



February 28, 2019

The Honorable Floyd Prozanski
Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary

The Honorable Kim Thatcher
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary

RE: Testimony in Opposition to SB 723

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary:

Oregon Gun Owners (OGO) is one of Oregon's largest gun rights advocacy groups. Since 1975, OGO has advocated for law-abiding gun owners and promotes the responsible use of firearms. We have helped craft responsible policy in Oregon and oppose measures that jeopardize the sportsmen's lifestyle. OGO opposes SB 723 for several reasons:

- This bill would limit Oregonians' ability to manage predators for the protection of their families and livestock. While the language is limited to hunting contests, it is vague enough to jeopardize activities in which groups of people engage in predator management.
- SB 723 is part of a nationwide effort by anti-hunting groups to end all public hunting. Hunting contests do not present a problem and thus do not need a solution.
- Coyotes are predators, not game species like elk and deer. Arguments favor of this bill rely on a distorted view of hunting principles of fair chase. The doctrine of fair chase is part of a broader conservation ethic that includes an ethical, sporting approach that does not give the hunter an improper or unfair advantage over the game animals.

Predator species such as coyotes are non-game species that should be managed to minimize harm to other wildlife, pets, and livestock. The approach to controlling populations for such purposes has never incorporated a fair chase approach because it is more closely associated with removal or reduction of animals by the most efficient means possible. Applying the principles of fair chase incorrectly to score political victories is not appropriate.

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In summary, SB 723 is a solution in search of a problem and falsely implies improper conduct on the part of gun owners. The natural range of coyotes continues to expand, posing problems for people and other wildlife, and their numbers need to be managed. OGO believes no animal should be killed without a purpose, and those who participate in predator and varmint reductions should do so as respectfully and humanely as possible.

As a practical matter, and as a matter of principle, OGO urges you to vote no on SB 723.

Sincerely,

Dan Cushing
Executive Director