

To: Oregon Senate Committee on Judiciary

From: Robert Bullard DVM

Re: SB 723-2

Date: 2-26-19

Dear Committee Members:

While I am personally opposed to organized coyote hunting contests, I am also **opposed to SB 723-2** as it will lead to unintended consequences that may ensnare innocent sportsmen and hunters. It is also an illogical “solution” to a politically incorrect pursuit. There are currently many different pursuits where sportsmen legitimately engage in their hobby and enter contests for various reasons. Examples are AKC Field Trials, Hunt Tests, various local and regional horn contests, many “longest rooster tail” contests by various clubs and social groups as well as the well-recognized National and International trophy record books such as Boone and Crockett, Pope and Young and Safari International. In addition, there are a myriad of fishing contests or derbies that are extremely popular by both participants and spectators and sponsors. Some of them here in Oregon help provide food to The Oregon Food Bank. All of these are carried out following the rules set forth by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and have been determined not to negatively impact game populations.

So, what makes coyote contests different? It has received negative publicity because it is viewed as unsportsmanlike, mostly by urban Oregonians. Then again, others view Field Trials, a sport which I embrace, in a similar way. On the other hand, I don't think much of fishing derbies. But our personal preferences for or against a sport should not determine its legality. Neither should the boorish behavior of a few bad actors who engage in an activity. There are bad actors in every single sport. We should not legislate an activity out of existence because of the bad behavior of a few individuals who cast this pursuit in such a negative light. Nor should we do so because some of us do not chose to participate in it. It should be the responsibility of the proponents of the sporting community to encourage proper ethics and respect for the quarry and the ODFW to regulate fish and game regulations.

Passage of this measure will only further deepen the urban/rural divide in this state and lead to further restrictions on traditional “fair chase” pursuits.

Please vote “NO” on SB 723.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bob Bullard DVM