

I am writing today in opposition of yet another attempt to manage our wildlife through emotion rather than science, HB 2728. It has been my great pleasure to enjoy the public hunting and outdoor recreation opportunities in Oregon since we moved here in 2015. Many things have changed in our country over my life time. Human populations have increased, new and different forms of recreation have developed, pressure on our lands and wildlife have increased dramatically. Along with this comes a state now with more urban than rural residents and a deepening lack of understanding of our wildlife laws and the professional wildlife science involved in management of all wildlife.

Emotionally targeted bills such as HB2728 do a great disservice to all Oregon residents whether they are inclined to think predators are cute and fuzzy or consider predators as a species to be managed in balance with human needs.

HB2728 is an attempt to prohibit a legal activity (hunting Coyotes) by emotionally attacking the taking of Coyotes where any benefit comes directly to hunters through a lottery or prize. Coyotes are legal to hunt with open seasons statewide and no limit on numbers harvested. There is no science telling us the hunting of coyotes either for recreation or protection of property has any negative effects on the highly resilient coyote populations.

Please derail this effort to create a crime without a victim by stopping HB2728. This bill is framed as a bill against holding contests for wildlife killing. It is not. The bill simply is another effort by people who do not understand hunting or want to stop hunting altogether to "kill" our hunting heritage using any means possible. In this case using the idea of a "killing contest" to discredit legal hunting methods and tug on the emotional heartstrings of unknowing publics. There is NO wildlife management harm in coyote hunting via a "contest" or not. Please put this bill to rest.

HB2728 is an attack on hunting. What will be next? What's the difference between a coyote contest and a fishing derby? There is none should be the obvious answer. When will kids' fishing derbies become the target? Too soon if bills like SB2728 pass in our state.