

**U.S. HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER, WILDLIFE, AND FISHERIES HEARING
TUESDAY, JULY 21/2:00 P.M. EDT**

**--TESTIMONY PREPARED FOR MR. JARED BLANKENSHIP TEXAS FARM
BUREAU STATE DIRECTOR, DISTRICT 1--**

Chairwoman Hageman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Jared Blankenship, and I am representing Texas Farm Bureau and our more than 480,000 member families across the state of Texas. I serve as Texas Farm Bureau State Director for District 1, representing farmers and ranchers across the Texas Panhandle.

I am also a cattle producer, and I am here today to voice Texas Farm Bureau's strong support for H.R. 7466, the SAFE CATTLE Act, authored by my Congressman, Ronny Jackson, and co-led by Chairwoman Hageman and Representative Soto—who each distinguishably serve on this subcommittee.

It is important that we remain alert, not alarmed, as we address the New World screwworm threat. Livestock producers across Texas are diligently monitoring their herds, remaining vigilant, and quickly reporting any suspected cases. Combined with the swift and coordinated response from state and federal animal health officials, these efforts are helping ensure that cases are identified, contained, and addressed with urgency and a clear plan of action.

It is also important to emphasize that New World screwworm is an animal health issue, not a food safety issue. America's food supply remains safe, wholesome, and secure. This legislation is about supporting ongoing animal health and eradication efforts so producers, animal health officials, and federal agencies can expand on their unified response.

The SAFE CATTLE Act would establish a formal partnership between USDA and the Department of the Interior to support surveillance, monitoring, and eradication activities in wildlife species, coordination with state officials, and regular reporting to Congress as we work collectively toward eradication.

I want to recognize the outstanding work already being done by USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins, the Trump Administration, state animal health officials, and many industry partners. Producers across Texas appreciate the leadership, resources, and attention that have been devoted to addressing New World screwworm. The SAFE CATTLE Act builds on that momentum and helps ensure federal agencies remain focused on the shared goal of eradication.

As a cattle producer, I know success often depends on having everyone working together toward the same objective. On our operation, whether we are managing

herd health, responding to severe weather, or handling day-to-day challenges, clear roles and teamwork make all the difference.

That is why I support this legislation. It does not create a new program or add unnecessary bureaucracy. Instead, it strengthens the framework for agencies already engaged in this effort.

The bill recognizes that USDA leads animal health efforts while the Department of the Interior manages wildlife and federal lands that can play an important role in prevention and eradication activities in wildlife.

By bringing those agencies together under a formal agreement, the SAFE CATTLE Act strengthens joint surveillance, supports coordinated eradication strategies and improves engagement with state animal health and wildlife officials.

It increases transparency to ensure Congress can provide responders with the resources they need to eliminate this devastating pest. Those are practical steps that will help protect producers moving forward.

Texas Farm Bureau believes the SAFE CATTLE Act is exactly the type of commonsense legislation Congress should support. It reinforces the strong work already underway, clearly defines responsibilities, and strengthens the tools available to those on the front lines of this effort.

On behalf of Texas Farm Bureau, I respectfully urge the Subcommittee to advance the SAFE CATTLE Act and move this legislation to the full House of Representatives for consideration and passage. We have eradicated the New World screwworm before, and by continuing to work together, we will eradicate it again.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to answering any questions.

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