

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

I appreciate the opportunity to voice my support of SB769. I grew up in Oregon, learning to conserve, hunt and fish for wildlife in Oregon. While Oregon wasn't necessarily a trophy destination, there were still opportunities to harvest deer and elk with some regularity. Upon returning to the state in late 2014, it became abundantly clear that the hunting opportunities one enjoyed were no longer. Further inquiry into the reasons for opportunities declining revealed that there has been a population explosion of ungulate predators, including cougars. It's difficult to overstate their impact on local and regional wildlife herds; suffice to say that while cougars haven't been the only reason for ungulate declines, they are a major one. I urge you to vote yes on the proposed legislation, offering counties such as Harney the option to decide locally if utilizing hounds to pursue cougar populations, while at the same time ensuring cougars remain a healthy population on the landscape.