

February 8, 2018

Dear Senator/Representative:

On behalf of the 513 undersigned organizations from all 50 states, representing millions of members and supporters from across the country, we strongly urge you to defend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) — one of our nation's oldest and most important wildlife conservation laws. In particular, we urge you to oppose any effort that undermines the ability to address the incidental take of birds under the MBTA.

This year, our nation celebrates the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Passed in 1918, the law is credited with saving many beloved species from extinction, such as the Wood Duck, Sandhill Crane, Snowy Egret, and more. The law implements the visionary treaty signed with Canada in 1916 to protect migratory birds shared by our countries, as well as similar treaties signed later with Mexico, Japan, and Russia. The law is critical in conserving nearly all of our nation's native birds. The MBTA protects more than 1,000 species, most of which are not covered by other laws, while also allowing for the regulation of hunting. The treaty and legislation aimed to protect a variety of birds that provide value to the country, including waterfowl and wading birds that were overhunted in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but also insectivorous and pollinating birds, such as hummingbirds, orioles, and woodpeckers, which help reduce agricultural pests and pollinate crops.

The MBTA has effectively protected birds in the decades since its passage, and it is still needed now as much as ever. While our country has made great progress in conserving birds, hundreds of species remain at serious risk and many are facing long-term declines. The 2016 State of the Birds report, published by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, found that one-third of our nation's bird species are of high conservation concern, and at risk of extinction without urgent conservation action. Birds face numerous modern-day threats. These threats can often be avoided or minimized with basic precautions and best management practices, such as covering oil waste pits, flagging transmission lines, and following wind energy guidelines. MBTA protections have incentivized proactive conservation to help bird populations and limited the need for further protections under the Endangered Species Act.

The MBTA is now under serious threat. In December, the Trump administration issued a controversial legal opinion providing an interpretation that the law does not apply to the incidental or accidental deaths of migratory birds, reversing decades of precedent. The opinion means that the administration will not hold industries accountable for preventable bird deaths. In Congress, H.R. 4239 – the “SECURE American Energy Act” – would change the law to cement this interpretation and permanently end the government's ability to address major sources of migratory bird mortality from industrial activities. This change would represent the most significant roll back of the MBTA in its 100-year history. It would dramatically reduce the incentive for industries to implement best practices that save birds, and would limit the accountability and recovery from events and activities that kill substantial numbers of birds. For example, after the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, which killed more than one million birds, BP pled guilty to violations of the MBTA, paying \$100 million to recover damages to birds impacted by the spill. These funds are being distributed through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act to restore habitat for waterfowl and other birds.

As we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the law and the incredible gains we have made to help protect our nation's birdlife, we urge you to oppose any effort that would gut the MBTA and turn back the clock decades on bird conservation.

Sincerely,

## **National Groups**

Alliance for Wise Energy Decisions  
American Bird Conservancy  
American Birding Association  
Animal Welfare Institute  
Bluebird Recovery Program  
Born Free USA  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Clean Water Action  
Conservation CATalyst  
Conservatives for Responsible Stewardship  
Cornell Lab of Ornithology  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Earthjustice  
EDM International, Inc.  
Endangered Species Coalition  
Friends of the Earth  
HawkWatch International  
Humane Society Legislative Fund  
International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute  
National Audubon Society  
National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Ocean Conservancy  
Oceana  
Pacific Seabird Group  
Pollinator Partnership  
Raptor Resource Project  
Rare  
Rio Grande Waterkeeper  
Sierra Club  
The Humane Society of the United States  
The Nature Conservancy  
The Rural Alliance  
The Wilderness Society  
Turtle Island Restoration Network  
Waterkeeper Alliance  
WE ACT for Environmental Justice  
Western Watersheds Project  
Wild Nature Institute  
Wildlife Conservation Society  
World Wildlife Fund  
WRI

## **Regional/State/Local Groups**

### **Alabama**

Alabama Ornithological Society  
Birmingham Audubon  
Mobile Bay Audubon Society  
Shoals Audubon Society

