

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

I'm writing in support of SB 769 because I value well-managed wildlife populations and believe that local communities should have the power to shape policies that affect them directly. I recently moved to Oregon from Idaho and in my view, Oregon's current approach to cougar management is not working as intended. Oregon issues a large number of cougar tags every year, yet we see very little impact on cougar densities. Meanwhile, rural residents report more and more cougar sightings around livestock, homes and even our school has had to close outside recess multiple times in the last few years due to cougars being in the vicinity. Declining deer and elk herds further illustrate the imbalance. In the past, regulated hound hunting allowed for more precise harvests and helped maintain a balance among predators and prey. By empowering counties to make this choice, SB 769 neither forces hound hunting on those who don't want it nor leaves those who do want it without a legal avenue. I think that's the most equitable way to address this complicated issue. Cougars are a treasured part of Oregon's landscape, I have seen the results of being managed responsibly through hound hunting, and I truly think this bill provides a framework of a well balanced thriving population of not just cougars but other game species as well.

Thank You,  
Jessica Lowe