

Members of the Committee,

I am in opposition to HB 2844. While a beaver is not a predator they are a "rodent" and as such, ranchers and farmers, need the ability to protect their livestock and crops from damage that a beaver can cause. In E. Oregon, water is the single most important natural resource that we work with. It is in a limited supply so it's value increases substantially. While no one dislikes beavers in general there are times a rancher and a beaver will find themselves at cross purposes, so to speak. There will arrive a difference of opinion as to which direction water will flow. When this occurs the rancher must have the ability to remove the beaver by relocation or elimination. If the beaver is not considered a predatory animal or a rodent then the rules change as to how a rancher or farmer may approach a problem that may have a substantial economic effect on their business. The beaver population continues to increase as do possible conflicts so now is not the time to limit the options for problem solving. There is no attempt to remove beavers that do not cause harm. They slow the water down and create habitat that befits everyone. It is the duty of the state to not impede the citizens right to protect their property and livelihood.

As a side note, it does seem ridiculous that the House of Representatives of the State of Oregon is spending any valuable time attempting to change the definition of the word "beaver" Beaver, as defined in the Webster Dictionary is "1. a large amphibious rodent having sharp incisors, webbed hind feet and a flattened tail." Seems pretty clear.