### **Alaska**

Arctic Audubon Society  
Audubon Alaska  
Kodiak Audubon Society  
Prince William Sound Audubon Society

### **Arizona**

Arizona Native Plant Society  
Desert Rivers Audubon Society  
Friends of the San Pedro River  
Grand Canyon Trust  
Maricopa Audubon Society  
Northern Arizona Audubon Society  
Northern Jaguar Project  
Tucson Audubon Society  
White Mountain Audubon Society  
Yuma Audubon Society

### **Arkansas**

Arkansas Audubon Society  
Arkansas Citizens First Congress  
Arkansas River Valley Audubon Society  
Audubon Arkansas  
Audubon Society of Central Arkansas  
Hot Springs Village Audubon Society  
Little Red River Audubon Society  
Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society

### **California**

Altacal Audubon Society  
Antelope Valley Audubon Society  
Bird Ally X  
Buena Vista Audubon  
Central Sierra Audubon Society  
Conejo Valley Audubon Society  
Conservation Congress  
Eastern Sierra Audubon Society  
Endangered Habitats League  
Environmental Action Committee of West  
Marin  
Environmental Protection Information Center  
Friends of Atascadero Wetlands

Friends of Famao Slough  
Friends of Plumas Wilderness  
Golden Gate Audubon Society  
Handa Ornithology Lab  
International Bird Rescue  
Kern Audubon Society  
Kerncrest Audubon Society  
Klamath Forest Alliance  
La Purisima Audubon Society  
Los Angeles Audubon Society  
Los Padres ForestWatch  
Madrone Audubon Society  
March Conservation Fund  
Marin Audubon Society  
Morro Coast Audubon Society  
Mt. Diablo Audubon Society  
Napa Solano Audubon Society  
Native Bird Connections  
Northcoast Environmental Center  
Ohlone Audubon Society  
Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society  
Pasadena Audubon Society  
Peregrine Audubon Society  
Plumas Audubon Society  
Pomona Valley Audubon Society  
Redbud Audubon  
Redwood Region Audubon Society  
Sacramento Audubon Society  
San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society  
San Diego Audubon Society  
San Fernando Valley Audubon  
San Joaquin Audubon Society  
Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc  
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society  
Santa Cruz Bird Club  
Santa Cruz Mountains Bioregional Council  
Sea and Sage Audubon Society  
Sequoia Audubon Society  
Sierra Foothills Audubon Society  
Sierra Forest Legacy  
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council  
Songbird Care and Education Center  
Stanislaus Audubon Society  
The Wildlife Trust  
Tulare County Audubon Society, Inc  
Ventura Audubon Chapter  
Whittier Area Audubon Society  
Wildcare Eastern Sierra  
Wintu Audubon Society  
Yolo Audubon Society

Yosemite Area Audubon Society

### **Canada**

Alberta Wilderness Association

### **Colorado**

Aiken Audubon Society  
Arkansas Valley Audubon Society  
Audubon Colorado Council  
Audubon Rockies  
Audubon Society of Greater Denver  
Black Canyon Audubon Society  
Boulder County Audubon Society  
Central Colorado Wilderness Coalition  
Conservation Colorado  
Evergreen Audubon  
Fort Collins Audubon Society  
Grand Valley Audubon Society  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness  
Quiet Use Coalition  
Roaring Fork Audubon  
Rocky Mountain Wild  
Southern Plains Land Trust  
Weminuche Audubon Society  
Western Slope Conservation Center  
Wild Connections

### **Connecticut**

Audubon Connecticut  
Connecticut Falconers Association  
Connecticut Ornithological Association  
Friends of Outer Island  
Friends of the Westbrook Barrier Islands  
Friends of the Wild Whoopers  
Horizon Wings Inc.  
Litchfield Hills Audubon  
Menunkatuck Audubon Society  
New Haven Bird Club  
The Connecticut Audubon Society

### **Delaware**

Delaware Audubon Society  
Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and Families  
Delmarva Ornithological Society  
Friends of Bombay Hook

