

Al LePage
PO Box 11045
Portland, Oregon 97211
Saturday, March 30th, 2013

**TO: *House Committee on
Agriculture and Natural Resources***

RE: HB 2624 - Authorizes counties to exempt themselves from statewide ban on use of dogs to pursue cougars and black bears by a vote of the people of that county.

HB 3395 – Authorizes a pilot program to allow the use of dogs to pursue cougars in certain management zones.

Dear Members of the *House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources*:

Since any testimony provided on these two bills will most likely include differing opinions and beliefs, I will simply state the facts and the intent of my request to you.

First, according to an *Associated Press* article about hound hunting bears (12/25/12) it states in part . . . **“The animals can be chased to exhaustion, packs of dogs can tear apart bobcats, and bears can injure or kill the hounds that pursue them.”**

Therefore, it would seem apparent that any animal, whether cougar or bear, being chased by dogs will **experience at the very least life-threatening fear, anxiety and other distress, plus the potential for physical pain during the chase** up until the point they are either shot or allowed to retreat. And, in fact, ***the dogs themselves can also be injured.***

I am saddened to think about the suffering cougars must go through while being hunted by hounds, or hounds too could experience if injured or killed, and since I simply do what I can **to alleviate the pain and suffering of all living beings, I am writing you to consider doing what you can to join with me in a compassionate way** to act on behalf of cougars, bears and hounds.

Therefore, **I respectfully request that you oppose HB 2624 and HB 3395**, scheduled for hearing on April 2.

Thank you for your consideration of kindness in this regard.



Al LePage

PS . . .

- Both of these measures are apparent attempts to overturn the will of the majority of voters who supported *Measure 18 in the past to ban hounding of cougars and black bears.*
- The cougar hunting season has also already been expanded to encompass the entire year, plus the Cougar Management Plan allows the taking of roughly 40% of the population. There *apparently is no evidence to suggest a need to expand the killing of cougars* even further by allowing the use of hounds.



Photo Credit: Rich Beausoleil/WA Department of Fish and Game