

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

As an Oregonian, I strongly urge you to oppose SB 769. This bill would overturn the will of the voters, who have already shown where they stand on this issue—twice. Oregonians are opposed to the hunting of cougars with hounds and want to keep their protections in place. Hunting them with dogs is cruel, unnecessary and ineffective. Using dogs to chase, attack and tree cougars is brutal bloodsport that results in orphaned kittens, violent risk of injury and death to the dogs, and erratic migration patterns for surviving cougars. Cougars do not pose a serious threat to people. In all of North America, 24 people have been killed by cougars -- over the past 125 years. Conversely, about 100 people die every single year in hunting accidents. Fewer than 0.25 percent of cattle and 4 percent of sheep are killed by predators. There's no need for cougar hunting with hounds, but trophy hunters -- who do not have Oregon's best interests at heart, only their own -- are pushing for this. (The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife proposes allowing trophy hunters and wildlife service agents to kill an unlimited number of cougars that live within 6,200 square miles of designated "target areas," but their reasons ignore scientific facts.)