### **District of Columbia**

American University Washington College of Law  
Animal Law Society

City Wildlife, Inc.  
DC Audubon Society

### **Florida**

Apalachee Audubon Society  
Aquatic Research and Communication  
Audubon Florida  
Audubon of Martin County  
Audubon of Southwest Florida  
Audubon Society of the Everglades  
Bay County Audubon Society  
Cedar Keys Audubon Society  
Choctawhatchee Audubon Society  
Citrus County Audubon  
Clearwater Audubon Society  
Duval Audubon Society  
Eagle Audubon Society  
Flagler Audubon Society  
Florida Keys Audubon  
Four Rivers Audubon  
Friends of Moccasin Lake Environmental Education Center  
Friends of the Tampa Bay National Wildlife Refuges  
Halifax River Audubon  
Hendry-Glades Audubon  
Hernando Audubon Society  
Kissimmee Valley Audubon Society  
Manatee County Audubon Society  
Marion Audubon Society  
Native Nurseries  
Okalawaha Valley Audubon  
Orange Audubon Society  
Peace River Audubon Society  
Pelican Island Audubon Society  
Ridge Audubon Society  
Santa Fe Audubon Society  
Seminole Audubon Society  
South Florida Audubon Society  
Southeast Volusia Audubon Society  
Space Coast Audubon  
St Johns County Audubon  
St Lucie Audubon  
St. Petersburg Audubon Society  
Tampa Audubon Society  
Tampa Bay Raptor Rescue  
Tropical Audubon Society  
Venice Area Audubon Society  
West Volusia Audubon Society  
Wild Raptor Sanctuary

**Georgia**

Atlanta Audubon Society  
Oconee Rivers Audubon Society  
Ogeechee Audubon Society  
R&R Wildlife Rehabilitation

**Hawaii**

Hawaii Audubon Society

**Idaho**

Coeur d'Alene Audubon  
Golden Eagle Audubon Society  
Idaho Conservation League

**Illinois**

Audubon Great Lakes  
Bird Conservation Network  
Champaign County Audubon Society  
Chicago Audubon Society  
Chicago Ornithological Society  
Decatur Chapter of National Audubon Society  
Lake County Audubon Society  
Northwest Illinois Audubon Society  
Sinnissippi Audubon Society

**Indiana**

Amos Butler Audubon Society  
Audubon Great Lakes  
Dunes-Calumet Audubon Society  
Evansville Audubon Society  
Hamilton County Parks and Recreation  
Robert Cooper Audubon Society  
Sassafras Audubon Society  
Stockbridge Audubon Society  
Sycamore Audubon Society  
Tippecanoe Audubon Society

**Iowa**

Bird Friendly Iowa  
Dubuque Audubon Society  
Prairie Rapids Audubon Society  
Quad City Audubon Society  
Tallgrass Prairie Audubon Society

**Kansas**

Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater Kansas  
City  
Jayhawk Audubon Society  
Rolling Hills Zoo  
Smoky Hills Audubon Society

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society  
Wichita Audubon Society

**Kentucky**

Central Kentucky Audubon Society  
Kentucky Ornithological Society

**Louisiana**

Audubon Louisiana  
Louisiana Audubon Council  
Louisiana Ornithological Society

**Maine**

Downeast Chapter of Maine Audubon  
Maine Audubon  
Mid Coast Audubon Society

**Maryland**

Audubon Maryland-DC  
Audubon Society of Central Maryland  
Chesapeake Audubon Society  
Friends of Blackwater  
Maryland Conservation Council  
Maryland Ornithological Society  
Prince George's Audubon Society  
Southern Maryland Audubon Society  
Tri-County Bird Club

**Massachusetts**

Association of Massachusetts Bird Clubs  
Brookline Bird Club  
Cape Ann Wildlife  
Conservation Imaging, Inc.  
Forbush Bird Club  
Mass Audubon

**Michigan**

Audubon Great Lakes  
Detroit Audubon  
Huron Valley Audubon Society  
Laughing Whitefish Audubon  
Michigan Audubon  
Mid-Michigan Stewardship Initiative  
Oakland Audubon Society  
Saving Birds Thru Habitat  
Washtenaw Audubon Society

