



## SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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### NEWS RELEASE

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### **Senate votes to end coyote killing competitions in Oregon**

*SB 723: Prohibits coyote hunting competitions statewide*

SALEM – Killing coyote for competition will be banned in Oregon, under a bill passed today by the Oregon Senate.

[Senate Bill 723](#) – which passed with a 17-12 vote on the Senate floor today – prohibits coyote hunting contests, competitions, tournaments or derbies for prizes or other inducements. It also requires hunters to forfeit remains of coyotes killed during prohibited events to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

“Nothing in this bill precludes the hunting of coyotes, nor does it create any impediments to farmers and ranchers protecting their livestock from depredation,” said Sen. Michael Dembrow (D-Portland), a chief co-sponsor of the bill, who carried it on the Senate floor. “It simply puts an end to a blood sport – in which prizes are given to those who can produce the greatest number of dead animals, often with premiums given to those who are able to kill the biggest – which many see as deeply antithetical to the values of ethical hunting that this Legislature has fiercely defended for many years.”

The issue came to light last year because of a contest in Harney County in which participants competed for prizes for killing the most coyotes. Judging was based on the cumulative weight of the coyotes’ dead bodies. At least five of these contests have been held in Oregon in recent years.

“Oregon’s wildlife is held and managed in the public’s trust and, as such, coyote killing contests violate the spirit and tenets of responsible stewardship, sportsmanship and respect for the public’s wildlife,” Humane Society of the United States Oregon State Director Kelly Peterson said. “Motivated by the financial rewards of killing the most or heaviest coyotes, participants are not likely to abide by the rules and values embraced by ethical sportsmen and sportswomen. Therefore, there is a compelling state interest in ending coyote killing contests to prevent animal cruelty, uphold the state’s longstanding hunting tradition of respect for the hunted, and to protect our wildlife from non-science-based, mass killings that are likely to be viewed as barbaric, cruel and wasteful to the majority of Oregonians.”

Coyotes are defined as predatory animals and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife estimates there are 300,000 in the state. They are not a protected species and coyote hunting is not regulated by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. They still can be killed on an owner’s land without a hunting permit and on public land with a permit. Currently there is no limit on the number of coyotes that can be killed by a single individual or during a single hunting contest or event.

“As a state, we should be above promoting blood sports involving any animal,” Sen. Jeff Golden (D-Rogue Valley), another chief co-sponsor of the bill, said. “The sportsmen I know in rural Oregon wouldn’t begin to support slaughtering animals by volume for nothing more than the thrill of the kill and the chance to take home some award for their den wall.”

Senate Bill 723 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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