



TENNESSEE FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

March 13, 2026

The Honorable Harriet Hageman
United States House of Representatives
Chair, Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries
House Committee on Natural Resources
1227 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Val Hoyle
United States House of Representatives
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries
House Committee on Natural Resources
1227 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairwoman Hageman and Ranking Member Hoyle,

The Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation (TFBF) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries hearing titled "*Oversight of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act*" which was held on Wednesday, March 4, 2026.

Beef cattle are produced in every county in Tennessee, making it a top beef-producing state in the United States (16th). In 2025, Tennessee had an estimated inventory of 1.56 million cattle and calves. In 2024, cattle and calves brought \$1.07 billion in cash receipts, ranking 2nd in the state at 20.5% of total farm cash receipts. Cow-calf operations are vital to Tennessee's agricultural economy.

Farmers across Tennessee continue to experience the burden of growing black vulture populations and the resulting depredation of their livestock. Black vultures prey on young calves, often attacking and killing them during or immediately after birth. For cow-calf producers who rely on the successful weaning of calves at six to eight months of age, losing young calves due to black vulture predation can result in significant financial losses for the producer. It should be a fundamental right for farmers to protect their livestock when threatened by predatory actions of black vultures.

TFBF is the largest general farm organization in Tennessee, representing farmers of all types across the state. Our policy is developed through a grassroots network of member farmers who identify, research, deliberate, vote on, and adopt policies related to agriculture and rural living. On behalf of our farmer members, we are concerned about the negative impacts of black vulture predation on livestock producers, most specifically cattle producers with young calves. Our policy specifically states:

The American black vulture is an economic threat to many livestock producers and we support the removal of the black vulture from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation's Black Vulture Subpermit program provides farmers opportunities to legally dispatch nuisance vultures which are predators to livestock. We support federal legislation which allows livestock producers and their employees to take black vultures without a permit if it is believed the vulture will harm or threaten to harm their livestock.

Since the black vulture is listed under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, a federal permit is required to legally take black vultures. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service issues a subpermit to Tennessee through TFBF, allowing three takes per year. With the population of black vultures continuing to grow exponentially, the approved three takes authorized per person through this subpermit do not allow farmers to adequately protect their cattle herds.

While TFBF's priority would be to remove the black vulture from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, we support the passage of H.R. 2462, the Black Vulture Relief Act, lead by Tennessee's own Representative John Rose (TN-06) and Florida Representative Darren Soto (FL-09). This legislation aims to allow farmers to address black vulture threats as they arise.

TFBF thanks Chairwoman Hageman, Ranking Member Hoyle, and the entire House Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries for putting focused attention on this important topic and look forward to continued engagement on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eric Mayberry".

Eric Mayberry
President

Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation