TESTIMONY

Senate Committee on Finance & Revenue

Wednesday, June 10, 2015

Oregon Farm Bureau supports HB 3188-B

Chair Hass and members of the committee:

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) asks for your support of HB 3188-B. OFB has worked with Rep. Caddy McKeown (D-Coos Bay) and Rep. Dallas Heard (R-Roseburg) to find a funding solution for Coos and Douglas counties to retain predator management services and protect local ag-dependent economies. The final product, HB 3188-B, is the result of collaborative work with legislators, county commissioners, county assessors, ag and timber producers, and the Oregon Department of Revenue.

Many rural Oregonians rely on effective predator management to prevent costly depredation on their livestock or timber. Unfortunately, as payments in lieu of timber harvest continue to decrease, the future of current predator management programs in rural counties is tenuous. HB 3188-B would provide a voluntary mechanism for ag and timber producers to maintain the effectiveness of current predator control services within the county without imposing a tax on the general public. HB 3188-B would give producers the ability to contribute to the funding of the county's trapping program and free up money to go to other county services—including law enforcement or infrastructure improvements.

HB 3188-B:
- Allows over 50% of landowners/ producers to petition the county to form a funding district to pay for predator management in the district
- Creates an advisory board of producers to establish the boundaries of the district and set the rate of incurred charge annually
- Includes a voluntary opt-out if a landowner/ producer does not want to participate

Without effective predator control, our producers would experience significant losses of livestock and their offspring that they cannot absorb. HB 3188-B is critical to the viability of production agriculture in Coos and Douglas Counties. We ask for your SUPPORT of HB 3188-B.

For additional information, please contact: Jenny Dresler with the Oregon Farm Bureau