

Dear Chair Burdick and Members of the Senate Rules Committee:

I strongly urge you all to support SB 723, the bill to prohibit coyote killing contests in Oregon.

Many of the opponents of SB 723 have portrayed this bill as an attempt by non-hunters to infringe upon the rights of hunters and an example of the divide between urban and rural Oregonians. I am an urban Oregonian who does not hunt, but I have enough respect for the hunting community to believe that no ethical, responsible, hunter would use the term "hunting" to describe these barbaric contests.

Opponents of SB 723 have also spread the false narrative that coyote killing contests are a valid wildlife management tool to protect livestock from depredation and increase game populations. Wildlife management should be science-based and the science says indiscriminate killing of coyotes does NOT decrease livestock depredation. Paradoxically, indiscriminate killing of coyotes leads to INCREASED depredation of livestock! Using non-lethal methods to protect livestock, coupled with the targeted killing of individual problem coyotes, is a much more effective way to reduce livestock depredation. The claim that killing contests increase game populations is not supported by scientific evidence either. The limiting factor for most game species is habitat, not predators.

The Boone and Crockett Club in their April 15, 2016 Fair Chase Position statement says: "The Club also believes that hunting is a **privilege** that must be earned repeatedly..." In a changing society, where fewer and fewer people are hunters, I believe SB 723 is necessary for the hunting community to maintain that privilege. Images of grinning, camo-clad, men dragging dead coyotes around as toys for their dogs to chase and tossing coyote bodies into pickup trucks as if they were bags of trash - while young children watch and are taught by example that this sadistic behavior is acceptable - gives the non-hunting public an extremely negative view of the sport. A lack of broad public support for hunting could lead to difficulty "earning the privilege" in the future.

After SB 723 was amended to make it clear that it does not impact fishing derbies or the training of hunting dogs, it passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee with a "do pass" recommendation and it deserves a vote in the full Senate!

Oregon has the chance to be a humane leader among western states by joining [New Mexico](#) in banning these grisly contests. According to a recent public opinion poll commissioned by Remington Research Group, a strong majority of Oregonians, across all five congressional districts, support legislation to ban coyote killing contests. If you watch the undercover video of a [recent coyote killing contest in Burns](#), and examine your conscience, I think you will agree with them and I hope you will take a stand against these pointless, cruel, offensive, contests even if doing so is controversial.

Please move SB 723 to the Senate floor for a vote.

Thank you.

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