

Dear Oregon – It is Time to Finally Ban Wildlife Killing Contests!

Oregon consistently ranks among the best states in the USA for animal welfare, according to the Animal Legal Defense Fund and the Humane Society of the United States. Even so, wildlife and domestic animals do not have it easy in Oregon.

Why has it taken Oregon so long to ban wildlife killing contests? Importantly, in 2020, a bill banning coyote killing contests had broad support in both state houses, but it, along with other legislation, was derailed when Republican House members abdicated their duty and failed to appear to vote.

Killing contests do not warrant discussion about whether they are fair or even necessary. They are in fact cruel and unethical; and cast a pall over ethical hunters. Participants compete to kill the most, the heaviest, or even the smallest coyote for cash and prizes. Social media posts vie for bragging rights. In fact, about four weeks ago, 272 coyotes were killed in the annual two-day Harney County Coyote Classic.

This new bill, HB 2728, reflects the values of a strong majority of Oregonians: that Oregon does NOT want coyote killing contests. I am ashamed that our state allows this. I argue that all life has the right to be valued and respected for its own sake, and to be treated ethically. It's time to end this inherently unethical and inhumane practice.

I ardently support this bill. These contests will continue with impunity until the Oregon legislature acts. Please do so without further delay.

Thank you.