

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

Dear Members of the Oregon State Legislature,

My name is Andrew Garrett, and I am a chef, bow hunter, mushroom forager, and fisherman. I am writing in strong support of SB 769, which would allow individual Oregon counties to vote on the use of hounds for hunting cougars.

As someone who spends countless hours in Oregon's wild landscapes—whether foraging for mushrooms, fishing our coastal waters, or pursuing game with traditional methods—I have witnessed firsthand the increasing cougar presence and its effects on wildlife populations, hunting traditions, and rural communities.

The ability to manage cougar populations effectively is critical for maintaining ecological balance and public safety. Since the ban on hound hunting, cougar encounters have increased, leading to greater livestock depredation, declines in deer and elk populations, and rising safety concerns among those who work, hunt, and recreate in the backcountry. Hounds have long been recognized as the most effective, ethical, and selective method for managing cougars, allowing hunters and wildlife managers to identify target animals with precision.

SB 769 does not impose a statewide mandate but instead allows local communities to make informed decisions based on their specific needs and wildlife management challenges. Providing counties with this choice respects the diverse landscapes and perspectives across Oregon.

I urge you to support this bill and give Oregon's rural communities the ability to manage their wildlife responsibly. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Chef Andrew Garrett