



# CONSOLIDATED OREGON INDIVISIBLE NETWORK

March 25, 2025

Subject: Please vote NO on HB 2403

To: Co-Chairs Representatives Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair McDonald, and Members of the Committee Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

I am writing on behalf of the Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network - COIN. COIN is made up of Indivisible groups from across Oregon and has its own Climate Energy Environment (CEE) Team. COIN's CEE Team collaborates with organizations, agencies, and groups across the Pacific Northwest to advocate, in part, for laws and programs that promote the wise management and protection of our natural world and resources.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW): the agency staffed with professional wildlife science, policy, and management expertise, has the responsibility of managing Oregon's wildlife. Existing policies require ODFW biologists to work closely with landowners who are experiencing depredations on their crops or livestock, as well as establishing hunting seasons and bag limits. Please note that the HB 2403 use of the term "predator" is contrary to the factual definition of the word, so the HB 2403 perspective on wildlife management would expand the breadth of impacts far beyond actual predators. HB 2403 does not address the existing laws and administrative rules requiring ODFW to manage all wildlife in the State, including predators, furbearers, lagomorphs, and birds. There is no mention of how ODFW fulfills their responsibilities to Oregonians to meet management objectives for all the wildlife species affected by HB 2403.

Foundational assumptions in the proposed management of this bill are flawed. County lines are not relevant to wildlife. Many species use large landscapes that cross County borders. Decisions that affect individual animals in one County are influenced by, and influence, actions in neighboring counties. Without reporting or other communications with ODFW, species demographics would be more difficult to monitor, and management objectives may be compromised. This bill does not indicate what methods may be used by a County to kill wildlife or the numbers of animals allowed to be killed. These decisions should be the responsibility of the trained professional biologists of ODFW. Without ODFW involvement in the specific directions laid out in this bill to the Counties involved, predators and the other various wildlife species included in this bill could be impacted without regard to the State's species management objectives, resulting in negative unintended consequences for wildlife and even landowners.

Pragmatically, at best, confusion among the multitude of pertinent parties would reign. Beyond that, this bill proposes imposing expenses and layers of bureaucracy to participating citizens. A cattle ranch owner with 10,000 acres would have to pay \$20,000 and navigate a maze of governances. Even a legitimate idea would be squashed with the costs and wasted time that this policy would impose on all parties. But a flawed idea such as HB 2403, with these costs in terms of time and effort, should not get serious consideration given the contradictions with ecological, wildlife management, and State governance principles.

In closing, the wildlife in Oregon does not belong to the landowners in Oregon. Wildlife in Oregon belongs to all the citizens of Oregon. If the makeup of the proposed County boards is biased towards the County-level control of predators and other wildlife, or if there are no board members with non-landowner affiliations, then the citizens of Oregon would be left out of the process. With this bill, any State citizen who has an interest in the fate of Oregon wildlife would be cut from County-level decisions that affect the future of the State's wildlife. Remember, it is all the citizens of Oregon who are the stewards of Oregon's wildlife, through the governance of the State.

Please vote NO on HB 2403.

Monica Tomosy,  
On Behalf of COIN