

Chair Grijalva Testimony on HR 6761, the Murder Hornet Eradication Act
June 25, 2020

Good morning everyone. I'd like to echo Mr. Huffman's gratitude to our witnesses for their time with this committee – we value your voice and sharing your expertise with us.

I am glad we are having this hearing on my bill, the Murder Hornet Eradication Act, and I'm delighted to have Dr. Michelle Samuel-Foo share her expert knowledge of invasive species and pest management.

We are learning, painfully and repeatedly, that we cannot ignore the natural world. Between murder hornets, coronavirus, the animal abuses in Tiger King, and the Australian wildfires earlier this year, a pattern is emerging: these insane, headline-making stories all stem from our broken relationship with nature. In case the headline "murder hornets" didn't make it obvious: nature is sending us a message, and it's time we listened and make some changes. Let's use the momentum from the murder hornet headlines as an opportunity to start addressing these larger issues.

Invasive species come at a huge cost – both to our wildlife and the economy. It is estimated that invasive species cost the United States \$120 billion each year. And, invasive species are the number 2 contributor to biodiversity loss. Here in the United States, about 40 percent of species listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA are directly impacted by invasive species. This is an issue that needs to be taken seriously.

My bill is modeled off of the Nutria Eradication Act, a bill we passed under suspension earlier this year. My bill proactively creates a grant program through the Department of Interior and authorizes funds to support States in need of eradicating Asian giant hornets and protecting pollinators, particularly honeybees, which would be severely threatened if this invasive species established populations in the United States.

Most importantly, this bill is about getting a head start on an obvious problem before it becomes too late and unmanageable. This is the kind of approach we should always be taking rather than relying on denial and anti-scientific thinking.

Even still, as a whole we need to take a more comprehensive look at our invasive species management, so I very much look forward hearing Dr. Samuel-Foo's testimony on this subject. Thank you.