

We write to let your members know that we strongly support HB 4075, a bill to ban the “sport” of coyote-killing contests in Oregon, and we urge you to do the same.

Last year we wrote in support of a similar bill that garnered enough votes to pass both branches of our legislature, but was dropped as part of negotiations over the cap and trade bill, which then itself failed. (That's an example of why ordinary citizens get so tired of legislative shenanigans that tie one popular bill to other bills, but then ultimately nothing gets done.)

Now your Committee will be considering HB 4075. So once again we write urging you to recognize how inhumane and senseless these killings appear to many of us. In fact, a Remington Research Group poll recently found that a strong majority of us, across all five congressional districts, support legislation to ban coyote-killing contests. They give hunters a bad reputation, and make our beloved Oregon look like a backward state. Such contests have been banned in California, Vermont, New Mexico, Arizona and Massachusetts.

Coyote-killing contests don't serve any significant wildlife management function. Organizers of such events claim that the killing targets “pests,” but they don't target specific coyotes involved in conflicts with livestock, and fail to recognize the many important ecological roles that coyotes play. Coyotes control rodents that may damage crops or spread disease. Furthermore, there is scientific evidence that indiscriminate killing of coyotes can disrupt pack structure and lead to exactly an opposite result from that claimed by the contest organizers: it can lead to increased coyote populations and livestock losses.

These contests are nothing but a blood sport, with prizes such as cash or weapons offered for the most animals or the largest animal taken. They should no longer be condoned in Oregon, and we're asking you to give our concerns your most serious and thoughtful consideration. Support HB 4075. Thank you.

/s/ Dan Blair      /s/ Jan Blair