

April 27, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chair, Committee on Appropriations  
2207 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member, Committee on  
Appropriations  
2413 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Andy Harris  
Chair, Subcommittee on Agriculture,  
Rural Development, Food and Drug  
Administration & Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
1536 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop, Jr.  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and  
Drug Administration & Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
2407 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Harris, & Ranking Member Bishop:

Wildlife causes more than \$12.8 billion in damage each year to agriculture, natural resources, human health and safety, and private property. For livestock producers, wildfire depredations represent one of the most serious and ongoing threats to operations, resulting in more than \$232 million in livestock losses annually with the loss of over 226,500 sheep due to wildlife predators in 2019 (NAHMS 2020). Wildlife destruction does not stop at targeting livestock as prey; it disrupts communities, creates human and pet safety issues and results in substantial crop production damage. Historically, field crop losses due to wildlife total more than \$619 million annually and losses to commodities such as vegetables, fruits, and nuts average over \$146 million annually. Wildlife damage even impacts the aquaculture industry with over 70% of catfish farmers incurring wildlife-related damages of up to \$65 million per year. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services (WS) is the only Federal agency charged with assisting the public in efforts to mitigate wildlife caused damages. Without a fully funded Wildlife Services program, one allowed to utilize all of the authorities and techniques necessary, producers and communities alike would face increased predation, greater disease risk, and fewer tools to address escalating wildlife pressures.

Wildlife Services plays a critical role in helping agricultural producers protect their herds, crops, and yields. In instances where wildlife becomes an issue, WS works cooperatively and directly with state agencies and producers to protect the public in all 50 states and three territories to reduce the impact of predators. In FY25, WS provided more than 28,000 technical assistance activities that enabled 7,300+ producers to implement improved husbandry and methods including the use of guard animals, predator exclusion and dispersal and fencing. These activities included predator management workshops that educated program participants on conflict avoidance tactics. These workshops have been attended by nearly 20,000 cooperators from all over the U.S.

Wildlife Services not only helps protect agricultural production and family pets from physical threats, but the agency also helps producers fight against plant and animal diseases. Over the past two decades, Wildlife Services has deployed resources to track the movement of diseases vectored by wildlife. These activities prevent outbreaks and educate the public on the impact these diseases have on agricultural outputs. Many of the world's most pressing animal diseases currently impact producers and the pocketbooks of the consumers who rely upon them. Over the last 19 years, Wildlife Services has conducted national surveillance of migratory waterfowl for avian influenza viruses and collected and tested over 500,000 wild bird samples. Wildlife Services is on the front lines of the battle against Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and its severe impact on domestic poultry producers and related human health and trade impacts. Wildlife Services recently implemented a wildlife biosecurity pilot project that conducts Wildlife Biosecurity Assessments (WBAs) on poultry operations to reduce the spread of HPAI in poultry.

Wildlife Services also supports our local communities, recreational activities and family pets. Wildlife Services' unique authority and capabilities allow their highly trained personnel to engage predators and disease-ridden animals in ways that other state, local and private organizations either cannot or will not do. On an annual basis, Wildlife Services disrupts the actions or permanently removes over hundreds of thousands of wild predators, nuisance and diseased animals. Wildlife Services is a front-line defender of national security that constantly faces and fights new threats to our health, welfare and economy. Just last year, Wildlife Services launched and helped lead a coordinated effort to strengthen early detection and response capacity for the New World Screwworm (NWS) along the U.S.–Mexico border. Wildlife Services has worked extensively with international, federal, state, local and private entities to develop various wildlife surveillance, control and mitigation strategies to reduce NWS spread from captive wildlife.

Wildlife Services provides a critical, cost-effective federal safeguard for agriculture and community safety by preventing wildlife-related losses, responding to emerging threats, and supporting producers on the ground. For agricultural producers, access to Wildlife Services often determines whether predation risks remain manageable or become economically devastating. Continued congressional support for Wildlife Services ensures these proven programs remain strong, responsive, and capable of protecting everything, from the airports we fly in and out of to the food we eat and the pets we hold dear, across the agriculture, public health, rural and urban communities of America.

Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l  
Airlines for America  
American Association of Airport Executives  
American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges  
American Beekeeping Federation  
American Dairy Goat Association  
American Dairy Sheep Association  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Goat Federation  
American Horse Council  
American Sheep Industry Association  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
America's Fur Resource Council  
Animal Health Institute  
Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies  
Association of National Grasslands  
Big Game Forever  
Blackfeet Nation Agriculture Development Foundation  
Blackfeet Nation Stock Growers Association  
Boone & Crockett Club  
Catfish Farmers of America  
Catfish Institute  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
East Coast Shellfish Growers Association  
Exotic Wildlife Association  
Fur Commission USA  
Livestock Marketing Association  
Mohair Council of America  
Mule Deer Foundation

Alabama Catfish Producers  
Alabama Cattlemen's Association  
Alabama Farmers Federation  
Alabama Meat Goat & Sheep Producers  
Arizona Cattle Feeders Association  
Arizona Cattle Growers' Association  
Arizona Cattlemen's Association  
Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society  
Arizona Wool Producers Association  
Arkansas Cattlemen's Association  
Arkansas Farm Bureau  
Arkansas State Sheep Council  
Association of Oregon Counties

National Aquaculture Association  
National Association of Counties  
National Association of Federal Veterinarians  
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture  
National Farmers Union  
National Grange  
National Lamb Feeders Association  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Pork Producers Council  
National Shooting Sports Foundation  
National Sorghum Producers  
National Sunflower Association  
National Women Involved in Farm Economics  
Natural Fiber Alliance  
North American Meat Institute  
North American Renderers Association  
Northwest Aquaculture Alliance  
Public Lands Council  
R-CALF USA  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Rural & Agriculture Council of America  
Safari Club International  
Society for Range Management  
Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife  
State Agriculture & Rural Leaders Association  
United States Animal Health Association  
United States Trout Farmers Association  
US Aquaculture Suppliers Association  
USA Rice  
Wild Sheep Foundation  
Wildlife Management Institute

Association of Texas Soil & Water Conservation Districts  
California Agricultural Commissioners & Sealers Association  
California Cattlemen's Association  
California Farm Bureau  
California Pork Producers Association  
California Wool Growers Association  
Catfish Farmers of Arkansas  
Colorado Cattlemen's Association  
Colorado Wool Growers Association  
Connecticut Sheep Breeders Association, Inc.