**Minnesota**

Albert Lea Audubon  
Audubon Minnesota

Central Minnesota Audubon Society  
Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter  
Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society  
Natural Resources Club at Central Lakes  
College  
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness  
Saint Paul Audubon Society  
Save Our Sky Blue Waters  
Zumbro Valley Audubon

### **Mississippi**

Audubon Mississippi  
Jackson Audubon Society  
Oktoberfest Audubon Society  
Okatibbee Creek Audubon Society

### **Missouri**

Audubon Missouri  
Burroughs Audubon of Greater Kansas City  
Conservation Federation of Missouri  
Greater Ozarks Audubon Society  
Missouri River Bird Observatory  
Ozark Gateway Audubon Chapter  
Platte County Land Trust  
St. Louis Audubon Society  
World Bird Sanctuary

### **Montana**

Bozeman Birders  
Bitterroot Audubon Society  
Five Valleys Audubon Society  
Flathead Audubon Society  
Last Chance Audubon  
Mission Mountain Audubon  
Montana Audubon  
Pintler Audubon Society  
Sacajawea Audubon Society  
Upper Missouri Breaks Audubon  
Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society

### **Nebraska**

Audubon Nebraska  
Audubon Society of Omaha  
Western Nebraska Resources Council

### **Nevada**

Lahontan Audubon Society  
Red Rock Audubon Society

### **New Hampshire**

New Hampshire Rivers Council  
New Hampshire Audubon  
Society for the Protection of NH Forests

### **New Jersey**

Bergen County Audubon Society  
Monmouth County Audubon Society

### **New Mexico**

Audubon New Mexico  
Central New Mexico Audubon Society  
Mesilla Valley Audubon Society  
Sangre de Cristo Audubon Society  
Southwestern New Mexico Audubon

### **New York**

Audubon Council of New York State  
Audubon New York  
Audubon Society of the Capital Region  
Bedford Audubon Society  
Bronx River - Sound Shore Audubon Society  
Buffalo Audubon Society, Inc.  
Central Westchester Audubon Society  
Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society  
Eastern Long Island Audubon Society  
Eco-Logic, WBAI-FM  
Federated Conservationists of Westchester  
Four Harbors Audubon Society  
Genesee Valley Audubon Society  
Great South Bay Audubon  
Hudson River Audubon Society of Westchester  
Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society  
Nassau Hiking & Outdoor Club, Inc.  
North Fork Audubon Society  
North Fork Environmental Council  
North Shore Audubon Society  
Northern Catskills Audubon Society  
Northern New York Audubon Society  
NYC Audubon  
Onondaga Audubon  
Orange County Audubon Society  
Otsego 2000  
People for Animal Rights, Inc.  
Putnam Highlands Audubon Society  
Queens County Bird Club Inc.  
Rochester Birding Association  
Rockland Audubon Society  
Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History  
Saw Mill River Audubon

South Shore Audubon Society  
Southern Adirondack Audubon Society  
Sullivan County Audubon Society  
Surfrider Central Long Island Chapter  
Surfrider Foundation NYC

### **North Carolina**

Audubon North Carolina  
Cape Fear Audubon Society  
Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society  
Forsyth Audubon  
High Country Audubon Society  
High Peaks Birders  
Mecklenburg Audubon Society  
New Hope Audubon Society  
Seahawk Audubon, College Chapter  
T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon  
Wake Audubon

### **North Dakota**

Audubon Dakota

### **Ohio**

Audubon Great Lakes  
Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland  
Audubon Society of Ohio  
Black River Audubon  
Black Swamp Bird Observatory  
Blackbrook Audubon Society  
Canton Audubon Society  
Columbus Audubon  
Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society

### **Oklahoma**

Tulsa Audubon Society

### **Oregon**

Audubon Society of Corvallis  
Audubon Society of Lincoln City  
Audubon Society of Portland  
East Cascades Audubon Society  
Forest Web of Cottage Grove  
Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge  
Friends of the Kalmiopsis  
Kalmiopsis Audubon Society  
Klamath Forest Alliance  
Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center  
Lane County Audubon Society  
Northcoast Environmental Center  
Oregon Wild

