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 100th 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 20th 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 100th 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
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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

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
Oktibbeha Audubon Society
Oktibbebee 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

**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 Society

**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

**Nevada**
Lahontan Audubon Society
Red Rock Audubon Society
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

**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