

Representatives thank you for considering my comments OPPOSING HB 2728.

"Compensatory reproduction" and "population infill" sounds like sustainable and renewable to me.

The use of incentivized hunting for predator management is one of the last remaining focused techniques available for predator management. This method uses dispersed participants, utilizing legal means of take common throughout the country, who fund their own rewards. There are no herds of coyotes, rounded into fenced areas wantonly slaughtered for personal gain as testimony has presented. There is no governmental investment.

Thus far, we have removed poisons, explosives, government culling through funding misappropriation, and hounds from the predator management toolbox and now derbies are in the spotlight for removal. Historically, this legislation in Oregon, as well as throughout the country, has been presented and supported by anti-hunters for anti-hunting in this country; a large percentage of the testimony presented proves this. Please have the fortitude to leave wildlife management in the hands of the professionals at ODFW that we hire to make those decisions - they are qualified to do just that. If populations were in decline or in need of more focused management efforts, the classification of coyotes would change as would the efforts toward their management. Instead, we are left with struggling sage grouse, diminishing mule deer, disappearing bighorn and reduced pronghorn populations where predation, though not the sole issue, takes a significant impact. This is especially true at critical times where these animals and others are most vulnerable and their sustainability is most in jeopardy. This is seen in study after study by ODFW. Being able to focus on predator management during breeding, wintering, fawning and calving periods has a beneficial effect and leads to better herd management and fawn survival when these animals are at their most vulnerable. This is a management tool that provides an incentive to participants that is not publicly funded and reduces the need for public funding in management.

This legislation solves no problem. If people are not interested in participating, they simply do not have to. If landowners do not want participants on their land - they simply deny access. Look at the harvest statistics provided for the few contests remaining, they are not excessive or devastating. Again, they are sustainable and renewable. Are there any areas in Oregon devoid of coyotes? How about any areas where populations of coyotes are below a cyclical norm? Have any of you experienced areas of Oregon without coyotes? I have not and that includes many weeks in NE, Central, and SE Oregon at various times of the year. They even thrive in my SW Portland neighborhood! Our state biologists often speak about the impacts to wildlife young that coyotes have - this includes game and non-game species. Listen to them. This tool, incentivized management is not forced on anyone; should a landowner who wants to keep natural predation of mice/ground squirrels in his alfalfa pivots not want to participate, he doesn't have to. The same applies to other citizens of the state - it is a choice. A choice with benefits:

Impacts to predator populations are not long term.

Short term predator impacts benefit bird and animal species at specific times when population recovery is paramount i.e. hard winters, fawning and brooding periods.

Community organizations benefit.

Animal ecosystems that man has impacted through habitat loss.

Animal husbandry industries.

Reduced taxpayer burden by reducing or eliminating government funded culling operations and especially resulting lawsuits.

Again, do not allow this tool to be removed from wildlife management; there is no problem being solved and the benefits are too great. No portion of this legislation or its rewording makes it of value.

Thank you again for considering my comments AGAINST proposed HB 2728