



BAT CONSERVATION

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

www.batcon.org

Draft Text for Individual Letters to Congress

Dear Representative,

I urge you to support federal funding for research to stop the spread of White-nose Syndrome, a devastating disease that has killed at least one million bats in nine states in just three years. This poorly understood malady, with mortality rates as high as 95 percent at affected caves, puts whole species at imminent risk and threatens to spread across North America. The Federal government must provide adequate research funding to deal with this wildlife crisis.

During recent Congressional hearings, leading bat scientists requested a five-year budget of \$55 million, with first-year funding of \$15 million for critical efforts to understand the role of a suspect fungus and determine what can be done to stop WNS before the damage becomes irreversible.

After the hearings, the Appropriations Committee wrote a bill that provides only \$500,000 for “increased monitoring” of WNS. Simply monitoring caves and counting dead bats will not stop White-nose Syndrome. Funding is needed for immediate research. The House has approved this insufficient appropriation, but the Senate will not consider the bill until September. Before the Senate vote, I sincerely hope you will recommend amending the bill in the Senate Appropriations Committee to include additional funding for WNS research.

Bats eat huge amounts of insects, including many agricultural pests, thus saving U.S. farmers millions of dollars in pesticides each year. That’s a lot of chemicals that will not run off into our water supplies. The environment is on the minds of many Americans these days, and bats play an important role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. Please do not let WNS destroy entire species of bats. Add WNS-research funds to this bill.

Thank you for your support.

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