

LOCAL COMMUNITIES & BIRD HABITAT STEWARDSHIP
ACT OF 2026

AUGUST 20, 2026.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. WESTERMAN, from the Committee on Natural Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 3276]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 3276) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish the Urban Bird Treaty Program, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Local Communities & Bird Habitat Stewardship Act of 2026”.

SEC. 2. URBAN BIRD TREATY PROGRAM.

(a) URBAN BIRD TREATY PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall establish a program for the voluntary conservation of birds and the habitats of such birds in urban areas, to be known as the “Urban Bird Treaty Program”.

(2) PROGRAM DUTIES.—In carrying out the Program, the Director shall—

(A) work with and support covered entities to—

(i) protect, restore, or enhance urban habitats for birds, including through the control of invasive species and restoration of native plant species;

(ii) reduce urban hazards to birds;

(iii) engage communities in scientific activities involving the monitoring of birds and the habitats of such birds in urban areas; and

(iv) educate and engage communities in caring about and conserving birds and the habitats of such birds in urban areas;

(B) provide technical and financial assistance through partnerships with covered entities to build capacity for, plan, and carry out projects related to activities described in subparagraph (A); and

(C) facilitate collaboration and information sharing among covered entities and the public with respect to best management practices for the conservation, restoration, and enhancement of urban bird habitats.

(3) GRANT PROGRAM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall establish a competitive grant program to award amounts to eligible entities for the purposes of conducting research, planning, assessments, management, building capacity, monitoring, collaboration and information sharing, workforce training, and accomplishing related activities as described in paragraph (2) with respect to the conservation, restoration, enhancement or management of urban birds and the habitats of urban birds.

(B) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible for a grant under this paragraph, an eligible entity shall submit to the Director an application in such form, at such time, and containing such information as the Director determines appropriate.

(C) ADMINISTRATION.—

(i) AGREEMENT.—The Director may enter into an agreement with the Foundation for the Foundation to administer the grant program established under subparagraph (A) pursuant to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.).

(ii) APPLICATION OF NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION ESTABLISHMENT ACT.—Section 10(a) of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3709(a)) shall not apply with respect to—

(I) an agreement entered into under clause (i); or

(II) amounts made available to carry out this section.

(iii) GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION.—The Director shall ensure, to the extent practicable, equitable distribution of awards among and between small, midsize, and large cities, as described in the document titled “Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates Program (EDGE): Locale Boundaries Technical Documentation” published by the National Center for Education Statistics of the Department of Education.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED ENTITY.—The term “covered entity” means—

(A) a Federal, Tribal, State, or municipal agency;

(B) a nongovernmental organization;

(C) a community group; and

(D) an academic institution.

(2) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible entity” means—

(A) a Tribal, State, or municipal agency;

(B) a nongovernmental organization;

(C) a community group; and

(D) an academic institution.

(4) FOUNDATION.—The term “Foundation” means the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation established by section 2(a) of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701(a)).

(5) PROGRAM.—The term “Program” means the Urban Bird Treaty Program established under subsection (a)(1).

(6) URBAN.—The term “urban” has the meaning given the term “urban area” in section 101(a) of title 23, United States Code.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Director to carry out this section \$200,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2033.

PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION

The purpose of H.R. 3276 is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish the Urban Bird Treaty Program.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Birds play key roles in local ecosystems and economies. They help sustain healthier, more resilient landscapes; cleaner waterways; and balanced, biodiverse ecosystems. Moreover, nearly 96 million Americans participate in birdwatching every year, generating \$279 billion in annual economic output and supporting approximately 1.4 million jobs nationwide.¹ Unfortunately, an estimated one billion

¹ Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis, Addendum to the 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, November 2024.

birds die annually in the U.S. from collisions with buildings, while light pollution in urban areas disorients migratory species.²

Through its existing Urban Bird Treaty Program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) conserves, restores, and enhances urban habitats for birds; reduces urban hazards to birds; and educates and engages communities in scientific activities, including monitoring birds and their habitats. The Urban Bird Treaty Program currently operates based on the Service’s organic authorities without specific congressional authorization. H.R. 3276 codifies the Service’s existing program; requires balance in awards between small, mid-size, and large cities; and authorizes an annual budget of \$200,000 through Fiscal Year (FY) 2033, consistent with the program’s current funding levels.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 3276 was introduced on May 8, 2025, by Representative Debbie Dingell (D-MI). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries. On February 4, 2026, the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held a hearing on the bill. On June 10, 2026, the Committee on Natural Resources met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3276 by unanimous consent. Representative Debbie Dingell (D-MI) offered an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute designated Dingell 159 ANS. The Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute was agreed to by unanimous consent. The bill, as amended, was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

HEARINGS

For the purposes of clause 3(c)(6) of House rule XIII, the following hearing was used to develop or consider this measure: hearing by the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held on February 4, 2026.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

Section 1 names the bill the “Local Communities & Bird Habitat Stewardship Act of 2025”.

Section 2. Urban Bird Treaty program

Section 2 codifies the Service’s existing program and authorizes an annual budget of \$200,000 through FY 2033, consistent with the program’s current funding levels.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources’ oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII AND CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT

1. *Cost of Legislation and the Congressional Budget Act.* Pursuant to clause 3(c)(2) of House rule XIII and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, and pursuant to clause 3(c)(3) of House rule XIII and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has requested but not received from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office a budgetary analysis and a cost estimate of this bill.

2. *General Performance Goals and Objectives.* As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish the Urban Bird Treaty Program.

EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

²“New Study Confirms Building Collisions Kill Over One Billion Birds Annually in U.S.,” American Bird Conservancy, April 7, 2024. <https://abcbirds.org/news/bird-building-collisions-study-2024/>.

UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT STATEMENT

An estimate of federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act was not made available to the Committee in time for the filing of this report. The Chair of the Committee shall cause such estimate to be printed in the Congressional Record upon its receipt by the Committee, if such estimate is not publicly available on the Congressional Budget Office website.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

Directed Rule Making. This bill does not contain any directed rule makings.

Duplication of Existing Programs. This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program. Such program was not included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139 or identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95–220, as amended by Public Law 98–169) as relating to other programs.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

Any preemptive effect of this bill over state, local, or tribal law is intended to be consistent with the bill's purposes and text and the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

As ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources, H.R. 3276 would make no changes in existing law.

