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Testimony by Catherine Koehn of Eugene

4/1/13

Dear Chair Witt & Members - Please vote **NO** on **HB 2624**, and **HB 3395**!

Thank you for accepting comments on this very important topic. Here are Ten Reasons to vote 'NO'

**OVERVIEW: Reasons these bills should not pass.**

These frivolous bills are nothing more than just thinly veiled attempts to overturn Measure 18.

Various versions of these bills have been repeatedly brought up for decades & always turned down

There is No Need, Measure 18 is working fine, - already has provisions for killing any problem predators

Monetarily we can't afford it, complete waste of hundreds of thousands of dollars – for What?

Biologically unsustainable: killing off your most important wildlife species would harm the ecosystem.

Would actually CREATE Public Safety problems, because of the territorial nature of mountain lions

Voters will be affronted if you allow the 'County-rights' free for all that HB 2624 would create!

HB 3395 – is just a blank check to slaughter more cougars that is unscientific and costly!

Bills would ENCOURAGE POACHING in International Black Market of Wildlife Parts

They're against federal recommendations by National Fish, Wildlife & Plant Climate Adaptation' group.

**SPECIFICS: Reasons these bills should not pass.**

Absolutely NO need, there have been NO people attacked by either bear or cougar EVER in Oregon!...including in the last 20 years, since Measure 18 was passed – Two Times by a majority of voters.

B 3395 – is nothing more than a blank check to slaughter more cougars in the same Expensive and unnecessary way that their last fake 'Study' – which proved NOTHING! A complete and total Waste of Tax Payer's and Sportmen's money!

This brings up POACHING – Oregon is in the middle of a ‘Poaching Epidemic’ and Oregon’s houndmen have a long history of illegal killing of wildlife. The name RAY HILLSMAN comes to mind, They called him "the Al Capone of bear hunting." He was notorious! A brazen houndman who was convicted of racketeering with Bear Gaul Bladders, and who has repeated flaunted the laws of this state, along with his buddy Johnny Young who was the President of the ‘Sporting Dog’ Club when convicted.

The houndmen refused to legal up when ODFW demanded that they report what they killed. The state could not even get 30% compliance out of them! Just like the OSP Game Warden told me, “The houndmen hunt anytime they want, any place they want.” So if you pass these laws that are virtual open doors for Poachers, you will actually be ENCOURAGING POACHING!

Allowing Trophyhunting again would go against the federal recommendations by the National Fish, Wildlife & Plant Climate Adaption’ group, that was produced by “an intergovernmental group of federal, state and tribal representatives at the request of the US Government.”

<http://www.wildlifeadaptationstrategy.gov/pdf/NFWPCAS-Final.pdf>

One of their recommended goals they outlined was to: “Manage species and habitats to *protect ecosystem functions*”; and the single most important animal in any ecosystem are it’s Predators. They are an Apex specie that is essential for a ‘functioning ecosystem’ as well as the health of their prey, since they have evolved in tandem, and **taking out your most important wildlife species would irreparably disrupt and harm the whole ecosystem.**

Only two animals are affected by trophyhunting houndmen: Bear and Cougars, and the ODFW has been repeatedly rebuked for having inadequate and unscientific Bear and Cougar Plans; to the point where specific accusations have arisen with serious repercussions: for instance the state has “no data about the age and structure of non-hunted bears’, which means that “ODFW’s management policies could be creating smaller bears and therefore have long-term evolutionary impacts”.

Inherent in HB 2624 is a ‘County-rights’ free for all, in which state rules don’t have to be followed.... Voters will probably not elect representatives that open a door to “Every County for themselves” – where wildlife would have THIRTY SIX different sets of rules about wildlife! –Counties can’t ‘Op Out’ of legal Referendums TWICE passed by a majority of voters in this state!

PLUS: neither the ODFW Bear Plan or the Cougar Plan are biologically defensible because they are predicated on fabricated statistics and driven by ‘Special Interests’ instead of sound Science. The state is treading on thin ground already – don’t exacerbate an already bad problem!

Their Bear Plan even allows for a ‘Spring’ Bear Hunt, when sows have young cubs! That is inhumane and could seriously damage the whole age structure of bears in Oregon!

These bills are just more examples of greedy, Self-Serving/Time Wasting Bills again- despite the fact that THEY NEVER GET ANY OF THEIR KILL BILLS PASSED – EVER, AND THEY'VE TRIED - EVERY YEAR SINCE WE PASSED THE INTITATIVE!

The Economic fact is that we do not have the policing ability to stop poachers, and since houndhunters are the only ones that can make some fast cash on Bear/Cougar GAULS, - it would be inviting A PUBLIC SAFETY NIGHTMARE AND ENCOURAGING uncontrolled bedlum in the woods!

And that 'study' has helped US, by documenting with the states' *own* research that there IS illegal baiting already going on!

Plus, the percentage of voters who own hounds is like less than 1% - so the state should under NO circumstances ENCOURAGE this SAME SMALL PERCENTAGE OF SELF-SERVING Poachers that they keep catching like Johnnie Young and the infamous RAY HILLSMAN they just caught AGAIN last year!

These bills are both an affront to the Legislature because of their historically ridiculous repeated pattern of these time-wasting bills that are always defeated because everybody KNOWS they would just encourage Poaching and the International Wildlife Trade on the CITES Treaty that documents a world-wide decline in Bears everywhere!

Thank you, Catherine Koehn