

Submitter: Laura M Ohanian

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2403

I strongly oppose HB 2403.

Scientific proof that the practices of Wildlife Services control livestock damage is markedly lacking. In fact, the best available science shows that killing carnivores worsens conflicts with livestock. In addition, countless taxpayer dollars are wasted by spending far more to kill predators than the actual damage those predators cause. Shame on us, using taxpayer's money for decades to pay people to kill native predators.

HB 2403 does not require recipients of district funds to use or even consider nonlethal alternatives, which abound. Given Wildlife Service's record for emphasizing killing of wildlife as its preferred solution to human-wildlife conflict, any state-created funding mechanism for the program should include requirements to consider and use effective nonlethal alternatives like livestock guardian animals, foxlights, penning, fladry, range riding, and livestock carcass disposal. Coexistence with essential native predators is key, especially in this age of extinction.

This bill also includes a provision specifically designed to prevent the public from holding the special districts accountable -- I mean, really? This bill is unacceptable. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.