

Dear Senator Witt

RE: HB 2728

I support this bill.

Living in northeast Salem, I would often hop on my bicycle and ride out Sunnyview St. to the Cascade Highway passing through farm land. On one occasion as I was on a downhill run next to a fence, I was startled by a fox that had crawled under the fence a few feet in front of me. He had a rat in his mouth. I was close enough to see how he held it. He had grabbed it by the belly with the feet tucked inside and the spine neatly curved outside. The head dangled from one side of its mouth and the tail from the other side. He looked up at my front tire, with terrified eyes. His mouth came open and he dropped the rat, then ran at top speed across the road into another field as fast as he could. I kept peddling and watched him run off. When he was at a substantial distance he turned his head to see if he could still see me. He could, and he kept running as fast as possible. I was sorry I spoiled his lunch.

But, what this demonstrates to us is the value of predatory animals like the fox and the coyote. They provide the best method of controlling rodents such as mice and rats which carry nasty diseases and can quickly contaminate a granary of wheat or corn. The need to kill a coyote that's raiding the chicken coop is one thing, but killing massive numbers of them for monetary rewards is disturbing, and I question what the actual purpose of this is.

It is disturbing because the way people treat animals is the way they will treat their loved ones. I learned this from reading through the nursing curriculum at the community college where I was working. It is my understanding that high school students participate in this activity, and I wonder what the long-term effect will be. Are we teaching kids that this is the way to handle problems? That killing is fun?

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