

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Rehabilitated Eagle Released in Honor of Senator Howard H. Baker Jr.

September 2, 2014

*Video courtesy of the American Eagle Foundation*

(Huntsville, TN / September 2, 2014) Baker Donelson and the American Eagle Foundation, in partnership with the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, have released a wild rehabilitated bald eagle in honor of the late former Tennessee senator, presidential advisor and ambassador Howard H. Baker Jr.

The eagle, named "Leader" in recognition of Senator Baker's service as both the minority leader and majority leader of the U.S. Senate, was released on Saturday, August 30, at the East Rim Overlook at the [Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area](#). The eagle was found with a broken wing on a roadside in Hawkins County, Tennessee in 2012. It was brought to the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine for initial treatment, then taken to the [American Eagle Foundation](#), where it underwent additional treatment and had been undergoing extensive therapy and rehabilitation for the last two years. Now about three and a half to four years old, "Leader" has recovered from his wing injury and was ready to be released into the wild.

Baker Donelson was the principal sponsor of the eagle's release, along with additional support from the Howard H. Baker Center for Public Policy.

"Beyond his extraordinary public service career, Senator Baker was an enthusiastic advocate for the environment," said [Ben Adams](#), chairman and chief executive officer of Baker Donelson. "He was especially passionate about the area surrounding his home in Scott County, Tennessee, which he always referred to as the 'center of the universe,' and that passion fueled his efforts as the principal author of the enabling legislation that created the 125,000-acre Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area in 1974. Baker Donelson is extremely proud to support the release of this eagle in honor of Senator Baker in an area that was so precious to him. It is truly a fitting tribute to Senator Baker's life and legacy."

Matt Murray, executive director of the Howard H. Baker Center for Public Policy, said "The Energy and Environmental Policy Program at the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy strives to sustain Senator Baker's work and legacy in the areas of energy and environmental policy. As a major contributor to the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act, and the primary force behind establishment of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Senator Baker served as a model of environmental stewardship for the nation and his home state of Tennessee. The Baker Center now serves as a vibrant research, instructional and engagement hub for discussion and debate on environmental and energy policy issues. We are pleased to support this befitting effort in honor of Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr."

[Senator Baker](#) began his distinguished public service career in 1966, when he became the first Republican popularly elected to the U.S. Senate from Tennessee. He gained national recognition as vice chairman of the Senate Watergate Committee in 1973, and in 1980 was a candidate for the Republican presidential nomination. He concluded his Senate career in 1985 after two terms as majority leader (1981 – 1985) and two terms as minority leader (1977 – 1981).

Senator Baker's public service continued with his role as President Ronald Reagan's Chief of Staff (1987 – 1988) and as the 26th U.S. Ambassador to Japan (2001 – 2005). In 2005, he rejoined Baker Donelson, the

firm that his grandfather founded in Huntsville, Tennessee in 1888, and where he formerly practiced with his father, the late U.S. Rep. Howard H. Baker. As senior counsel to the Firm, he focused his practice on public policy and international matters. Senator Baker died June 26, 2014, from complications following a stroke. He was 88 years old.

The American Eagle Foundation is a non-profit public charity dedicated to the cause of restoring and protecting bald eagles to the U.S.A.'s lands, waterways and skies. The organization has a vision of establishing a multi-million dollar "American Eagle Fund" endowment to help keep America's eagles flying strong and free for the future. The Foundation is widely recognized as a national leader in bald eagle conservation, recovery and public education. Established in 1985, it is dedicated to the care and protection of the bald eagle and its habitat. The Foundation has educated millions of people, hatched and released hundreds of eaglets into the wild, and rehabilitated hundreds of injured eagles and other birds of prey. The AEF in cooperation with Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has released more than 360 eaglets in the state of Tennessee over the past 29 years. The AEF will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2015.