

April 27, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Committee on
Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and
Drug Administration & Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Collins, Ranking Member Murray, Chair Hoeven, & Ranking Member Shaheen:

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