

To the senators of the great state of Oregon:

I'm writing to strongly urge you to support passage of HB4075A.

At a moral level, any contest that promotes the wholesale slaughter of wildlife species is one that should not, under any circumstances, be promoted by a state government that believes in responsible and humane legislation. Not only do horrendous events like these tend to attract hunters with a lack of ethics that even other hunters find abhorrent, it is a bloodsport that demonstrates a state's blatant disregard for wildlife, itself. Is this cruel and reckless form of "entertainment" one that Oregon wants to promote? Does Oregon really want to be known as a state that welcomes people to come and kill wildlife at will?

Environmentally, such "contests" often create an imbalance in ecosystems that rely upon tiered systems where predators keep prey populations under control. Case after case has proven that, when coyotes are eradicated from an area, overpopulation of other species--like rabbits, prairie dogs and field mice--is soon to follow, causing extensive damage to native vegetation, crops and the potential spread of diseases that can impact other species.

Coyotes, along with other tier 1 predators like wolves, are also vital for culling herds of deer and elk, thereby making them stronger, healthier and more sustainable. Responsible hunters know this; irresponsible hunters do not. Does Oregon want to be known in the nation as a state that is shortsighted and uninformed in its environmental practices?

The tide has turned on horrendous events such as this. Concern for animal welfare and the conservation/preservation of our nation's wildlife is growing exponentially, and the state that recognizes this is a state that is looking to the future instead of returning to the bloody, primitive practices of the past.

Despite the bad reputation they have received, coyotes are actually complex, social and highly intelligent animals that have been a part of the Oregon landscape for centuries. I strongly urge you to join other states that have evolved in their treatment of wildlife and to vote in favor of HB4075A. This is not just a vote for valuing the lives of animals that exist in the wild; this is a vote that demonstrates Oregon values its history and believes that preservation of wildlife is an integral part of the state's culture in the year 2020.

Thank you,

Priscilla Waggoner