



NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS FOUNDATION, INC.

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Michael Findlay

Director,
Government Relations - State Affairs

February 28, 2019

The Honorable Floyd Prozanski
Oregon State Senate
State Capitol Building
Salem, OR 97301

Position: Oppose

Location: Hearing Room C

Re: SB 723

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

As the trade association for America's firearms, ammunition, hunting, and recreational shooting sports industry, the National Shooting Sports Foundation ("NSSF") seeks to promote, protect, and preserve hunting and the shooting sports. NSSF has a membership of more than 12,000 manufacturers, distributors, firearms retailers, shooting ranges, and sportsmen's organizations. Our manufacturer members make the firearms used by law-abiding Oregon sportsmen, the U.S. military and law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

This letter is to express NSSF's opposition to SB 723, a bill that places limitations on predator management practices and hunting in the state of Oregon.

The development of a statewide management plan for any species is a complex undertaking that considers biological, social, economic, and political aspects of species management. It's important to make decisions based on science and to make sure our wildlife professionals have all the tools available including hunting in order to properly manage coyote population numbers.

Coyotes can be dangerous to people, livestock and wildlife if not managed properly. The US Department of Agriculture conducted a study on cattle deaths in 2015 and coyotes accounted for the highest percentage of cattle deaths due to predators (40.5 percent). Coyotes also accounted for the highest percentage of calf deaths due to predators (53.1 percent)¹. The estimated cost of death loss in cattle and calves in 2015 was \$3.87 billion. The problem is getting worse, the percentage of calf deaths attributed to predators increased steadily from 3.5 percent in 1995 to 11.1 percent in 2015.

¹ Death Loss in U.S. Cattle and Calves Due to Predator and Nonpredator Causes, 2015 - https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/nahms/general/downloads/cattle_calves_deathloss_2015.pdf

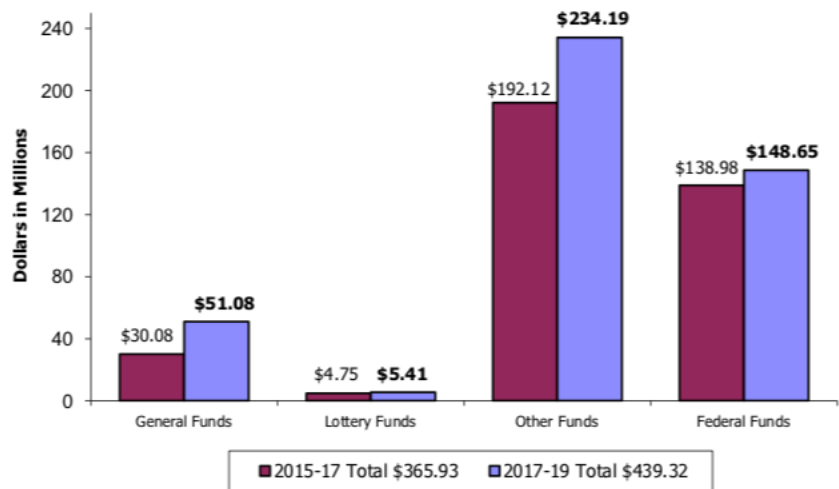
Most documented coyote attacks on humans have occurred in California² and other urbanized areas in western states. California has a law very similar to SB 723, this law along with other factors limiting predator management have contributed to increasingly bold behavior in coyotes. (Howell 1982, Carbyn 1989). It's important to note that coyotes are not native to Oregon and only have expanded to the state in the past hundred years.



Anti-hunting groups have advocated for non-legal practices such as hazing for coyote population management.³ While good intentioned, scientific research suggests hazing and other non-lethal techniques have not been effective at reducing extreme aggressive behavior in problem coyotes, and these individuals are most effectively managed through targeted lethal removal (Baker 2007, Baker and Timm 2017, Breck et. al. 2017).

Biennial Comparison of Agency Revenue by Fund Type

Wildlife conservation funding overwhelming comes from sportsmen and women. Federally there is an 11 percent excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition which are appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior and apportioned to States based on a formula. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is largely funded through these federal funds along with hunting and fishing licenses. 11 percent General Funds (\$51.08 million); 1 percent Lottery Funds (\$5.41 million); 52 percent Other Funds (\$246.27 million); and 36 percent Federal Funds (\$168.60 million).⁴



States are starting to see a decline in revenue and prohibitions on hunting will only increase the dire funding situation that states are finding themselves in. For instance, in Wisconsin, a lack of funding has prompted the state's Department of Natural Resources to leave staff positions unfilled and cut back on habitat management. Colorado's wildlife agency has cut tens of millions of dollars in expenditures and trimmed programs that deal with invasive species. Vermont's fish and wildlife department, which

² Coyote attacks on humans, 1970–2015: implications for reducing the risks - <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1387&context=hwi>

³ Coyote Hazing GUIDELINES - <https://www.humanesociety.org/sites/default/files/docs/coyote-hazing-guidelines.pdf>

⁴ Revenue Composition: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) - https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/budget/docs/15-17_ARB/E.%20Revenues.PDF

manages more than 25,000 species and nearly 2,000 native plants, is cautioning that even though the state leads the nation in wildlife viewing, that activity "provides no significant revenue stream to the department that would allow for the management of the resources viewed."⁵

The economic benefits from hunting are significant in Oregon. The industry supports 3,726 jobs, generates \$27,084,273 in state and local taxes, \$32,065,677 in federal taxes and \$132,197,830 in salaries and wages per year.⁶ Limitations on hunting practices would hurt Oregon's tax revenue, jobs and salaries.

There would be a litany of negative unintended consequences if SB 723 were passed. The bill could hurt the economy, people, wildlife and conservation funding in Oregon. Accordingly, SB 723 is strongly opposed by the National Shooting Sports Foundation and we would urge the committee to vote no on the bill.

Sincerely,

Michael Findlay
Director of Government Relations – State Affairs
National Shooting Sports Foundation

cc: Senator James I. Manning Jr.
Senator Dennis Linthicum
Senator Sara Gelsler
Senator Shemia Fagan
Senator Cliff Bentz
Senator Kim Thatcher

⁵ Decline In Hunters Threatens How U.S. Pays For Conservation - <https://www.npr.org/2018/03/20/593001800/decline-in-hunters-threatens-how-u-s-pays-for-conservation>

⁶ America's Sporting Heritage: Fueling the American Economy - <http://congressionalsportsmen.org/uploads/page/EIR%20final%20low-res.pdf>