

**Statement for the Record
U.S. Department of the Interior**

**House Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries
Legislative Hearing
on**

**H.R. 7466, Safeguarding America's Food Economy and Controlling Agricultural Threats
to Livestock and Enterprises (SAFE CATTLE) Act
H.R. 8876, Aquatic Invasive Species Control and Prevention Act of 2026**

July 21, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this Statement for the Record on H.R. 7466, the SAFE CATTLE Act, and H.R. 8876, the Aquatic Invasive Species Control and Prevention Act of 2026.

H.R. 7466, SAFE CATTLE Act

H.R. 7466 would direct the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture (Secretaries) to enter into a memorandum of understanding or other interagency agreement to coordinate activities to prevent, control, and eradicate New World screwworm (NWS) in wildlife and non-livestock species on lands managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) U.S. Forest Service. Such activities include surveillance and monitoring, coordination with state partners on control and containment, coordination of eradication protocols, and development of protocols to allow movement of non-infested animals to and from non-contaminated federal lands. H.R. 7466 also requires the Secretaries to submit an annual report to Congress describing these interagency efforts and any recommendations to improve federal response capacity to the threat of NWS.

The Department of the Interior (Department) has jurisdictional responsibility over vast federal lands and trust species, including species listed as threatened and endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), that are susceptible to NWS. The reinfestation of NWS into the United States poses a serious threat to these natural resources. The Department is committed to working collaboratively with the USDA and other federal, state, and tribal partners to effectively prepare for and respond to any foreign animal disease outbreak, including NWS incursions. We are currently working with state and federal partners to conduct planning, monitoring and surveillance activities to ensure readiness to address NWS infestations that may occur in wildlife species.

The Department supports H.R. 7466 and looks forward to working with the Sponsor and Subcommittee on supporting a coordinated and robust response to NWS.

H.R. 8876, Aquatic Invasive Species Control and Prevention Act of 2026

H.R. 8876 would amend the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 to codify certain existing practices and expand the scope of the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (Task Force) and the Aquatic Nuisance Species Program. Specifically, the bill would increase the membership of the Task Force, codify the six regional panels that currently support the Task Force, and require enhanced coordination with the National Invasive Species Council. H.R. 8876 would also direct the Task Force to identify ecosystems susceptible to aquatic invasive species, update national and regional management control plans, develop a plan for federal agencies to conduct inspections and decontaminations of watercraft, and establish an inter-basin and intra-basin monitoring program, among other provisions. In addition, the bill would also establish two new competitive grant programs focused on rapid responses to new detections and on new technologies and methods to control and eradicate aquatic invasive species. Finally, H.R. 8876 authorizes \$49.5 million per year for Fiscal Years (FY) 2026 through 2031 to implement the legislation.

Established by Congress in 1990, the Task Force is composed of 13 federal and 12 ex-officio members that work together to protect the waters of the United States from the harmful impacts of aquatic invasive species. As a co-chair of the Task Force, the Service currently works with federal, state, tribal, territorial, and other partners to implement the Aquatic Nuisance Species Program, including monitoring, prevention, early detection, rapid response, and on-the-ground control of aquatic invasive species nationwide.

The Department recognizes the importance of combating invasive species and their negative impacts on hunting, fishing, infrastructure, human health, natural resources, and national security. The Department appreciates the goals of this bill and looks forward to working with the Sponsor and Subcommittee to ensure efficient use of taxpayer dollars.