

Submitter: Christina Witham

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and
Water

Measure: HB2631

As Chair of the Baker County Wolf Depredation Compensation Committee, I am in support of this bill without amendments, as originally written. Wolf depredation is a constant occurrence in our county despite non-lethal measures taken in both low and high risk areas. Already this year, we experienced the ODFW confirmed death of a working dog, less than 50 feet from the ranchers home along with multiple confirmed livestock kills from that same pack.

We are asking our producers to use non-lethal measures like flashers and fladry, to range ride, keep eyes on livestock overnight and change feeding times. We suggest that they bury carcasses so as not to bait the wolves and we are currently working on a carcass removal and compost program.

Through all that we ask of our producers, all of the work that they have to perform in order to preserve their livestock against a predator that they did not want reintroduced, they continue to lose. The time spent after a loss or damage to livestock is costly in the way of labor spent in ODFW confirmations, submissions for compensation and carcass removal. The very least that our counties can do for our producers is compensate them fairly and to be honest, they receive cents on the dollar compared to the amount of loss and this results in very little incentive to go through all of that work.

I thank you for this bill and appreciate you taking my testimony into consideration. Please move this bill forward for our producers.