



April 30, 2025

To the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources & Water

Re: Testimony Opposing SB 777-5

Thank you, co-chairs Helm & Owens, Vice-Chair Finger-McDonald & others in this House committee for the opportunity to provide testimony. My name is Michael Dotson, and I am the executive director of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, based in Jackson County, Oregon. KS Wild is a founding member of the Pacific Wolf Coalition, and we have been working on wildlife coexistence efforts in southwest Oregon since OR-7 found his way to the Rogue Valley back in 2011. In recent years, we worked with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and a local rancher to invest in a wolf-deterrent fence in the range of the Rogue Pack. We understand and recognize that this issue around wolf management and rancher compensation is a complex one.

KS Wild is opposed to the current SB 777 bill, which we believe threatens the existing structure of the wolf depredation compensation program. Over the past two years, an average of 70+% of the wolf depredation compensation program funds have supported non-lethal measures to help prevent wolf-livestock conflict in the first place. The way SB 777 is written could upend the existing structure and lower the amount of funding that goes to non-lethal measures. We do not believe this bill promotes coexistence as some claim (see attached High Country News article), and the five-time multiplier could actually lead to less funding for coexistence measures, which are scientifically proven methods to reduce conflicts.

SB 777 does nothing to address the ongoing illegal poaching crisis on wolves in this state, and we believe changes need to be made to the bill. SB 777 will rapidly drain existing funds with the multiplier and could lead to more frustration from all sides of this debate. We strongly urge this committee to re-engage both the conservation community and ranching interests in striking a balance moving forward.

For the Wild,

Michael Dotson
Executive Director
Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center