



BROOKS MCCORMICK JR
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PRESS RELEASE

New World Screwworm Incursion into Texas Highlights Risks Created by Farm Bill

Yesterday, June 4, in testimony before the House Committee of Agriculture, Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins confirmed the presence of New World Screwworm (NWS) in a calf in La Pryor, Texas. The larvae were [reportedly living in the umbilical area](#) of the three-week-old animal. NWS, a parasitic fly, is a serious threat to American livestock. [According to the USDA](#), “NWS larvae (maggots) burrow into the flesh of living animals, causing serious damage to livestock and economic losses.”

The incursion of NWS into the U.S. amplifies concerns raised in the Brooks McCormick Jr. Animal Law & Policy Program’s September 2025 report, a [“Legislative Analysis of H.R. 4673: The ‘Save our Bacon Act’”](#) and its February 2026 [“Analysis of H.R. 7567, Sec. 12006”](#) of the House Farm Bill, which contains language mirroring H.R. 4673. The NWS is “a pest that can devastate herds and is approaching the U.S. border from the south,” the report warned. The report also warned that, if adopted, the “Save our Bacon Act” (SOBA) could nullify over 600 existing state laws, including biosecurity provisions that create state-based protections against various diseases and parasites that affect animals. State-based importation restrictions, quarantine, testing and certification are critical legal protections against the NWS that are in place in many states, including Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia and South Dakota.

As the report explains:

Every state imposes importation restrictions of some kind on livestock. These restrictions relate to pests and diseases that threaten livestock and the livelihoods of livestock producers, as well as public health. ...Indiana, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington impose restrictions on cattle imported from Mexico. Some of these states also include bison from Mexico in those restrictions. Other states impose requirements on certain livestock imported from Canada, including Idaho, Illinois, New York, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, and Washington.

While many of these restrictions relate to pre-entry branding or negative tuberculosis testing, this ability by states to impose origin or country-specific importation requirements **may be particularly vital to efforts to control the northern spread of New World screwworm from Mexico** as well as pests or diseases from other countries.

The ability to impose and enforce such restrictions is vital for states to be able to control the entry of livestock exposed to industry threatening pests and diseases. **The enactment of H.R.4673 [SOBA] could restrict or block such disease and pest restrictions.**

The Farm Bill (formally, the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026) has been passed by the House of Representatives but is now under scrutiny by the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. The latest iteration of the language of H.R. 4673/SOBA is found in Section 12006. In the House, a bipartisan amendment that purported to remove the threatening language of section 12006 was rejected.

Professor Kristen Stilt, editor of the report and Harvard Law School Professor and Director of the Brooks McCormick Jr. Animal Law & Policy Program, warns that “this incursion of New World Screwworm into Texas—an incursion that it likely to worsen significantly—is another reason to regard the Save our Bacon Act language in Section 12006 of the House Farm Bill with extreme caution. As our analyses of the various forms of this proposed legislation have shown, SOBA and related efforts jeopardize greatly the ability of states to carry out their most basic duties of protecting the health, safety, and welfare of their residents, including the livestock and the related livelihoods of those residents.”

Professor Stilt continues: “It is important for states to have regulatory and legal certainty about their powers to protect their residents. This certainty is threatened by the Farm Bill in its present form. Our analyses show that SOBA and Section 12006 would throw into jeopardy the status of existing state laws that have long supported biosecurity and critical public health measures. Especially under these new circumstances of NWS incursion into Texas, it is extraordinary that this language remains under consideration.”

Backgrounder:

In 2018, California voters passed Proposition 12, a ballot initiative that established minimum space requirements for egg-laying hens, veal calves, and sows, and prohibited the sale of products from animals (and their offspring in the case of sows) raised in extreme confinement, including gestation crates for pigs reared for pork. Proposition 12 passed with 63% support and was challenged by industries all the way to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court upheld its constitutionality in 2023 *National Pork Producers Council v Ross*.

In the intervening eight years since the passage of Proposition 12, industries selling eggs, veal, and pork products in California have in fact adapted to the new norm; in effect since 2022, the law has both improved animal welfare and provided market opportunities to small and independent farmers. SOBA and Section 12006 of the House Farm Bill is an attempt to negate the choices of Californian voters and prevent any other state from adopting similar laws that seek to improve animal health and welfare.

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