

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 10, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

We are writing to bring your immediate attention to the growing risk posed by the New World screwworm (NWS) and the critical need for expanded eradication and containment efforts.

In November 2024, we first received reports of NWS detected in the Mexican state of Chiapas—the number of reported cases has surged from five to now at least 33 and has spread to the states of Campeche and Tabasco. This raises a critical question of how many cases are truly out there and whether we have mechanisms in place to ensure the safety of U.S. livestock and wildlife. Left unchecked, an outbreak could cost livestock producers millions of dollars per year and inflict detrimental economic losses on the national economy.


The life cycle of NWS makes it uniquely destructive to livestock and wildlife as NWS larvae infest living tissue, causing severe wounds that can lead to infection and death. The U.S. successfully eradicated NWS in 1966 using the sterile insect technique (SIT), which required dropping sterilized flies out of airplanes to disrupt the reproductive cycle.

The current and only accessible sterile fly production facility in Panama, which is operated jointly by USDA and the Panamanian Government, is maxed out at producing 100 million sterile flies per week. However, this output is no longer sufficient to maintain an effective barrier against NWS migration. There are currently no sterile fly production facilities in the U.S. or Mexico, and to successfully push the NWS population further back into Central and South America it is estimated an additional 100 million sterile flies per week will be needed.


To address this growing concern across our livestock, farming, and wildlife industries, we urge the USDA to work with state, local, and relevant industry stakeholders to proactively address this emerging threat—including considering the feasibility of establishing a sterile fly production facility in Texas or the Southwest.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to working with you to strengthen NWS eradication and containment efforts.


Sincerely,




Tony Gonzales
Member of Congress




Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress




C. Scott Franklin
Member of Congress




Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress




Monica De La Cruz
Member of Congress




Eugene Simon Vindman
Member of Congress




Ronny L. Jackson
Member of Congress




Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress



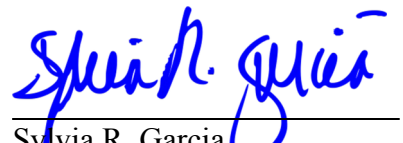
David G. Valadao
Member of Congress



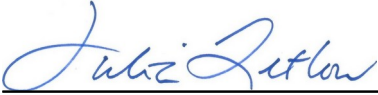
Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Juan Ciscomani
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



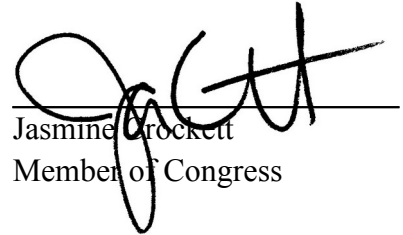
Julia Letlow, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



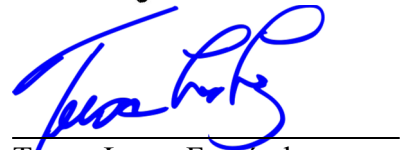
Kat Cammack
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



Ben Cline
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernandez
Member of Congress



Austin Scott
Member of Congress



Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



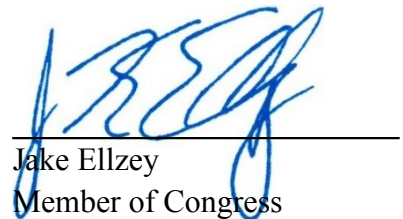
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John R. Carter
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Michael Cloud
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Jake Ellzey
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Jodey C. Arrington
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Michael T. McCaul
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August Pfluger
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Brian Babin, D.D.S.
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Morgan Luttrell
Member of Congress



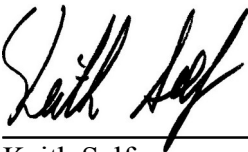
Nathaniel Moran
Member of Congress



Pete Sessions
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Troy E. Nehls
Member of Congress



Keith Self
Member of Congress



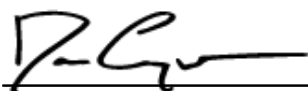
Lance Gooden
Member of Congress



Craig A. Goldman
Member of Congress



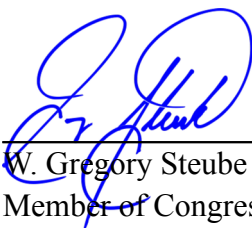
Pat Fallon
Member of Congress



Dan Crenshaw
Member of Congress



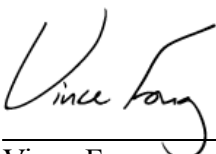
Brandon Gill
Member of Congress



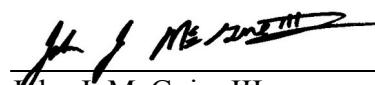
W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress



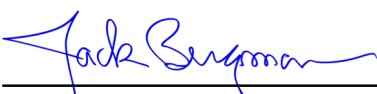
Daniel Webster
Member of Congress



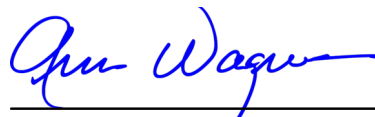
Vince Fong
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