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The Honorable Brad Witt, Chair  
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee  
900 Court St NE, H-374  
Salem, OR, 97301

***RE: HB 3395 – Hounding of Cougars – Pilot Program - Oppose***

Dear Representative Witt:

On behalf of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and our more than 2.5 million members and supporters nationwide, including more than 25,000 Oregon residents, I wish to register our opposition to HB 3395. HB 3395 would authorize a pilot program for the use of hounds to pursue cougars in certain management zones.

There is simply no scientific evidence that there is a need to create a pilot program of this nature. The Legislature is already considering extending the state's authority to appoint agents to use hounds this session – there is no reason to grant additional avenues that allow the use of hounds. What truly needs to happen is more scientific review of the cougar management plan as well as allowing for input from the public.

The Cougar Management Plan allows the taking of roughly 40% of the cougar population and increased the cougar hunting season to encompass the entire year. The plan was widely criticized by cougar biologists when it was proposed and has continued to be criticized for its over-estimation of cougar populations and for its singular focus on the lethal taking of cougars. In 2006, the same year the Plan was adopted, Oregon saw more cougars taken than in any other previous year.

Biologists surmise that the taking of so many cougars offers more risk for human/cougar interaction as younger more inexperienced cougars fill the void left by these takings. In fact the takings allowed under the Management Plan and HB 2971 are likely causing more harm than good.

For these reasons, we strongly oppose HB 3395. If you have any questions about the ASPCA's position, please feel free to contact me at [Kevin.oneill@aspca.org](mailto:Kevin.oneill@aspca.org) or 916.214.0476. Thank you for your time in considering our position.

Sincerely,

Kevin O'Neill  
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