Delta Council  
 Empire Sheep Producers  
 Florida Aquaculture Association  
 Florida Cattlemen's Association  
 Florida Tropical Fish Farms Association  
 Garden State Sheep Breeders, Inc.  
 Georgia Agribusiness Council, Inc.  
 Georgia Cattlemen's Association  
 Georgia Sheep & Wool Growers Association  
 Hawaii Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association  
 Hawaii Farm Bureau  
 Hawaii Sheep & Goat Association  
 Idaho Cattle Association  
 Idaho Farm Bureau Federation  
 Idaho Outfitters & Guides Association  
 Idaho Wool Growers Association  
 Illinois Beef Association  
 Illinois Lamb & Wool Producers, Inc.  
 Independent Beef Association of North Dakota  
 Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas  
 Indiana Sheep Association  
 Iowa Cattlemen's Association  
 Iowa Sheep Industry Association  
 Jack H. Berryman Institute, Utah State University  
 Kansas Livestock Association  
 Kansas Sheep Association  
 Kentucky Aquaculture Association  
 Kentucky Cattlemen's Association  
 Kentucky Sheep & Wool Producers  
 Louisiana Cattlemen's Association  
 Louisiana Farm Bureau  
 Maine Aquaculture Association  
 Maine Sheep Breeders Association  
 Maryland Sheep Breeders Association  
 Massachusetts Federation of Sheep Associations  
 Meat Sheep Alliance of Florida, Inc.  
 Michigan Aquaculture Association  
 Michigan Sheep Producers Association  
 Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers  
 Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association  
 Missouri Cattlemen's Association  
 Missouri Sheep Producers, Inc.  
 Montana Association of State Grazing Districts  
 Montana Farm Bureau Federation  
 Montana Public Lands Council  
 Montana Stockgrowers Association  
 Montana Wool Growers Association  
 Nebraska Cattlemen, Inc.  
 Nebraska Farmers Union  
 Nebraska Sheep & Goat Producers  
 Nebraska State Grange  
 Nebraska Women Involved in Farm Economics  
 Nevada Cattlemen's Association  
 Nevada Central Committee for State Grazing Boards  
 Nevada Department of Agriculture  
 Nevada Farm Bureau Federation  
 Nevada Rangeland Resources Commission  
 Nevada Wool Growers Association  
 New Hampshire Sheep & Wool Growers Association  
 New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association  
 New Mexico Department of Agriculture  
 New Mexico Farm & Livestock Bureau  
 New Mexico Federal Lands Council  
 New Mexico Trappers Association  
 New Mexico Wool Growers, Inc.  
 North Carolina Cattlemen's Association  
 North Carolina Sheep Producers Association  
 North Central Oregon Livestock Association  
 North Dakota Department of Agriculture  
 North Dakota Game & Fish Department  
 North Dakota Lamb & Wool Producers Association  
 North Dakota Stockmen's Association  
 Ohio Aquaculture Association  
 Ohio Cattlemen's Association  
 Ohio Dairy Producers Association  
 Ohio Farm Bureau Federation  
 Ohio Pork Council  
 Ohio Poultry Association  
 Ohio Sheep Improvement Association  
 Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association  
 Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
 Oregon Aquaculture Association  
 Oregon Cattlemen's Association  
 Oregon Dairy Farmers Association  
 Oregon Farm Bureau Federation  
 Oregon Forest Industries Council  
 Oregon Outdoor Council  
 Oregon Seed Council  
 Oregon Sheep Growers Association  
 Oregon Small Woodlands Association  
 Oregon Trappers Association  
 Oregon United Sporting Dogs Association  
 Oregonians for Food & Shelter  
 Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association  
 Pennsylvania Farm Bureau  
 Pennsylvania Sheep & Wool Growers Association  
 Rhode Island Sheep Cooperative  
 Shellfish Growers of Virginia  
 South Carolina Sheep Industries Association  
 South Dakota Cattlemen's Association

South Dakota Sheep Growers Association  
South East Dairy Farmers Association  
Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife Idaho  
Tennessee Cattlemen's Association  
Tennessee Farm Bureau  
Tennessee Sheep Producers Association  
Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers  
Association  
Texas Cattle Feeders Association  
Texas Farm Bureau  
Texas Pork Producers Association  
Texas Sheep & Goat Predator Management  
Board  
Texas Sheep & Goat Raisers' Association Texas  
Wildlife Damage Management Association  
The Port Authority of New York & New  
Jersey  
United Dairymen of Arizona  
Utah Farm Bureau Federation  
Vermont Sheep & Goat Association  
Virginia Cattlemen's Association  
Virginia Farm Bureau Federation  
Virginia Sheep Producers Association  
Washington Cattlemen's Association  
Washington Cattle Feeders Association  
Washington State Animal Damage Control  
Program  
Washington State Sheep Producers  
West Virginia Cattlemen's Association  
West Virginia Farm Bureau  
West Virginia Shepherds Federation  
Western Forestry & Conservation Association  
Western United Dairymen  
White Tail Deer Farmers of Ohio  
Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association  
Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association  
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation  
Wisconsin Firearms Owners, Ranges, Club &  
Educators  
Wisconsin Sheep Breeders Cooperative  
Wyoming Animal Damage Management Board

Wyoming Association of County Predatory  
Animal Boards  
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation  
Wyoming Game & Fish Department  
Wyoming Sportsmen for Fish & Wildlife  
Wyoming Stock Growers Association  
Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation  
Wyoming Wool Growers Association