

House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee:

Please vote NO on HB 2537. This bill increases damages for unlawful taking or killing of wildlife.

The bill is contrary to ORS 498.166 by adding black bear and cougars. Bears and cougars are already regulated as known predators that endangers farms and ranch properties. ORS 498.166 allows for the taking of cougars or bears that pose a threat to human safety. Forbidding defending your own property and personal safety is not right.

Further, the bill assumes that a fisherman can direct fish to prevent catching unclipped or unmarked salmon or steelhead. How absurd.

This bill indirectly puts every wild animal on the "endangered species" list limiting individual freedoms.

Proposed increases in fines is significant and is another effort to raise taxes Oregonians with out an avenue for defense. Finding someone guilty by possession without evidence of how the animal was taken or intended use is contrary to the laws of the land.

Donna Bleiler