

May 8th, 2020

The Honorable John Hoeven
Chairman, Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, Food and Drug
Administration, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sanford Bishop Jr.
Chairman, Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, Food and Drug
Administration, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and
Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United State Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeff Fortenberry
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and
Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United State House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Hoeven and Bishop and Ranking Members Merkley and Fortenberry:

We are writing as a diverse coalition of industries representing airlines and airport infrastructure, agriculture, aquaculture, conservation, and state, county and city municipal services who support and depend on the work of the United States Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services Program (USDA/WS).

USDA/WS has two critical mission areas; to protect the food supply chain and protect human health. USDA/WS protects our nation's food supply chain by providing support to control and eradicate predation on livestock, aquaculture, and wildlife. They provide support to row crop farmers, grain growers and dairies. Additionally, they conduct work on feral hogs and many other invasive species across the nation, and at our ports of entry, that are a concern for spreading zoonotic pathogens. Their mission to protect human health is achieved through the mitigation of air traffic hazards (bird strikes and others), preventing the spread of rabies along the southern border, and protecting the critical drinking water infrastructure that hundreds of millions of Americans rely on daily. USDA/WS is truly America's first line of defense in protecting our citizens against wildlife damage to critical infrastructure.

USDA/WS is funded by Congress through annual appropriations, which combined with matching dollars from cooperators allows them to accomplish this broad mission. These cooperators are primarily state, county and municipal entities; but also include predator control districts and other private entities. Together, cooperators make up 50% of USDA/WS annual program funds.

Our concern is that the COVID-19 pandemic has stressed the budgets of these cooperators and that will have a detrimental effect on their ability to continue to support USDA/WS mission when we need them most to provide continuity. The airport wildlife hazard mitigation is fully funded by cooperators and the Federal Aviation Administration. This sector of the economy has been

particularly hard hit. State, counties and municipalities are reeling from the loss of tax revenue at all levels coupled with the need to divert already limited resources to emergency response and aid for their residents. Livestock, aquaculture and crop producers are feeling the pinch of a market crash from upended supply chains, the closure of food service and disrupted international trade.

During this pandemic, we have all worked to respond to the immediate needs of our respective industries and have greatly appreciated the support of Congress. Throughout this, we have continued to find unexpected and unanticipated challenges during what has been a previously unfathomable event of shutting down an entire nation and global economic leader to save lives. We ask that you consider providing additional program funding to USDA/WS to help bridge the gap of the loss of cooperator funding for this vital program.

Thank you for your leadership through these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l
American Dairy Goat Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Goat Federation
American Sheep Industry Association
American Veterinary Medical Association
Animal Health Institute
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Catfish Farmers of America
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Exotic Wildlife Association
Fur Industries of North America
Livestock Marketing Association
National Aquaculture Association
National Association of Federal Veterinarians

Alabama Cattlemen's Association
Association of Oregon Counties
California Cattlemen's Association
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Wool Growers Association
Colorado Wool Growers Association
Delta Council
Florida Cattlemen's Association
Florida Tropical Fish Farms Association
Georgia Agribusiness Council Inc
Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Lamb Feeders Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
Northwest Aquaculture Alliance
Public Lands Council
Rural and Agriculture Council of America
Safari Club International
Society for Range Management
U.S. Cattlemen's Association
USA Rice
Wild Sheep Foundation

Idaho Wool Growers Association
Independent Beef Association of North Dakota
Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas
Indiana Sheep Association
Kentucky Aquaculture Association
Maine Aquaculture Association
Massachusetts Federation of Sheep Associations
Michigan Aquaculture Association
Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producer Association

Montana Association of State Grazing
Districts
Montana Public Lands Council
Montana Stockgrowers Association
Montana Wool Growers Association
Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Nevada Central Committee
Nevada Farm Bureau Federation
Nevada Wool Growers Association
New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association
New Mexico Farm & Livestock Bureau
New Mexico Federal Lands Council
New Mexico Wool Growers, Inc
North Dakota Lamb and Wool Producers
Association
North Dakota Department of Agriculture
North Dakota Game and Fish Department
Ohio Aquaculture Association
Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
Ohio Sheep Improvement Association
White Tail Deer Farmers of Ohio

Oregon Cattlemen's Association
Oregon Farm Bureau Federation
Oregon Sheep Growers Association
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau
Pennsylvania Sheep and Wool Growers
Association
South Dakota Cattlemen's Association
South Dakota Sheep Growers Association
Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers' Association
Texas Wildlife Damage Management
Association
Jack H. Berryman Institute, Utah State
University
Utah Wool Growers Association
Washington State Sheep Producers
West Virginia Shepherds Federation
Wisconsin Sheep Breeders Cooperative
Wyoming Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife
Wyoming Stock Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association