

Testimony in support of SB 777-5 from Representative Bobby Levy

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee,

As a farmer, rancher, and former ODFW Commission chair, I have spent years advocating for balanced wolf management solutions. Today, alongside Senator Todd Nash, we bring you SB 777-5 —a fair and practical approach to addressing wolf impacts on rural Oregon.

My district bears nearly 97% of Oregon’s wolf population, putting a heavy burden on Eastern Oregon ranchers. These families face livestock and guardian dog losses, financial hardship, and constant stress. SB 777-5 ensures fair market compensation for losses while responsibly capping payments and removing compensation where wolf depredation is unproven.

The -5 amendment improves the base bill by:

- Increasing funds for nonlethal deterrence and livestock management from 30% to 50%.
- Allowing counties to set compensation multipliers, with caps of five times fair market value for calves, yearlings, sheep, and goats, and three times for cows, while ensuring a \$25,000 total cap.

These changes increase fairness, accountability, and local control, ensuring that funds are allocated effectively and tailored to the unique needs of each county.

This bill is not about eliminating wolves—it’s about fairness and it is a critical lifeline for the people who feed Oregon. Without it, we risk driving more ranching families out of business, weakening our state’s agricultural economy, and further deepening the urban-rural divide. Eastern Oregon has done its part in carrying the burden of wolf recovery. Now, it’s time for this Legislature to do its part and ensure that burden is not shouldered alone.

I urge you to support SB 777 and the -5 amendment to give rural Oregon the tools it needs to survive.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobby Levy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Representative Bobby Levy
House District 58