

Submitter: Matthew Brady

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB199

SB 199 Opposition

Chair Golden and members of the committee,

My name is Matthew Brady, I am a fifth generation sheep and timber farmer in Azalea in rural southern Douglas County. In the past year I have seen the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission vote to close a hatchery program and increase trap check intervals in spite of expert testimony by ODFW and USDA Wildlife Services staff. These capricious and ill-informed decisions by un-elected officials have created additional burdens on rural Oregonians, in particular those of us that raise animals to feed our population. It is clear that the decisions made by the Commission are not based in science, but primarily on personal opinion and emotion, with little regard to their effects on the people of this State. Giving the Commission any more authority, as SB199 will do, will only lead to more poorly conceived regulations that will drive up production costs, and drive farmers and ranchers out of business.

I cannot afford more regulation when it comes to dealing with predator conflicts. While I utilize non-lethal methods to deter predators from taking my sheep, sometimes lethal methods are the most effective and the only option. In December of 2022 I had a cougar kill two sheep, one of which was a breeding ram. The loss of that ram is a major setback in improving the growth and production of my flock of sheep, and the loss of potential offspring from his natural lifespan is between \$10-20,000. Both a coyote or bobcat conflict with my sheep could result in an equally great of loss. I can't prognosticate what kind of additional regulations the Commission will conceive of if they receive authority to further regulate predatory animals, but I do know that I cannot afford to lose more livestock if my ability to resolve predator conflicts is further restricted by the whim of political appointee Commission members.

I urge you to oppose SB199.