, in general, one of the most conservation minded user groups. Banning indiscriminate bolting is one thing, and I think most climbers would support that. But banning any gear from being left behind makes climbing unnecessarily dangerous and exclusive. What happens if bad weather or an injury causes climbers on a multi pitch route to make an emergency rappel? Are they forced to choose between their own safety and becoming criminals, simply for leaving a few tiny nuts and a carabiner on a cliff face? To ban all gear in this way is to ensure only elite climbers with an exceedingly high risk tolerance are able to experience the amazing climbs of our nations wilderness. In conclusion, I strongly believe that the proposed legislation is dangerous, elitist, unrealistic, and overreaching. I believe that a safer "middle ground" could be achieved by restricting permanent (i.e. drilled, hammered, or glued) installations, while making exceptions for "semi permanent" installations of removable traditional climbing protection.

Thanks,

Caleb Kopp