

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the House Committee On Rules:

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

Many of the opponents of SB 723 B 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 B 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 B is necessary for the hunting community to maintain that privilege. Videos and photos from **coyote contests** show 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. These images **give 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.**

To be perfectly clear, **plenty of coyotes will still die even after these contests are banned.** They will still be trapped in leg-hold traps and shot from helicopters by USDA APHIS Wildlife Services, they will still be shot on sight by anyone at any time as vermin, and they will still be trapped for their fur. The only thing SB 723 B will stop is the sickening practice of killing coyotes as part of organized contests to win prizes. That doesn't seem like too much to ask!

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 trust that you will agree with the majority of Oregonians **and vote to end these pointless, cruel, offensive, contests** even if doing so is controversial.

Thank you.

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