

Submitter: Karen Wurdinger
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB769

I support SB 769 because I've seen the impact that unchecked cougar populations can have on rural communities and wildlife. While I value Oregon's cougar population and want it to remain healthy, I also recognize that in some regions, proactive management is needed to protect livestock and help recover our dwindling deer and elk herds. The flexibility of this bill stands out. It respects the will of local voters, who can decide if hound hunting is an acceptable practice. By doing so, counties can address issues before they become emergencies. This measure is not about diminishing cougars; it's about encouraging practical, science-based management. I believe cougars are magnificent beautiful animals but that they do require proper and humane management. This Bill, I feel, will be great for all- even for the cougars.

I would rather see local hound hunters bringing in needed income into our small rural communities. Nevada Guides Association did a study on how much income hound hunters bring into local small communities. Here is a short list- Dog food bought, fuel, dog kennel supplies(lumber for dog houses, chain link for runs). Traveling to hunt - motel rooms or winter Air B&B rentals, restaurants, grocery stores, tires(lots of them it seems), of course vehicle repairs and probably some tow truck income too. Dog equipment- tracking collars, e-collars, lots of leashes, reg collars with contact info, straw for boxes, and heaven forbid all the vet bills too. All this while in our small towns. Then add in hunting licenses and tags. Oh and taxidermy costs and meat processing costs too! They are buying snowmobiles, ATV's and Side x Sides. Other than us having to pay several Government hunters salary's, 401k or PERS, their medical insurance, vacation/sick pay, vehicles, fuel, ect to do the same thing the local hunters could do. And both do use hounds to achieve the same outcome. Except one brings needed income into our small communities and in the slow winter months and the other one costs us a lot of money.

I might be able to find the results of that Nevada study if you would like it.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Karen L. Wurdinger