

May 8<sup>th</sup>, 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  
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  
Idaho Wool Growers Association

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

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 Farm Bureau Federation  
Nevada Rangeland Resources Commission  
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 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  
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