



Formerly called the Humane  
Society of the United States and  
Humane Society International

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April 30, 2025

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

***Re: Testimony in opposition of SB 777– Relating to the depredation of livestock***

Dear Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair McDonald, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Humane World for Animals (formerly The Humane Society of the United States) and our members and supporters in Oregon, I am writing in opposition to SB 777, which proposes compensation multipliers of up to five times fair market value for cows, calves, yearlings, sheep, and goats, and up to three times fair market value for other cows who are confirmed or deemed probably killed or injured by wolves. These multipliers could make the robust use of effective, non-lethal conflict prevention measures seem less financially worthwhile for livestock owners.

Livestock go missing for many reasons, including severe weather, disease, and birthing problems, especially in rugged terrain.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, livestock-wolf conflicts are rare in Oregon and in every jurisdiction where they live.<sup>2</sup> For example, in 2024, wolves were confirmed to have killed or injured fewer than 0.008% of the cattle and sheep living in Oregon.<sup>3</sup> For the small number of producers who experience losses, it is no doubt a very difficult experience. However, compensation is available, and making the assumption that missing livestock are losses caused by wolves, without evidence, compounds animosity toward wolves that may be misplaced, and is a disservice to both livestock producers and conservation efforts. Active and regular monitoring of herds, which is considered best practice in areas of wolf activity, should reduce or eliminate “missing” livestock.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, these multipliers are unfair to those livestock owners who dedicate time, effort, and financial resources to proactive wolf-livestock conflict deterrents, which prevent injuries and losses of livestock to wolves. Non-lethal, proactive range management and husbandry techniques, such as low-stress livestock handling, range riding, carcass removal, and others, can be very effective and economically advantageous in the long term when used adaptively and consistently, saving the lives of both livestock animals and Oregon’s recovering wolf population.<sup>5</sup> Financially assisting livestock producers with these tools should be the focus of resources rather than greatly multiplying the fair market value of injured or lost livestock.

There is a path to making SB 777 more constructive to livestock producers and wolf recovery, including amendments that would do the following: establish the multiplier at a more reasonable and realistic 3x market value for calves and lambs, 2x for cows, sheep, and goats, and 1x for



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livestock guardian dogs and other livestock; allocating \$300,000 for an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife wolf coexistence biologist as well as \$1.3 million toward anti-poaching efforts by ODFW and the Oregon State Police (to make up for cuts made early in the budget process); requiring that deterrence tools are confirmed to have been implemented in a manner appropriate for the landscape and type of livestock operation; and creating a statewide livestock loss board with consistent standards and criteria. These changes would help ensure that livestock producers get the assistance they need, both before and after conflicts, so that conflicts can be reduced and prevented over the long term, and that wolves can recover and thrive alongside Oregon's communities.

Thank you,

Story Warren  
Wildlife Protection Program Manager  
Humane World for Animals

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<sup>1</sup> The Humane Society of the United States, "Government data confirm that wolves have a negligible effect on U.S. cattle and sheep industries," [https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/HSUS-Wolf-Livestock-6.Mar\\_.19Final.pdf](https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/HSUS-Wolf-Livestock-6.Mar_.19Final.pdf) (2019); Peter Kareiva et al., "A new era of wolf management demands better data and a more inclusive process," *Conservation Science and Practice* n/a, no. n/a (2022), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/csp2.12821>, <https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/csp2.12821>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. (2025). Oregon wolf conservation and management 2024 annual report. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Salem, OR. [https://dfw.state.or.us/Wolves/docs/oregon\\_wolf\\_program/2024\\_FINAL\\_Annual\\_Wolf\\_Report\\_250410.pdf](https://dfw.state.or.us/Wolves/docs/oregon_wolf_program/2024_FINAL_Annual_Wolf_Report_250410.pdf); United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service Northwest Regional Field Office. (2024). 2024 Oregon annual statistical bulletin. [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Oregon/Publications/Annual\\_Statistical\\_Bulletin/2024/OR\\_ANN\\_2024.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Oregon/Publications/Annual_Statistical_Bulletin/2024/OR_ANN_2024.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Andelt, W. F. (1996). Carnivores. In P. R. Krausman (Ed.), *Rangeland Wildlife* (pp. 133-155). Society for Range Management; Bergstrom, B. J. (2017). Carnivore conservation: shifting the paradigm from control to coexistence. *Journal of Mammalogy*, 98(1), 1-6; Eklund, A., López-Bao, J. V., Tourani, M., Chapron, G., & Frank, J. (2017). Limited evidence on the effectiveness of interventions to reduce livestock predation by large carnivores. *Scientific reports*, 7(1), 2097; Lennox, R. J., Gallagher, A. J., Ritchie, E. G., & Cooke, S. J. (2018). Evaluating the efficacy of predator removal in a conflict-prone world. *Biological Conservation*, 224, 277-289; Parks, M., & Messmer, T. (2016). Participant perceptions of Range Rider Programs operating to mitigate wolf–livestock conflicts in the western United States. *Wildlife Society Bulletin*, 40(3), 514-524; Santiago-Avila, F. J., Cornman, A. M., & Treves, A. (2018). Killing wolves to prevent predation on livestock may protect one farm but harm neighbors. *PLoS One*, 13(1), e0189729; Stone, S. A., Breck, S. W., Timberlake, J., Haswell, P. M., Najera, F., Bean, B. S., & Thornhill, D. J. (2017). Adaptive use of nonlethal strategies for minimizing wolf–sheep conflict in Idaho. *Journal of Mammalogy*, 98(1), 33-44; Treves, A., & Karanth, K. U. (2003). Human-carnivore conflict and perspectives on carnivore management worldwide. *Conservation biology*, 17(6), 1491-1499; Treves, A., Krofel, M., & McManus, J. (2016). Predator control should not be a shot in the dark. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, 14(7), 380-388.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., Louchouart, N. X., & Treves, A. (2023). Low-stress livestock handling protects cattle in a five-predator habitat. *PeerJ*, 11, e14788.