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ASI's Annual D.C. Fly-In Advances Producer Priorities on Trade, Risk Management, and the 2026 Farm Bill

Sheep producers and state association leaders from across the country traveled to Washington, D.C., this week for the American Sheep Industry's (ASI) annual Spring Fly-In. An advocacy trip focused on advancing practical policy solutions for the domestic sheep industry.

WASHINGTON, D.C., (March 9, 2026) – Approximately 50 producers and state leaders from the nation's oldest livestock organization, the American Sheep Industry (ASI), met with key congressional offices, including Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman John Boozman (R-Ark.), professional staff of the House Agriculture Committee majority under Chairman Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-Penn.), and professional staff for the Senate Agriculture Committee minority under Ranking Member Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.). Conversations focused on issues critical to sheep producers, including risk management tools, trade issues, animal disease prevention, wildlife services, and challenges related to bighorn sheep interactions on grazing allotments.

"ASI shows up with substance, year after year," said ASI President Ben Lehfeldt. "This is not a one-week effort. It's a continuation of the work we've been doing for producers -- advancing sheep priorities, moving policy, pressing for outcomes, and working alongside our agriculture partner to push results that make a difference for sheep producers nationwide. You can see it in concrete steps like Rep. Jackson's amendment directing USDA to study a lamb risk management option, and the action we've taken with USTR regarding the 201 investigation on lamb imports. That's what progress looks like: turning producer priorities into action and keeping them moving until they're across the finish line."

Fly-In Callouts:

1) 2026 Skinny Farm Bill advances out of House Agriculture Committee

ASI members met with House and Senate Agriculture Committee leadership and staff as the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026 (AKA Skinny Farm Bill) advanced through House Agriculture Committee markup. The bill passed out of committee with bipartisan support by a 34-17 vote. In total, 7 Democrats joined ranks with Republicans to vote for the bill as amended: Reps. Jim Costa (D-CA), Sharice Davids (D-KS), Don Davis (D-NC), Gabe Vasquez (D-NM), Adam Gray (D-CA), Kristen McDonald Rivet (D-MI), and John Riley (D-NY). ASI continues encouraging producers to contact their

elected officials prior to mid-terms and reinforce the importance of sheep and lamb priorities as the bill moves through the legislative process.

2) Jackson amendment directs USDA to study lamb risk management options

ASI applauds an amendment offered by Rep. Ronny Jackson (R-TX) directing USDA to study the feasibility of an insurance or risk management program for domestic lamb producers to protect against market and input cost volatility. During the farm bill markup, the amendment was offered and passed by a voice vote. ASI emphasized this is a meaningful step while noting the Farm Bill still must move through the House, the Senate, and final conference before it can be sent to the President.

3) Trade enforcement: USTR meeting and continued engagement with Ambassador Julie Callahan

During its recent Fly-In, ASI advanced its federal trade efforts by holding a follow-up meeting with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR). The meeting reinforced ASI's formal request that USTR initiate a global safeguard investigation into rising U.S. lamb meat imports under Sections 201–202 of the Trade Act of 1974. The request was submitted on behalf of ASI's 42 state associations and more than 100,000 sheep farms and ranches nationwide.

In October 2025, ASI delivered both public and confidential reports to USTR documenting the sharp growth in imported lamb, the resulting financial harm to domestic lamb processing companies, and the serious economic injury facing American sheep producers. Since filing the request, ASI has continued working closely with congressional offices and USTR officials to underscore the impact of these imports on the U.S. sheep industry and the urgent need for federal action.

ASI leadership emphasized that securing a formal federal review remains a top priority to ensure fair market conditions and long-term stability for American lamb producers.

While in D.C., state association leaders also met directly with their respective members of Congress to highlight the importance of sheep production in their home states and to reinforce the industry's policy priorities. ASI concluded the Fly-In by hosting its annual American Lamb Reception, bringing together members of Congress, staff, and partners to continue discussions and strengthen working relationships. A highlight of the evening included attendance by Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), the Senate Republican whip, along with Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-Miss.) and Rep. Jack Bergman (R-Mich.).

To learn more about some of the key priorities discussed during the ASI fly-in, [click here](#)

About ASI

The American Sheep Industry (ASI) is the national organization representing the interests of U.S. sheep producers, advancing the sheep industry through targeted work in policy, animal health, market development, education, and producer-driven leadership.

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