

We write to express our strong support for HB 2728, a bill to ban the "sport" of coyote killing contests in Oregon, and to ask for your support, as well. 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. Just a few weeks ago in Harney County, a two-day "contest" resulted in the killing of 272 coyotes. This should no longer be condoned in Oregon. We ask you to think about how inhumane and senseless these killings appear to many of Oregon's citizens. In fact, a Remington Research Group poll conducted a few years ago found that a majority of us, across all five congressional districts, support legislation to ban coyote-killing contests. These gruesome contests should have no place in our state, or in any state. They give ethical hunters a bad reputation, and make our beloved Oregon look like a backward state. Such contests have been banned in Washington, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Vermont and Massachusetts. Coyote killing contests don't serve any significant wildlife management function. Organizers of such contests claim that the killings target "pests," but they don't target specific coyotes involved in contacts 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. HB 2728 is good for farmers, good for hunters, and good for wildlife. HB 2728 is legislation that is perfectly aligned with Oregon's values, the best available science, and broad public support, and we're asking you to give our concerns and recommendation your most serious and thoughtful consideration. Support HB 2728. Thank you.