

Hello sponsors of SB 723 (and others perusing the public record),

I am a constituent in House District 30 and Senate District 15. I am writing today to express my concerns about Senate Bill 723. While I share your revulsion regarding the coyote-killing tournaments, I am concerned about ancillary impacts this bill would have in its current form.

My dog has the largest social media following of any whippet in the United States (over 65k): <https://www.instagram.com/spacewhippet/> One of the things that I am most passionate about is my ability to do dog sports with him. Together we train every day to with the goal of competing at the national level in competition obedience, as well as agility and tracking. He loves training for these activities (he works hard for Tillamook cheese), but they are not what my dog was bred to do; he was bred to race.

Unlike greyhound racing, whippet racing in the United States is 100% amateur and just for fun. There is no gambling or prize money involved. The "lure" is either a plush toy or a plastic grocery bag. The dogs are "weekend warriors" who occupy the couch for the remainder of the week. My otherwise composed dog loves racing so much that he screams in excitement while waiting his turn to race. It is important to me that not only can he continue doing what his breed loves to do, but that owners of other breeds can as well.

SB 723 in its current form would not affect my dog. However, it would affect a number of my friends who own golden and labrador retrievers as well as owners of breeds like German shorthaired pointers, Irish setters and beagles. My understanding is that SB 723 would effectively outlaw American Kennel Club hunt tests and field trials in Oregon. Since these events exist to test hunting dogs' skills in realistic scenarios, they use small numbers of live game.

The events are designed to test the speed, precision and steadiness of a bird hunting dog. The availability of hunt tests and field trials ensures that hunting dogs can perform reliably when the dogs are actually out hunting. This in turn ensures that game birds are retrieved humanely and are not wasted.

Although I myself do not hunt with my dog, I support the ability for others to legally bird hunt with dogs bred for this purpose. However, in order to ensure respectful and responsible bird hunting, we must allow hunt tests and field trials.

I urge you to clarify the wording of SB 723.

Thank you,

Beth Gordon  
resident of Hillsboro