

I support SB 769 because it gives us a chance to protect the balance between cougar populations and other wildlife—like mule deer and elk—without imposing a blanket policy on every county. I've grown up hunting and fishing across Oregon, and I've witnessed how our deer herds are in real decline. Current cougar management efforts seem largely ineffective, given that thousands of tags are issued annually but yield very few harvested cougars. Allowing counties to decide for themselves whether to permit hound hunting can help tailor solutions to local conditions. I find it sensible for rural counties with active cougar conflicts to have the option of using proven, selective methods to manage these predators. I'm a firm believer in responsible hunting practices, and hound hunting, when regulated, can be both humane and practical.

Sincerely,
Garrett Rotter