

SB 723, "Relating to unlawful takings of wildlife; declaring an emergency." Testimony, Al LePage, Eugene, OR

A stone hits the water and the ripples spread out.

Killing coyotes for prizes or entertainment, that's the stone.

I'm here today, to talk about, the ripples.

The first ripple for me was before the killing began, when I contacted the Governor's office to ask that she intervene.

The second ripple was when the killing was happening. A deep sadness, a sadness so deep that I could not even cry. A kind of sadness I had never known, before my beloved Olivia died last year. A sadness that's with me still, and I think, always will be.

There were other ripples, too, found in newspaper stories, in the thoughts and feelings of others affected by the killing.

The bill before us today is yet another ripple . . . so is this hearing, and my testimony.

I truly believe that as a person's awareness grows, so does their compassion. And the depth of their awareness, likewise leads to deeper levels of compassion. Such awareness though, requires time and energy, a willingness to be open and listen, and to be affected -- to be changed by what one learns. Such has been my experience in life.

So now I jump in, to share my deeper ripples of sadness, born of compassion.

I am sad for the death of these animal beings -- like all beings just trying to survive -- their lives being seen by some as having no value.

I am sad for science -- that long held beliefs persist -- and dismiss, ignore or deny the realities of wildlife biology and evidence-based predation control.*

I am sad for the earth -- because such killing teaches children and young adults -- not stewardship, but the destruction of a specific species. And since everything is connected within the natural world, the ripple of death spreads to affect other species, surrounding habitat, and ultimately, everyone, and the earth itself.**

Lastly, I am sad for society -- for a society that would allow such killing -- and especially . . . if it's allowed to continue.

Therefore, I support SB 000 and its passage, as a life-affirming ripple, not only for coyotes, but also for people and the earth itself.

Thank you for your serious consideration -- heartfelt and compassionate, rational and scientific -- on behalf of coyotes, science, society, and the earth.

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* *Managing conflict between large carnivores and livestock.* van Eeden, Crowther, Dickman, Macdonald, Ripple, Ritchie, Newsome / *Conserv. Biol.* 2018 Feb;32(1):26-34.

* *Limited evidence on the effectiveness of interventions to reduce livestock predation by large carnivores.* Ann Eklund, José Vicente López-Bao, etc. / *Sci. Rep.* 2017; 7: 2097

** *Trophic Downgrading of Planet Earth.* James A. Estes, John Terborgh, etc. / *Science* 15 Jul 2011 : 301-306