

Submitter: Donna Harris

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2403

I am writing to 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 (Rob Weilgus PhD , John Laudré , et. al.).In addition, countless taxpayer dollars are wasted by spending far more to kill predators than the actual damage those predators cause. 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.

All these named non-lethal tools to prevent depredation can be supplied to livestock producers in Oregon counties that currently have a Wolf Depredation and Financial Assistance Committee , where application for ODA grant funding is available. This non lethal method has been successful even when the non-lethal Wildlife Services part of this agency has sent this section of agents out to help our ODFW wildlife biologists put up fladry, foxlights, haul away carcasses , or bury bone pits to reduce attractants.

This bill also includes a provision specifically designed to prevent the public from holding the special districts accountable. This bill is unacceptable. Coexistence with essential native predators is key, especially in this age of extinction.