

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

Expanding the use of hounds to hunt cougars is a cruel and inhumane practice that puts both the animals and hounds at risk. This method subjects cougars to relentless pursuit, often causing them extreme stress, injury, and exhaustion before they are killed. It also disrupts natural behaviors and can fragment cougar populations, leading to long-term ecological harm. Furthermore, hounding can result in the unintended targeting of non-problematic cougars, including young, healthy individuals, or mothers with cubs.

Additionally, hunting cougars is an unethical and short-sighted approach to wildlife management that disregards the natural balance of ecosystems. Rather than resorting to lethal measures, we should focus on non-lethal alternatives such as better land-use planning, habitat preservation, and education to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts. Cougars play an essential role in maintaining healthy ecosystems by controlling prey populations and promoting biodiversity. Removing them disrupts these ecological functions and ultimately harms the environment, leading to a cascade of unintended consequences. We should seek coexistence through thoughtful conservation practices.

As an Oregonian, I strongly urge you to oppose SB 769. This bill would overturn the will of the voters, who have already shown where they stand on this issue—twice. Oregonians are opposed to the hunting of cougars with hounds and want to keep their protections in place.