

Submitter: David Walker
On Behalf Of: Oregon United Sporting Dogs Association
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB769

I Would like to express our support of SB 769 on behalf of the members of the Oregon United Sporting Dogs Association.

We are in favor of the passage of this bill which would allow counties to make the decision on being able to responsibly pursue and hunt cougars with the use of dogs.

Ballot measure 18 which banned the practice of hunting cougars and bears with hounds was passed 31 years ago and many things have changed in that time, therefore giving the people of Oregon a chance to revisit this issue and vote on it county by county is not overturning the will of the voters. It is actually giving the voters most affected by this issue a chance to vote on it again and make their voices heard. Many of the people weighing in on this issue were not even of voting age when this law took effect, and some have since passed away. We don't wait 31 years to reelect elected officials so it certainly makes sense to have a chance to vote again on this issue.

OUSDA was formed in 1971 with the main goal and purpose to get Cougars and Bears classified and managed as big game animals. Prior to this these animals had been classified as predators with no hunting seasons and bag limits. The hound hunting community recognized this as a problem and asked for their protection to ensure they would be around for future generations. We are very supportive of proper management of these big game animals and are not in the least the blood thirsty, vicious killers as some portray us. In fact hound hunters were the first use the catch and release method and very much respect these awesome animals.

This bill would also give the ODFW biologists that we pay to manage our wildlife another tool in their toolbox to do the job that we hire them to do. Wildlife management should never be done at the ballot box and this bill would not manage the wildlife, it would just return the management back to the people we pay to do it.

OUSDA would encourage you to hold a work session on this bill and vote in favor of it and move it out of committee with a do pass recommendation.

Thank You for your time and consideration

David Walker

President

Oregon United Sporting Dogs Association