

TO: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

FROM: Barry & Shella DelCurto, Eastern Oregon Ranchers

DATE: March 23, 2023

RE: HB 2631

I am taking an opposing position on this bill. I would like to offer these thoughts on this bill. As a producer and compensation committee member our ranch has had depredations. We do use non-lethal, co-existence practices. I feel like this bill is a step in the right direction. My suggestion would be to not pass 2631 and go with 2633-3. I would like to see a committee set up to help fine tune the multiplier piece if it should pass.

When I look at some of the various ways a multiplier could be used, I envision it bankrupting our compensation program. For example, a producer has 160 acres where he has cattle. The wolves come in and over a short period of time they depredate and kill 4 head of cattle. This is confirmed by ODFW. As a wolf committee we could then compensate the producer. Say the cattle are worth \$1000 per head. That would give the producer \$4000 plus we add the multiplier of 5 and we would then pay the producer \$20,000 for his lost livestock. In this instance I feel the multiplier shouldn't be allowed as the producer should have been able to adequately monitor his cattle. This is where we need qualifiers for the multiplier. A multiplier of 5 or 7 would not be sustainable under our current program. The language below from HB 2633-3 would take care of the multiplier. The multiplier should only be used for confirmed depredation of livestock excluding dogs which this bill does not do. In Wyoming the multiplier is only allowed when there is a confirmed depredation on cattle, on Public Lands. Private lands are excluded. Again the bill does not have a guideline of when and how to use the multiplier.

I feel the following proposed language from bill 2633-3 would clean up all scenarios without having to use a multiplier.

**“(B)(i) One hundred percent of the fair market value of yearling cattle and sheep, of adult male cattle and sheep and of working dogs. “**

**(ii) Two hundred percent of the fair market value of breeding female cattle and sheep and of juvenile cattle and sheep that are less than one year old.**

This language would have less chance of depleting our programs resources. Let's move forward and work towards an amicable agreement for all.