

My name is Crystal Elston and I writing in support of HB2728 Prohibiting Coyote Wildlife Killing Contests In Oregon

Over the past decade I have become aware of the animal killing contests occurring in various states that largely target wolves and coyotes. Animals I have a personal fondness for because they have been given a false negative reputation over the years. An unfounded stereotype that holds them up as nasty beasts, animals who compete with hunters for game, nuisance animals that kill livestock, and as a result are treated as living clay targets for blood sport thrill seekers, when they are in fact sentient beings with pack families who contribute to a healthy and biodiverse ecosystem.

I believe that wildlife killing contests encourage and uphold an already existing negative view of these animals and feed the stereotype that they are beasts undeserving of respect and vermin to be killed in any way possible. The killing games display a lack of respect for them as Apex predators in our own ecosystem, for the spirit of hunting, and most importantly it has been determined by scientists that not only are these killing sprees ineffective at reducing populations, it has the opposite and unintended result of increases in predator populations.

A quote by Dave Parsons, MS, retired career wildlife biologist with the U.S Fish & Wildlife Service, former hunter, and Project Coyote Science Advisory Board Member had this to say in a quote used in the December 20, 2018 Yavapai County, Arizona, Media Release on Killing Contests: "There is no documented scientific evidence that coyote killing contests permanently reduce coyote abundance, increase populations of deer or other game species, or prevent conflicts between predators, humans and livestock"... "Wildlife killing contests are symptomatic of a broader problem of misguided wildlife governance by state wildlife agencies that fail to recognize and value the crucial ecological roles of native predators."

Additionally, these killing contests are grotesque in every way possible and makes my gut wrench. What a perverse display to see the excitement amongst stacks of bodies dripping with blood...knowing packs have permanently disrupted and left scrambling. A complete lack of regard for other living beings and their rightful place among us and on this planet.

This is NOT a RURAL vs. URBAN issue. Killing coyotes does not work! The science supports this. Biologically when coyotes lose an alpha male or female, breeding increases. Indiscriminate kills give the opposite unintended result. Stop catering to special interests' group - it's enough already. Oregon state needs to run the state responsibly based on scientific facts from experts and create a plan that makes sense.

Sincerely,

Crystal Elston
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