

March 16, 2026

Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson:

The undersigned organizations, representing millions of hunters, anglers, wildlife professionals, and outdoor enthusiasts, write to express support for the Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act (H.R. 556). Introduced by Congressman Rob Wittman, this legislation would prohibit the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior from restricting the use of lead ammunition or tackle on certain federal lands and waters absent field data demonstrating a science-based link to wildlife population declines. Overly broad or arbitrary bans on traditional ammunition and tackle can create unnecessary economic impacts and hinder fish and wildlife conservation efforts. We respectfully urge prompt House consideration of this legislation.

Fish and wildlife are generally managed at the population level, and—with limited exceptions—management authority primarily resides with state fish and wildlife agencies. In the rare cases where credible field data demonstrate impacts to wildlife populations, state agencies already have the authority to regulate ammunition or tackle use to achieve conservation objectives while minimizing impacts on hunters and anglers.

Wildlife management decisions should be guided by science and the expertise of professional wildlife managers—not political motivations, litigation, or ballot initiatives. Restrictions on traditional ammunition and tackle on federal lands should occur only with the support of the relevant state fish and wildlife agency. H.R. 556 appropriately reinforces this principle and affirms the central role of states in wildlife management.

Broad bans can also discourage participation in hunting and fishing, particularly when comparable alternatives are not widely available at similar cost or performance. Reduced participation has economic consequences and directly affects conservation funding. Through excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, and fishing tackle under the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson Acts, hunters and anglers provide the primary source of funding for state wildlife conservation, habitat restoration, research, and public access.

At the same time, we support efforts by federal agencies to responsibly expand opportunities for hunting and fishing on public lands. We commend the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for proposing to expand hunting and sport fishing opportunities across units of the National Wildlife Refuge System and National Fish Hatchery System. Increasing access supports the Refuge System's mission to facilitate compatible wildlife-dependent recreation while strengthening participation in the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

For these reasons, we strongly support the Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act (H.R. 556) and encourage the House to advance this legislation. We also appreciate ongoing agency efforts to maintain and expand opportunities for America's hunters and anglers on public lands.

Thank you for your leadership and continued service on behalf of America's outdoor heritage.

Sincerely,

American Catfishing Association
American Sportfishing Association
Bass Anglers Sportsman Society
Boone and Crockett Club
California Waterfowl Association
Catch A Dream Foundation
Coastal Conservation Association
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports
Dallas Safari Club
Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited
International Game Fish Association
Major League Fishing
Mule Deer Foundation
National Deer Association
National Professional Anglers Association
National Rifle Association
National Shooting Sports Foundation
Pheasants Forever
Public Lands Foundation
Quail Forever
Safari Club International
Sportsmen's Alliance
The Bass Federation
The Walleye Federation
Whitetails Unlimited
Wildlife Forever