



**OREGON**  
**FARM**  
**BUREAU**

Locally Grown  
and  
GROWING STRONG

**February 10, 2025**

**To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Wildfire**

**Re: Support for SB 769**

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Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and members of the committee,

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is the state's most inclusive agriculture organization, proudly representing more than 6,500 family farms and ranches that produce more than 220 agricultural commodities. From hops and hazelnuts to cattle, cranberries, and timber with operations spanning from just a few acres to thousands, our members utilize all farming methods including organic, conventional, regenerative, biotech, and even no-tech.

OFB supports the use of dogs to assist in controlling cougar numbers where a threat to livestock or humans occurs. Predator and predatory animal management must be an essential part of an overall wildlife management program to maintain reasonable compatibility with other wildlife, to reduce livestock and crop losses, and for the public interest, health and welfare including control of rabies and other diseases that may be transmitted to humans.

Cougars pose a threat to livestock, particularly cattle, sheep, and goats. This bill allows county voters to decide whether to permit the use of dogs to hunt cougars—giving local communities more control over wildlife management. Restoring the ability to use dogs for hunting cougars would help manage cougar populations and reduce conflicts with ranchers.

Without the right tools to fight depredation, Oregon's ranch families are losing thousands of young livestock each year to cougars and other predators. In some cases, the mothers are also impacted when they intervene to protect their young. Our members depend on healthy livestock for their yearly wages and spend long days and nights watching over lambs, kids, and calves. However, cougars are stealthy, opportunistic predators—a dog, lamb, or calf is much easier prey than a wild animal. The only way to prevent future attacks on domestic animals is to eliminate the offending cougar, which is virtually impossible without the use of dogs.

OFB opposes restrictions on predator management that make it harder for landowners to protect their property. The bill does not remove state authority over wildlife management but gives counties an exemption if voters approve. This balances the need for oversight with the practical need for predator control in counties that face cougar conflicts.

OFB supports this bill because it:

- ✔ Restores an important predator control tool for farmers and ranchers.
- ✔ Allows local decision-making rather than a one-size-fits-all state ban.
- ✔ Reduces livestock losses from cougars, aligning with our position on wildlife management.

Thank you.



Lauren Kuenzi  
Oregon Farm Bureau