



Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
900 Court St., NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Senate Bill 769

Dear Chairman and Committee Members

On behalf of Safari Club International, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 769, which provides that a county is exempt from the statute banning the use of dogs to hunt or pursue cougars through a voter approved county measure.

Current law bans the use of dogs as a tool for hunting cougars in a statewide one size fits all model as well as substitutes emotion in place of science, hindering local community wildlife concerns. Senate Bill 769 would essentially exempt counties from the statewide ban on the use of dogs to hunt cougars under certain conditions. SCI strongly supports the bill as it demonstrates a way forward with responsible and sustainable scientific wildlife management while allowing a local method of choice for harvest. And the bill would not otherwise affect the authority of the fish and wildlife commission to manage wildlife, still providing safeguards against overharvest.

SCI believes that sound science-based conservation involving hunting as the primary management tool, while maximizing opportunities for all huntable species such as cougars, is necessary to the long-term health of wildlife. Hunters have long paid the way for conservation, both game and non-game wildlife, and maximizing opportunity for hunting is also key to long-term funding for all conservation. Hunting benefits wildlife conservation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment in support on Senate Bill 769. SCI is dedicated to protecting the freedom and is always first for hunters.

Sincerely,

W. Laird Hamberlin
Chief Executive Officer
Safari Club International