



June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Chairman Guillen and Members  
House Committee on Agriculture & Livestock  
Texas House of Representatives

**RE:** Written Testimony on New World Screwworm

Chairman Guillen and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding the New World Screwworm.

Texas agriculture is one of the state's most important industries, supporting producers, rural communities, consumers, and the broader Texas economy. The confirmed presence of New World Screwworm (NWS) in Texas represents a serious challenge that warrants immediate attention and continued vigilance. Unlike many policy debates that involve theoretical risks, NWS presents a direct and measurable threat. Left unchecked, infestations can harm livestock, wildlife, pets, and other warm-blooded animals while imposing significant economic costs on ranchers and agricultural producers. Protecting animal health and preserving the viability of Texas agriculture are legitimate public interests.

Texas Policy Research (TPR) supports a response focused on rapid detection, transparent reporting, producer education, interstate coordination, and proven eradication strategies. The sterile insect technique successfully eliminated NWS from the United States decades ago and remains the cornerstone of effective suppression efforts today. Policymakers should prioritize strategies with demonstrated success rather than creating new layers of bureaucracy that do little to improve outcomes.

Recent developments also raise important questions regarding preparedness and response. Public reporting has highlighted disagreements between state and federal officials concerning the pace and adequacy of preventative actions taken before NWS reached Texas. While assigning blame should not be the primary objective of this hearing, lawmakers should carefully evaluate whether warning signs were appropriately addressed, whether available resources were deployed in a timely manner, and what lessons can be learned to strengthen future agricultural biosecurity efforts. As Texas considers its path forward, policymakers should resist the temptation to view every crisis as justification for permanent government expansion. Emergency responses may be necessary, but temporary measures should remain targeted, accountable, and focused on clearly defined outcomes. The objective should be eradication of the threat, not creation of new programs that persist long after the threat has passed.

This challenge also underscores the importance of maintaining strong state capabilities. Texas should ensure that producers, veterinarians, and animal health officials have access to the information, diagnostic resources, and response tools necessary to identify and contain future outbreaks before they become widespread.

The New World Screwworm is a reminder that threats to agriculture can quickly become threats to the broader Texas economy. Effective policy should focus on protecting producers, preserving market stability, safeguarding private property, and ensuring government resources are directed toward measurable results. Texas Policy Research appreciates the Committee's attention to this important issue and looks forward to continuing to provide research and analysis as Texas responds to this emerging challenge.

For Liberty, For Texas!

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