

Submitter: Veril Nelson
On Behalf Of: Oregon cattlemens Assn.
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB777

Good afternoon, Chairman Golden and members of the Natural Resources Committee. I am Veril Nelson representing the Douglas County Livestock assn., Oregon Cattlemans Assn. and am Co-Chair of the wolf committee. I am in support of Senate Bill 777. I understand this committee will be dealing with catastrophic wildfire issues. One of the answers to this issue is to have a healthy livestock industry in Oregon that harvest fine fuels which reduce catastrophic wildfires. In order to have a healthy livestock industry, adequate compensation needs to be available for wolf damage. Wolves are the most devastating predator to livestock, because they attack in packs terrorizing and killing their prey. Livestock in these situations won't leave protected areas. If they are not grazing, they are losing weight.

An example of losses common with constant attacks by wolves assuming a herd of 100 cows. Cows commonly lose 150# per head a loss of \$15,000. Those cows calves commonly are 50# lighter at a loss of another \$15,000. Additionally, 10% of cows have to be culled because of stress related abortions a loss of \$1,000 each for a total of \$10,000. If 10 calves are killed by wolves according to the Oakly study only 2 will be confirmed. This bill would only provide \$15,000 to \$18,000 in compensation. Actual losses exceed \$40,000.

The compensation for losses requested in this bill would have to be verified by a third party ie. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife or Wildlife Services. I believe if Oregonians want wolves everyone should share the cost. I live in Western part of Oregon where wolves are listed endangered, our only defense is non-lethal which has limited success of deterring wolves.

A rancher in Jackson County said he had investigations for wolf kills 8 times before one was confirmed. He questioned whether it was worth the time and effort to participate in the program. He said a year later his cows were calving in the fall. Wolves were attacking and killing nearly every night. He used fladdery, fox lights and human presents with poor results. He finally moved the cattle to California for the winter even though he had to buy hay until the pastures grew.

This should show the common losses of livestock producers suffer and that a 7 to 1 compensation of those losses doesn't cover those losses.

