

To

House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, Oregon



Date: 02.09.2022

Sub: **Testimony opposing HB 4080 (establishing predator damage control districts)**

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Hudson, Vice Chair Brock-Smith and Members of the Committee

My name is Sristi Kamal and I am the Senior Representative for Defenders of Wildlife, a national wildlife conservation organization with over 33,000 members and supporters in Oregon. Defenders **opposes HB 4080** with the request for an opportunity to work further on the goal and language of the bill.

One of Defenders' primary goals within wildlife conservation is to promote coexistence between humans and wildlife — a principle where both groups can share a landscape and benefit from it. We believe preventative and mitigation measures must be tried before any agency resorts to lethal means. However, our state invests significantly in lethal control of carnivores and predators through various agencies like the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, who then contract it out to other agencies such as Wildlife Services. Oregon needs to have a broader conversation about what “predator management” means and the significant resources our state invests in killing many species of wildlife. There are better places to direct money within Wildlife Services where it would be prioritized for non-lethal tools and techniques. I will identify one such opportunity:

In 2021 (as was also in 2020) the federal Appropriations Committee provided an increase of \$1.38 million for Wildlife Services to hire personnel exclusively to promote and implement non-lethal livestock-predator conflict deterrence techniques in selected states; assist in providing trainings in those techniques to landowners and other agency personnel; and to research non-lethal techniques. Oregon is one of those states, and we received \$97,000 for 2021 toward this preventative program within Wildlife Services. This program could benefit more producers from expansion and support through state and county resources but we have continued to prioritize lethal control.

We acknowledge that attempts were made to add amendments (-1) and we appreciate the effort, but we feel that HB 4080 does not adequately explore non-lethal, preventa-

tive alternatives before resorting to lethal means. As a collaborative gesture, we were hoping to work on this bill and suggest amendments, but the “related to..” clause was too narrow to allow any amendments to work. We are requesting that you not rush to pass this bill on time constraints, but instead give it due consideration with more time and provide an opportunity to the various stakeholders to see if a resolution is possible.

Thank you for taking my testimony into consideration, and I will be happy to address any questions you might have. My email address is: [skamal@defenders.org](mailto:skamal@defenders.org)

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sristi Kamal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sristi Kamal, Ph.D.  
Senior Representative, Defenders of Wildlife  
Portland, Oregon