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Testimony in Opposition to House Sill 2624

Dear Committee Members:

This bill sets a bad precedent for Oregon in allowing some counties to opt out of a statewide initiative. Counties should not be able to opt out of a statewide law. There are already allowances for dispatching of problem cougar, with hounds if needed, and actually even this allowance is already abused, with little oversight to verify claimed cougar problems

Hunting of cougars is already allowed and cougar killing is currently at an all time high, with cougar tags vastly increasing.

Reportedly, even Steven Chapman, the avid hunter who helped form the Oregon Outdoor Council lobbying group, is now admitting he was likely wrong about why thinks that herds of deer and elk are decreasing due to loss of grazing lands and roads built for logging, and that targeting predators is not a solution to hunting concerns.

Additionally, hound hunting is not good for the dogs of hound hunters, who, instead of living the lives of valued pets, live in kennels or tied to dog houses when not on hunts. Hound hunting is bad for dogs as well as for cougar.

Our wildlife should be for all Oregonians. Predators keep herds of prey animals in far better health and more sustainable than hunters by targeting the sick and vulnerable and leaving the strong and healthy to procreate.

We do not need this bill; we do not need to violate the twice voted in initiative passed by Oregonians to ban the cruel method of hunting cougar with hounds.

Sincerely,

Laurel Hines