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On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB777

This bill is a danger to Oregon's wolves, as the 5x multiplier could rapidly drain the program's funds set aside for both compensating confirmed wolf kills at fair market value and supplying non-lethal coexistence tools. While the bill increases the minimum spent on non-lethal tools to 50%, last year nearly 80% of the requests were for proven non-lethal conflict reduction tools such as fencing and range riding, this bill could actually decrease the investment in reducing wolf livestock conflict. Moreover, over \$1,3 million dollars of the anti-poaching budget and the proposed new FTE wolf coexistence biologist were cut from the ODFW budget. It does not make sense to fail to invest in conflict reduction and anti-poaching while applying a multiplier to the flawed wolf compensation program. We can't afford to jeopardize the program and endanger the recovery of Oregon's wolves, which is exactly what would happen if SB 777-5 passes.

If SB 777 -5 were to pass, Oregon would have one of the largest multipliers in the nation for compensation for livestock killed by wolves. Let's make sure that Oregon isn't an outlier in the nation for wolf compensation, especially when the need for such a great multiplier is unclear. In the program's current structure, 100% of the requests for confirmed and probable depredations have been paid at fair market value.

Although this bill would require such a high multiplier for livestock compensation, SB 777-5 does not address program inefficiency or improve ways to account for increased management burdens and prompt wolf recovery, nor does the bill itself include the necessary funds for providing a multiplier.

It's clear that SB 777 -5 is not a solution to improving the Wolf Depredation Compensation Program. Let's invest directly into wolf recovery by supporting the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's wolf program - the entire budget of which is less than what SB 777 -5 would cost.