

Submitter: Matthew Hamilton
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB769

Dear Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Committee,
I ask you to please support and pass SB 769. The use of hounds is the only effective and accurate tool for managing cougar populations. It was banned as a State measure in 1993 through a very untruthful and radical ad campaign that persuaded Oregonians to pass the measure. Since it's passage cougar populations have grown exponentially. We have personally lost livestock and have had State contracted hounds-men come out for the problem cougars. One of my close neighbors recently stopped raising goats that she loved dearly after loosing many goats and having 5 different cougars treed and euthanized over a period of 3 years. I know many people look at livestock and hobby farm pets with little to no value since they do not have any themselves. For those of us that live outside city limits and deal with these issues everyday it is frustrating and sad to feel like our daily lives don't matter and are we not respected just because what we do for a living and where we live is so foreign to a high percentage of the Oregon population. We need the ability to manage wildlife through science using the best tools available as we do most other wildlife species. As Oregonians we should cherish the amazing beauty and respect coexisting sustainably with all native wildlife. Most people in the countryside absolutely love wildlife. Wildlife and being in nature is one of the most important reasons I farm and am so glad my wife and I are raising our young daughters (5) and (8) in the countryside of Polk County, OR near Corvallis. They're safety is one of the many reasons why I please ask you to support this bills passage. Please understand that with the passage of this bill cougar hunting will still be regulated and managed through the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Department.

Thank you for reading my testimony,
Sincerely,
Matt Hamilton