



Overview

Wildlife, or “zoonotic” diseases, are caused by the transfer of pathogens between animals and humans. Over 75% of emerging diseases originate in wildlife, exacerbated by deforestation, wildlife exploitation, development, and poor waste management which cause increased wild animal-human proximity. The costs of wildlife diseases to public health are enormous, and tend to [fall disproportionately](#) on communities with poor healthcare access and that are impacted by structural discrimination. Without state action, wildlife diseases will continue to spread, making future pandemics harder to control. Experts identify the [One Health approach](#) – recognizing interconnections between the health of people, animals, and our shared environment – as one of the best ways to respond to the threat of zoonotic disease.

Note: For additional details on the categories listed below, see this two-page [NCEL resource](#).

Policy Options



Comprehensive Zoonotic Disease Legislation

- [Oregon HB 4128 \(enacted 2022\)](#): Requires the Fish and Wildlife Commission to review and update the list of species prohibited from being imported, possessed, or sold, and requires an evaluation for strengthening Oregon’s zoonotic disease response framework. The Commission can recover damages for prohibited species regulatory violations and can prohibit the sale of live animals for human consumption with exceptions for defined farm use.



Support Restrictions on Wildlife Trafficking and Trade of Exotic Species

- [New York A. 9711 \(passed legislature, 2024\)](#): Requires contractors to certify that their products do not contribute to tropical forest degradation with measures for supply chain transparency, biodiversity protection, and Indigenous and local community rights.
- [Maryland HB 52 \(enacted 2022\)](#): Bans the sale, purchase, offer for sale, or the possession with intent to sell certain parts or products of 17 animal species. At least 19 states have similar regulations, and 13 states ban the trade of ivory and rhino horn.



Apply the “One Health” Concept to Agency Responsibility and Coordination

- [New Hampshire SB 146 \(enacted 2021\)](#): Requires the Fish and Game Department to monitor information on species that pose a zoonotic disease risk in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, State Veterinarian, and educational institutions, and recommend legislation or regulations to the legislature if necessary.
- [Washington SB 5306 \(enacted 2024\)](#): Authorizes the Department of Fish and Wildlife to establish check stations in coordination with the Department of Transportation for diseases that could threaten fish, wildlife, shellfish, and seaweed resources.
- [Texas S.B. 811 \(enacted 2023\)](#): Requires the Texas Animal Health Commission, upon identification of a wildlife disease outbreak, to notify each adjacent landowner and the Parks and Wildlife Department on the nature and location of the outbreak.





Improve Restrictions on Domestic Animal and Pet Trade

- **[Louisiana HB 554 \(enacted 2024\)](#)**: Requires individuals in possession of sick, injured, or orphaned wildlife for more than 90 days to notify the Department and take a wildlife rehabilitator course including content on the prevention of disease transfer.
- **[New York S.6870B \(enacted 2023\)](#)**: Provides sanitation standards for animal shelters, including a requirement to train veterinarians on zoonotic disease prevention.
- **[Arkansas SB 476 \(enacted 2023\)](#)**: Creates the Rural Veterinary Student Scholarship Program with requirements for advanced training in public health, animal disease diagnosis, and zoonotic disease. [Mississippi](#) (2024) enacted similar legislation.



Monitor, Regulate, and Restrict Wildlife Breeding Farms and Diseases in Wildlife and Livestock

- **[California AB 44 \(enacted 2019\)](#)**: Prohibits the trade of a fur product for monetary or nonmonetary consideration. Cities in [Michigan](#), [Florida](#), [Massachusetts](#), and [Colorado](#) have also banned the sale of new fur products.
- **[Vermont S. 301 \(enacted 2024\)](#)**: Requires captive deer operations to inform the Secretary of Agriculture when a captive deer dies or is sent to slaughter and make the animal available to the Secretary for chronic wasting disease testing.



Develop Wet Market Regulation and Other Food Sanitation Measures

- **[New York A. 10645 \(introduced 2024\)](#)**: Requires the department to promulgate regulations governing the storage and sale of animals in live animal markets.
- **[California AB 339 \(enacted 2013\)](#)**: Allows a swap meet operator to permit a vendor to offer animals for sale if the operator has a documented program of disease control and prevention established and maintained in consultation with a licensed veterinarian.
- **[Louisiana HB 467 \(enacted 2024\)](#)**: Requires testing of raw milk for zoonotic pathogens and reporting requirements for animals infected with zoonotic disease.



Facilitate Robust Funding Options to Prevent and Combat Wildlife Disease

- **[Missouri HB 3020 \(enacted 2023\)](#)**: Appropriates \$182 million for a multi-agency One Health Laboratory Campus. *See SEC 20.13 and SEC 20.610.*
- **[Washington SB 5693 \(enacted 2022\)](#)**: Appropriates \$1 million to create an environmental forensics research center to help disrupt and dismantle illegal international wildlife and plant trade. *See p. 703 #47.*
- **[Washington HB 2147 \(enacted 2024\)](#)**: Creates the emerging agricultural pest and disease account to respond to agricultural and disease emergencies that threaten the food and agricultural economy, public health, or the environment.