

HB 4080 -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

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Meeting Dates: 2/9

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Authorizes landowners who meet certain criteria to petition for formation of predator damage control district as funding mechanism to pay actual costs to county of preventing, reducing, and mitigating damage to property from predatory animals. Defines “prevent, reduce, and mitigate damage to property from predatory animals” to include both lethal and nonlethal methods of prevention, reduction, and mitigation. Authorizes the formation of a predator damage control district by a petition signed within a single six-month period by at least ten eligible petitioners who cumulatively own at least 10,000 acres of eligible land within the boundaries of the proposed predator damage control district. Requires the governing body of the county to hear testimony on the question of the formation of the district that is presented at a public hearing and make a determination whether to form the district based on the petition and the testimony. Requires the governing body of the county in which the predator damage control district is located to appoint an advisory board consisting of five members who reside in the district within 30 days after formation of a district. Establishes term of advisory board members and duties of advisory board. Establishes presumptive charges of \$2 per acre for tax lots of ten or more acres and \$50 flat rate charge for tax lots of less than ten acres. Requires the advisory board of a predator damage control district to consider each year whether the charges are sufficient to pay the cost to the county and authorizes advisory board to recommend to the governing body of the county the charges as specified or greater or lesser amounts. Creates cause of action under district program to counties, landowners, districts, and cities involved in program. Provides for continued existence of districts formed before sunset date of chapter 650, Oregon Laws 2015. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-3 Defines “district predatory animals” as bears, red foxes, gray foxes, coyotes, cougars, bobcats, minks, muskrats, river otters, raccoons, feral swine as defined by the State Department of Agriculture by rule, rabbits, rodents, and birds that are or may be destructive to agricultural crops, products, and activities. Excludes game birds, and other birds determined by the State Fish and Wildlife Commission to need protection, from the district predatory animals definition. Removes “predatory animals” definition.

BACKGROUND:

In some parts of the country, Predator Damage Control Districts (District) have been established by government entities to address farmer and rancher concerns for economic losses resulting from predation. Section 8, chapter 650, Oregon Laws 2015 authorized a pilot program which allowed, via petition, the formation of predator control districts for the purpose of funding county services to prevent, reduce, and mitigate damage to property from predatory animals. These districts have the ability to assess charges per acre or depending on the characteristics of the property, and election of the property owner. Predator control districts have been formed in Douglas and Coos Counties.

House Bill 4080 would authorize landowners who meet certain criteria to petition for formation of predator damage control district as funding mechanism to pay actual costs to county of preventing, reducing, and mitigating damage to property from predatory animals.