

Chair, Vice Chair, Members of the committee my name is Dominic Aiello, Vice President of the Oregon Outdoor Council, contractor to the Oregon Sportsmen Caucus and Oregon Hunters Association Member.

During the 2012 session a similar bill to HB2624A addressing the need for better cougar management in Oregon passed the House with bipartisan support. When it reached the Senate it was sent to this committee where it was never given a hearing. So I want to thank you for the progress in address in this important issue.

The past several weeks I've given serious thought to why an individual or organization wouldn't support HB2624A. I've reviewed information from Oregon Cat Action Team, the Humane Society of the United States and others. The reasons I've found is;

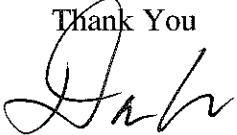
First and probably the most common argument is the voters have spoken on this issue twice before and that we should respect that. However, I can't help but take notice that there are numerous issues that voters have addressed that continue to come back up. Just yesterday water fluidization was voted down for the 4th time since 1956. In 1993 an Oregon sales tax was voted down for the 9th time. Why is there an issue in having a 3rd vote on cougar management if we can vote multiple times on these other topics?

Second most common argument is that science doesn't support management of cougars. As ODFW presented earlier they have been studying predator – prey impacts for years. There is no need for me to address this topic as ODFW has already disproven this argument.

Third is the argument that it's inhumane or encourages poaching. This is all based on emotion not science. Emotion has no place in determining wildlife management. We require our wildlife agency employees to have extensive education in science based wildlife management and we need to allow them to do the job they were established for them.

Oregonians deserve the opportunity to vote on this issue, I encourage you to make a do pass recommendation on HB2624A.

Thank You


Dominic Aiello