

SB 777 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**Carrier:** Sen. Nash**Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire****Action Date:** 03/18/25**Action:** Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)**Vote:** 5-0-0-0**Yeas:** 5 - Girod, Golden, Nash, Prozanski, Taylor**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued**Revenue:** No revenue impact**Prepared By:** Alexa Piscanio, LPRO Analyst**Meeting Dates:** 2/27, 3/11, 3/18**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

The measure modifies the Wolf Depredation Compensation Program by specifying that compensation is provided to individuals who suffer probable or confirmed losses or injury of livestock or working dogs, capping compensation at \$25,000 per animal, and establishing certain compensation rates based on specified multipliers applied to fair market value.

Detailed Summary:

Defines "area of known wolf activity" as any area identified by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife where wolf activity has been observed. Modifies the Wolf Depredation Compensation Program by removing compensation for missing livestock and specifying compensation is provided to individuals who suffer **probable or confirmed** loss or injury to livestock or working dogs caused by wolves. Increases from 30 to 50 percent the required minimum proportion of allocated grant funds to be used by counties for financial assistance provided to persons who implement livestock management techniques or nonlethal wolf deterrence techniques designed to discourage wolf depredation of livestock. Allows counties to determine the multiplier applied to compensation rates, not exceeding a \$25,000 total per animal, subject to the following caps:

- a multiplier of five times the fair market value of cow calves and yearlings, sheep, and goats.
- a multiplier of three times the fair market value of cows.
- the fair market value of horses, other livestock, and working dogs.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Establishment of the Wolf Depredation Compensation Program in 2011 (HB 3560)
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) wolf management and challenges
- ODFW probable or confirmed loss determination
- Lethal take
- Non-lethal activities and mitigation efforts by ranchers
- Effectiveness of nonlethal deterrence
- Justification for maximum compensation of \$25,000 per animal
- Establishing fair market value for livestock
- Current market values of cows and calves
- Reduction of ranch revenue
- Effects of stress on herds
- Multipliers in Wyoming and Colorado
- Changing percentage of grant allocations within the wolf depredation compensation and financial assistance grant program
- Missing livestock category
- Total value of cattle, sheep, goats, and other livestock
- Investigation, confirmation, and compensation processes

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- County Wolf Depredation Committees
- Current program deficiencies
- Good faith conversations with stakeholders
- Conservation groups' involvement
- Anti-poaching funds
- Canadian, Wyoming, and Oregon wolf size and behavior comparisons
- Moose population
- Increased pack sizes

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment replaces the measure. It increases from 30 to 50 percent the minimum proportion of allocated grant funds required to be used by counties for financial assistance to persons who implement livestock management techniques or nonlethal wolf deterrence techniques designed to discourage wolf depredation of livestock. The amendment allows counties to determine the multiplier applied to compensation rates subject to the following caps:

- a multiplier of five times the fair market value of cow calves and yearlings, sheep, and goats.
- a multiplier of three times the fair market value of cows.
- the fair market value of horses, other livestock, and working dogs
- \$25,000 cap per animal.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) designates an area of known wolf activity based on where an individual or groups of wolves have been documented repeatedly over a period of time, using actual location and data points to establish resident wolf activity. In 2023 ODFW reported 178 recorded wolves in Oregon. Currently, ODFW investigates loss or injury of livestock that is thought to be caused by wolves. Determination categories for loss or injury include: confirmed, probable, unknown, and not wolf.

House Bill 3560 (2011) directed the Oregon Department of Agriculture to establish and implement a Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Grant Program, using moneys in the Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund to provide grants for counties to implement wolf depredation compensation programs.