

Dear House Committee on Natural Resources:

I am reaching out to you for your support on this bill HB 4075 to bring an end to Wildlife Killing Contests in Oregon.

Over the years I have learned much about the behavior and family workings of coyotes and wolves of which science supports that these killing in mass numbers creates more problems than it solves. Aside from that, for me, is the lack of morality behind it. Doesn't matter to me what animal it is, killing contests are a perverse display of man over beast in the most indignant and disgusting displays of apathy and death gorging that I have personally ever seen.

These hunting events largely ignore the tenants of the N. American model of ethical hunting and allow for use of tricks to lure animals in (fair chase is not enforced) and ignores the ethics of not creating wanton waste. Ultimately, indiscriminate kills also have the opposite and unintended consequence of increasing predator populations in coyotes. And all this for cash? Killing for cash. It's just wrong. That is not hunting.

(Attached ) In his article, A Death of Ethics, Todd Wilkinson quotes carnivore biologist John Laundre: "...it is amply known in the true conservation community, and by many children, that all native species have a part in ecosystems and that the predators, large and small, probably have the most important part" ..." They are the shepherds of ecosystems, keeping herbivores in their ecological place. Time after time, it has been demonstrated that the removal of predators leads to ecological destruction. And returning herbivores without their predators, an ecological crime, a crime, hunters repeatedly commit..."

These animals are not 'things' to kill as a hobby or for fun or cash prizes. They are sentient creates like you and me, like our dogs and cats. They bond with their families, have responsibilities, and enjoy a sunny day and playing with one another. They are NOT vile creatures to be fear mongered or ignored or mass culled. They do us a service with keeping ill animals and disease at a minimum within their own environs. They do not compete with hunters for ungulates, and when their family packs are disrupted, for coyotes that means spread out and reproduce like crazy and for ranchers that means young survivors who don't know properly to hunt, attack their livestock for food. This really benefits no one in a good way. Additionally the days of fur are over. These are not trophy fur bearing animals. They are sentient and part of our Oregon Eco systems and deserve respect as much as we do and protections that we can and should afford them to protect their rightful place among us.

I do not believe Wildlife Killing Contests have a place in our society. Rather there must be a sound science-based approach to wildlife management, carried out in humane ways that reflect the best of our morality and good intentions. Five states have now banned these gruesome contests—including California, Vermont, New Mexico, Arizona, and Massachusetts. Please add Oregon to that list!

Sincerely,

Crystal Elston