

OREGON WEST PAC

La Grande, Oregon

February 10, 2025

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Oregon State Senate,

Regarding Senate Bill 769

As both a lifelong Oregonian and someone who lives in rural NE Oregon, I have seen our state and country torn apart.

And the Urban – Rural divide has never been wider.

For many rural Oregonians, when Measure 18 passed in 1994 banning the use of hounds for hunting mountain lions... as well as other common and ethical hunting practices... many rural Oregonians saw this as an attack on their way of life by Urban Oregonians who, through the ballot box, passed an anti-hunting ballot measure.

It was widely known that Measure 18 was advanced by anti-hunting activists... through the use of graphic images and misleading information that did not accurately depict hound hunting in an effort to end a form of hunting in Oregon.

They preyed on the emotions of people who didn't understand that wildlife management should only be in the hands of professional wildlife biologists... not the general public. And to be clear, several of the state's wildlife biologists were outspoken in 1994 about their opposition to Ballot Measure 18.

And I would argue that most of the people who oppose this bill... likely oppose hunting in general... and would seek to end all big game hunting.

And let's be clear... Senate Bill 769 does not open up a free for all for hound hunters to kill every mountain lion in the state... it doesn't change the harvest quotas and management objectives set by the biologists who have been hired to manage the state's wildlife.

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Senate Bill 769 would simply allow the counties to vote on whether they should allow the use of hounds to hunt for and manage mountain lions in that county.

You see... houndsmen care deeply about wildlife populations. Especially mountain lion populations... and the vast majority of houndsmen will not kill females or immature lions. Releasing these animals promotes a healthy and long term, yet well managed, mountain lion population for Oregon.

And hound hunting doesn't always end in a kill... lions that are pursued and treed... then allowed to escape... will often leave the area. Hound hunting and pursuit seasons in the foothills and mountains surrounding our rural communities keep lions away from towns and cities, neighborhoods and household pets.

Senate Bill 769 also provides you, our State Senators, with a chance to do something that has rarely happened in Oregon for a long, long time.

You can pass a common sense bill... that will ease the divide between Rural and Urban Oregon... at least in the eyes of the rural communities that were impacted by Ballot Measure 18 over 30 years ago...

And that would go a long way in helping to repair a state that has long been divided.

PLEASE SUPPORT AND PASS SENATE BILL 769 and bring back sensible wildlife management and show Rural Oregonians that their communities and way of life matter.

Thank you,



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