



February 26, 2019

Oregon Senate Committee on Judiciary  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: SB 723-2 – Oppose**

Chair Prozanski and Honorable Members of the Oregon Senate Committee on Judiciary,

On behalf of the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, I write today to express our organization's opposition to Senate Bill 723-2, legislation that would make it illegal for a person to "...organize, sponsor, promote, conduct or participate in a contest, competition, tournament or derby in this state that has the objective of taking coyotes for prizes or other inducement or for the purpose of entertainment." While the -2 amendments seemingly address a number of issues with the original bill, this legislation still represents a significant departure from the sound, science-based wildlife management paradigm that has long guided Oregon and the rest of the United States.

For over 80 years, sportsmen and women have played a crucial role in funding conservation in the United States through the American System of Conservation Funding (ASCF). This "user-pays, public benefits" funding model, unique to the rest of the world, has served as the backbone for conservation and wildlife management funding in the United States. Under the ASCF, sportsmen fund conservation and wildlife management through both the purchase of sporting licenses and through federal excise taxes firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, fishing tackle, and motorboat fuel, among many other items. These excise taxes fund a wide variety of activities, including: fish and wildlife research, private and public habitat management, hunter education, shooting range development, land acquisition and easements, and angler access area construction. These facts only further reinforce the need to preserve the contributions that sportsmen and women make to conservation and wildlife management, particularly in light of increasing efforts to limit or eliminate specific forms of hunting and angling.

Oregon presently allows year-round hunting of coyotes, so long as hunters possess the appropriate license and comply with all regulations relating to hunting and harvest of coyotes. Determinations on season lengths, allowable harvest, and other components factoring into the management of an individual species – such as coyotes – are made by trained professionals

employed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), with extensive backgrounds in biology and related fields. Given the expertise of these wildlife professionals, and the fact that state fish and wildlife agencies have long been regarded as the best and most effective managers of our public fish and wildlife resources, restrictions made to the laws and regulations for the harvest of coyotes and other species (such as Senate Bill 723-2) should only be considered if so proposed by ODFW. Legal and well-regulated hunting and angling keep public fish and wildlife populations healthy, facilitate habitat management and conservation, generate revenue for public agencies and private businesses, and support jobs, and Senate Bill 723-2 would represent an effort to upend that effective management structure.

With these factors in mind, we again respectfully urge the Oregon Senate Committee on Judiciary to oppose Senate Bill 723-2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Zach Widner".

Zach Widner  
Senior Manager, Northwestern States  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation