

Dear Chair Witt and Committee Members:

I strongly urge you all to support HB 4075, the bill to prohibit coyote killing contests in Oregon.

Many opponents of HB 4075 inaccurately portray it as an attempt by non-hunters to infringe upon the rights of hunters and an example of the divide between urban and rural Oregonians. I am a rural residential Oregonian, who does not hunt, but I do have friends and relatives who hunt and a great deal of respect for the hunting community. I firmly believe that no ethical, responsible, hunter would even use the term "hunting" to describe these barbaric contests, whether they live in an urban area or a rural one.

Opponents of HB 4075 have also spread the false narrative that coyote killing contests are a valid wildlife management tool to protect livestock from depredation and increase game populations. Wildlife management should be science-based and the science clearly shows that indiscriminate killing of coyotes does NOT decrease livestock depredation. Paradoxically, the more coyotes are killed, the more livestock are depredated! Using non-lethal methods to protect livestock coupled with the targeted killing of individual problem coyotes is a much more effective way to reduce depredations. The claim that killing contests increase game populations is not supported by scientific evidence either. The limiting factor for most game species is habitat, not predators.

The Boone and Crockett Club in their April 15, 2016 Fair Chase Position statement says: "The Club also believes that hunting is a privilege that must be earned repeatedly..." In a changing society, where fewer and fewer people are hunters, I believe HB 4075 is necessary for the hunting community to maintain that privilege. Videos and photos from coyote contests show grinning, camo-clad, men dragging dead coyotes around as toys for their dogs to chase and tossing coyote bodies into pickup trucks as if they were bags of trash - while young children watch and are taught by example that this sadistic behavior is acceptable. These images give the non-hunting public an extremely negative view of the sport. A lack of broad public support for hunting could lead to difficulty "earning the privilege" in the future.

Passing HB 4075 will not allow the coyote population to grow unchecked in Oregon. Plenty of coyotes will still die after these contests are banned. They will still be trapped in leg-hold traps and shot from helicopters by USDA APHIS Wildlife Services, they will still be shot on sight by anyone at any time as vermin, and they will still be trapped for their fur. The only thing HB 4075 will stop is the blood sport of killing coyotes as part of organized contests to win cash or prizes.

Oregon has the chance to be a humane leader among western states by joining California, Vermont, New Mexico, Arizona, and Massachusetts in banning these grisly contests. According to a recent public opinion poll commissioned by Remington Research Group, a strong majority of Oregonians, across all five congressional districts, support legislation to ban coyote killing contests. If you watch the undercover video of a [December 2018 coyote killing contest in Burns](#), and examine your conscience, I trust that you will agree with the majority of Oregonians and vote to end these pointless, cruel, offensive, contests even if doing so is controversial.

Please end coyote killing contests in Oregon by supporting HB 4075.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Respectfully,

Pamela Brunet Comeleo  
Corvallis, OR