



## Representative Bobby Levy

*Serving Umatilla, Union & Wallowa Counties*

Chair Golden and members of the Committee,

My district is home to Oregon's largest and longest roaming wolf packs—specifically, 81% of the state's wolves live in my district. Coincidentally, one of my closest friends discovered the Chesnimus wolfpack in Wallowa County. That discovery lent validity to the claims our natural-resource workers have known for quite a while—that we need tools to combat the presence of this predator in our woods.

To combat the reintroduction of wolves in Oregon, ranchers and counties have had to bear the brunt of the costs. These costs include employing range riders to go out around the clock to chase away wolves or to notify ranchers when they may need to move their cows. Further, in some instances, the funds can compensate a producer when a wolf is confirmed to have killed a cow, a sheep or even at times, a dog. As a sheep rancher and large breed guardian dog breeder, I have first-hand knowledge of the devastation wolf attacks have on livestock in North Eastern Oregon. For instance, the 2 reported attacks in Umatilla County occurred to one of my sheep and my guardian dog, Rocco. Rocco, whose purpose in life is to protect those sheep, can now never go back out onto the ranch.

One of the ways that the state has chosen to help alleviate the costs associated with wolf conservation and management is through this fund. These funds compensate ranchers for livestock loss and help fund conflict deterrents. These funds not only put our ranchers' minds at ease but they offset the direct and indirect costs of wolf conservation. As an elected representative in Northeast Oregon, I understand the difficulty of keeping ranchers committed to wolf conservation goals. For too long those in Wallowa, Baker, [Umatilla](#) and Union counties have seen their herds moved, scared, and reduced due to the presence, and depredation by wolves. This fund is one tool where Oregon can demonstrate its commitment to those who bear the risk of wolf population.

Please support SB 642. As you will see, the current program only funds about 1/3 of the annual requests. 75% of the funds are used to reduce or prevent wolf-livestock conflict. This is an important program and one that would seemingly be supported by farmers, ranchers and conservation groups alike.

Thank you for your time today.  
Representative Bobby Levy, HD58

