

This bill prevents the organization of any sort of contest in order to engage hunters to focus on keeping down the number of predators, coyotes in this case, in Oregon. In order for this bill to make sense to me, we would first have to establish some facts:

- 1) That coyotes should be protected in Oregon for some reason.
- 2) Perhaps we believe that coyote numbers will be reduced to a dangerously low level.

I would suggest that coyotes are protected in Oregon. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has been charged with the responsibility of overseeing Oregon's Fish and Wildlife, coyotes, etc. ODFW has developed a set of rules for the management of our wildlife. Wildlife are organized into categories such as "Game Animals", and "Non-Game Animals". All species of animal native to Oregon, and even non-native are placed in one category or the other. Non-game animals are further segregated into groups like, predators (like coyote), or fur bearers (like beaver, fox, muskrat) etc.

ODFW conducts surveys of each species, often based on required hunting reports, sometimes based on observation in the field, etc. Other information relevant to each species is also considered and a set of regulations for each subgroup of wildlife are developed. These regulations include protections for all animal populations which include hunting seasons - if it is determined necessary for a given group of animals, and includes a ban on taking particular animals by any method at all times in order to preserve the number of animals in that species which will maintain a proper balance in our state's ecologic system.

The ODFW conducts sessions open to public input regarding the regulations for any species of animal, including coyotes, prior to issuing the wildlife regulations (laws), for each calendar year. Those sessions are the appropriate place to address issues such as those contained in SB 723-2. Comment and testimony can be delivered to ODFW in person, or in writing. My hope is that you will recognize the ODFW as the lawmaking body governing wildlife issues; if Oregon citizens approach you with wildlife issues, refer them to the ODFW.