

Neider Ranch LLC
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Lakeview, OR 97630
541-219-2126

February 10, 2025

Subject: SB 777

Dear Senator NASH, Representative LEVY B, and Members of the Committee,

We would like to voice our support for SB 777, that would increase compensation for injury to livestock 7:1. We want to emphasize the economic challenges that fall on livestock producers to stay in business and recognize the value of the livestock industry to the state of Oregon.

We are a cattle producers in Lake County with 150 head cow/calf operation. We are classified as a small farm as our annual gross cash farm income is less than \$350,000. Small farms demonstrate a high risk of financial difficulty as they show less than 10% gross profit. To sustain operations and assure we have the financial input necessary, we (husband and wife) work off farm jobs. This is not uncommon for small and medium-sized agriculture producers as an average of 76 % of all small to medium size producers nationwide do exactly the same.

Like other livestock producers, we face substantial challenges each year to stay in business. Rising costs, disruptions to the supply chain, fluctuating markets, drought, severe storms, and succession planning are just a few. Wolf predation has been added to the list of these challenges and extends further than a single death loss. A loss of a heifer calf is not only the value of that calf during that year, but the loss of this breeding animal over the course for 7 – 10 years. Stress to the herd also impacts mother cows and their ability to breed and produce. Wolf predation translates to loss of income both short term and long term. An even greater challenge is the lack of control over many of these issues.

It is vital for Oregon to support livestock producers who experience wolf predation in compensating the true economic loss of each animal. Cattle/calf operations are important to Oregon's economy. According to Oregon Department of Agriculture statistics, cattle and calves are one of Oregon's top agriculture commodities ranked second with a value of production totaling \$676.2 million in 2021, up 13 percent from 2020. Malheur, Klamath, Harney, Baker, and Lake are the top Oregon counties for raising cattle.

It is important to note that small and medium-sized operations make up 92% of all farms and ranches and are vital to the food supply chain. It is essential for farmers, wildlife management authorities, and policymakers to collaborate on finding solutions that balance wildlife conservation with the needs of farmers and ranchers to keep us in business. We respectfully request an increase in the reimbursement to cover the full financial impact of a predation event.

Sincerely,

Kenneth and Brandi Neider