Rogue Valley Audubon  
Salem Audubon Society  
Siskiyou Audubon Society  
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council  
Umpqua Valley Audubon Society

### **Pennsylvania**

Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society  
Appalachian Audubon Society  
Audubon Pennsylvania  
Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania  
Bartramian Audubon Society  
Berks Nature  
Bucks County Audubon Society at Honey  
Hollow  
Conococheague Audubon Society  
Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon Society  
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association  
Juniata Valley Audubon Society  
Lehigh Gap Nature Center  
Lehigh Valley Audubon Society  
Lycoming Audubon Society  
Manada Conservancy  
Quittapahilla Audubon Society  
Seven Mountain Audubon  
South Mountain Audubon Society  
Valley Forge Audubon Society  
Wildbird Recovery, Inc  
Wildlands Conservancy  
Wyncote Audubon Society

### **Rhode Island**

Audubon Society of Rhode Island  
Ocean State Bird Club  
The Watch Hill Conservancy

### **South Carolina**

Audubon South Carolina  
Bird Club Sun City Hilton Head  
Charleston Audubon  
Columbia Audubon Society  
Gryphon Den  
Hilton Head Audubon Society  
Piedmont Audubon  
Waccamaw Audubon Society

### **South Dakota**

Audubon Dakota  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

**Tennessee**

Conservation Cooperative  
Cumberland-Harpeth Audubon Society  
Southeastern Avian Research  
Tennessee Ornithological Society

**Texas**

3 Rivers Foundation  
Audubon Texas  
Bexar Audubon Society  
Central Texas Audubon Society  
Fort Worth Audubon Society  
Friends of the High Plains Refuge Complex  
Houston Audubon Society  
Huntsville Texas Audubon Society  
Prairie and Timbers Audubon Society

**Utah**

Bridgerland Audubon Society  
Friends of Great Salt Lake  
Great Salt Lake Audubon  
Great Salt Lake Institute at Westminster College  
League of Women Voters of Utah  
Utah Audubon Council  
Utah Rivers Council

**Vermont**

Audubon Vermont  
Otter Creek Audubon Society  
Rutland County Audubon

**Virginia**

Audubon Society of Northern Virginia  
Cape Henry Audubon Society  
Northern Neck of Virginia Audubon Society  
Rappahannock Wildlife Refuge Friends Group  
Richmond Audubon  
Rockbridge Bird Club  
Virginia Bluebird Society

**Washington**

Admiralty Audubon Society  
Audubon Washington  
Black hills Audubon Society  
Conscious Talk Radio  
Eastside Audubon Society  
Friends of Seward Park  
Grays Harbor Audubon Society  
Kettle Range Conservation Group  
Kitsap Audubon Society

Kittitas Audubon Society  
Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society  
North Cascades Audubon Society  
North Central Washington Audubon Society  
Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society  
Olympic Vulture Study  
Pilchuck Audubon Society  
Rainier Audubon Society  
Seattle Audubon Society  
Skagit Audubon Society  
Spokane Audubon  
Tahoma Audubon Society  
Vancouver Audubon Society  
Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society  
Whidbey Audubon Society  
Willapa Hills Audubon Society  
Wolf Haven International  
Yakima Valley Audubon Society

**West Virginia**

Mountaineer Audubon  
Potomac Valley Audubon Society

**Wisconsin**

Audubon Great Lakes  
Hoy Audubon Society  
LJ Geer Design  
Madison Audubon Society  
Milwaukee Riverkeeper  
Northeastern Wisconsin Audubon Society  
Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory  
Wisconsin Metro Audubon Society  
Wisconsin Society for Ornithology

**Wyoming**

Audubon Rockies  
Bighorn Audubon  
Cheyenne - High Plains Audubon Society  
Laramie Audubon Society  
Meadowlark Audubon Society  
Murie Audubon Society  
North Laramie Range Alliance  
Red Desert Audubon  
Wyoming Outdoor Council