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February 4, 2009

Tucson Audubon Society
300 E. University Blvd.
Suite 120
Tucson, Arizona 85705

Dear Tucson Audubon Society Members and Supporters,

Congratulations on the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Tucson Audubon Society. While I cannot be there in person this evening, please know that I am with you in spirit as you celebrate this important milestone.

As members of the Audubon Society, you are part of an organization that is one of our nation's premiere conservation groups. The Audubon Society has provided communities from coast to coast with ways to learn about and experience the natural world. I commend you for all you have done to help our Tucson Audubon Society grow and thrive.

Much about our state and community has changed since the January day 60 years ago when 25 members of the newly formed Tucson Audubon Society held its inaugural meeting at Tucson High School. Then, your annual membership dues were \$1 and the entire state of Arizona had fewer people than Pima County has today. Arizona's governor at the time was the former Pima County Treasurer, Dan Garvey. Jan Brewer, our current governor, was four years old. Also memorable about that year was the graduation from law school of a former University of Arizona basketball star named Mo Udall and Barry Goldwater won a seat on the Phoenix City Council.

Now, 60 years later the Audubon Society's noble mission is even more crucial to the future of Arizona, the second-fastest growing state in the nation. Your vision, dedication and hard work have been instrumental in saving from development many priceless habitats throughout Southeastern Arizona. Anyone who has hiked along Sonoita Creek, through Tucson Mountain Park or into Ironwood National Monument has tasted the sweet fruit of your labor. Pima County is a model for the nation because of its Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, a plan that you helped make a reality. Much has been accomplished but we know that there is yet much more to be done as development continues and a mine threatens one of our most scenic mountain regions.

Looking back on the accomplishments of the Tucson Audubon Society, it is safe to say that you have influenced us and our quality of life as much as any political figure. Day in and day out, this wonderful organization reminds us that this corner of the planet we inhabit is fragile and that we must remain forever vigilant if we want our children and grandchildren to know and experience the unspoiled beauty of this amazing place.

I join with a grateful community to say thank you for a job well done. I look forward to working with you to meet the challenges that remain.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gabrielle Giffords".

Gabrielle Giffords
Member of Congress