

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Heard and Committee Members:

It is important to express the true value of SB 642 in a way that ties this request to the impact wolves are creating on the landscape and the impact to the people dealing most closely with them. In 2012 when this program was started, the wolf population was counted at 46 and was centered on four counties in north eastern Oregon. In 2010 Wallowa County Commissioners and a small citizen group created a program to help alleviate the lost income to producers from wolf depredation and to assist with preventing interactions with livestock. We named this program Community Alliance Livestock Fund or (CALF) and began soliciting public contributions to the fund. We started creating application documents that would give us information on numbers of stock, turn out numbers, gather numbers, historic loss numbers, etc. We also asked that the information be verified by a third party. The following year, this county program was submitted to Oregon Department of Agriculture for consideration as the genesis of the State program. The Legislature funded the State program and the first grants were paid in 2013. At last count the wolf population in the State was at 158 and inhabited area across the state has increased accordingly. With increase in territory inhabited by wolves comes increased interactions with livestock and southwestern Oregon producers are now dealing with the effects. The best non-lethal tool, in our experience, is human presence and that comes with a cost. The cost calculation for just one range rider (human) is between \$22.00 to \$25.00 per hour and in my county at least three range riders are essential to cover the areas of known wolf activity (AKWA). The overall cost of prevention has increased exponentially but the funding has not done the same. Producers have had to provide more and more detailed information to qualify for funding, yet it seems that all this information is still not enough to satisfy some groups. Once again I will state that if the 'public' is desirous of wolves on the landscape, and the producers are working to co-exist, the public needs to be willing to provide adequate funding. Thank you for your time. Wallowa County Commissioner, Susan Roberts