

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Eighty-Second Session  
March 15, 2023**

The Committee on Natural Resources was called to order by Chair Lesley E. Cohen at 4:03 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15, 2023, in Room 3143 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada, and to Room 130, Greenhaw Technical Arts Building, Great Basin College, 1500 College Parkway, Elko, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda [[Exhibit A](#)], the Attendance Roster [[Exhibit B](#)], and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at [www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/82nd2023](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/82nd2023).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen, Chair  
Assemblywoman Natha C. Anderson, Vice Chair  
Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod  
Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May  
Assemblywoman Venicia Considine  
Assemblyman Rich DeLong  
Assemblywoman Bea Duran  
Assemblyman Bert Gurr  
Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen  
Assemblywoman Selena La Rue Hatch  
Assemblyman Howard Watts  
Assemblyman Toby Yurek

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

None



**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Nicolas Anthony, Committee Policy Analyst  
Connie Barlow, Committee Manager  
Nancy Davis, Committee Secretary  
Cheryl Williams, Committee Assistant

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Be-Be Adams, representing Friends of Nevada Wildlife  
Rebecca Goff, Nevada State Director, Humane Society of the United States  
Patrick Donnelly, Nevada State Director, Center for Biological Diversity  
John Hiatt, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Nick Christenson, representing Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club  
Warren Hardy, representing Nevada Conservation League; and Humane Society of the United States  
Larry Johnson, President, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife  
Rex Flowers, Director, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife  
Mel Belding, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada  
Lance Stitzel, President, Nevada Trappers Association  
Ron Stoker, Vice President, Wildlife and Habitat Improvement of Nevada  
Martin Paris, Executive Director, Nevada Cattlemen's Association  
Brian Burris, President, Wildlife and Habitat Improvement of Nevada  
Neil Channey, Vice President, Nevada Trappers Association  
Tiffany East, Commissioner, Board of Wildlife Commissioners, Department of Wildlife  
Ashton Caselli, Director, Northern Nevada Safari Club International  
Steve Walker, representing Eureka County  
Bryce Pollock, Policy Co-Chair, Nevada Chapter, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers  
Linda Linton, Private Citizen, Wellington, Nevada  
Joel Blakeslee, representing Southern Nevada Coalition for Wildlife  
Roger Heath, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada  
Gerald Lent, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada  
Mike Ryan, Director, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited  
Thomas Bentz, Private Citizen, Pahrump, Nevada  
Michael Cassiday, Director, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife  
Deni French, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada  
Naomi Duerr, Council Member, Ward 2, City of Reno  
Karen Layne, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Jeff Carlton, Private Citizen, Reno Nevada  
Davy Stix, Member, Nevada Cattlemen's Association  
Embry Drew Edwards, Private Citizen, Spring Creek, Nevada  
Pace Saxton, Private Citizen, Spring Creek, Nevada  
Robert Bentz, Private Citizen, Pahrump, Nevada  
Dave Stowater, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

George Forbush, Private Citizen, Sparks, Nevada  
Joe Gomez, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Jason Schroeder, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada

**Chair Cohen:**

[Roll was called. Rules and protocol of the Committee were reviewed.] We will be hearing two bills today. We are going to start with Assembly Bill 70.

**Assembly Bill 70: Revises provisions relating to the uses of certain fees for a game tag. (BDR 45-342)**

**Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15:**

I am glad to present Assembly Bill 70 for your consideration today. Assembly Bill 70 was recommended from the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Natural Resources. I want to talk to you a little bit about the genesis behind this and provide a little bit of background, at least from my perspective, even though I was not involved in the Legislature when the predator fee was created and when it was last modified. By way of introduction, I want to say that I have no problem with predator control in this state, including lethal removal of predators. I think predators are a real issue facing wildlife as well as other sectors of the community.

One of the things that the Department of Wildlife (NDOW) mentioned in their presentation to our Committee earlier this session, and also came up in discussions during the interim, is that the greatest issue and the greatest threat facing our wildlife overall is habitat: habitat loss to wildfire; habitat conversion due to invasive species; and habitat conditions, particularly drought. This came from an interest in making sure that all the revenue that goes to our wildlife management agencies is going to them in a way that allows them to get the biggest bang for their buck in terms of helping out our wildlife resources, particularly our game resources. There is a fee that is paid by sportsmen, including myself. Every time someone applies for a big game tag, each application includes a \$3 fee. When it was put into place, there was a lot of concern with struggling big game herd numbers. I am sure that some of you are familiar with this: the deer population, which numbered as many as 200,000 as late as the mid-eighties, is around 90,000 today—less than half. To me, there is a significant correlation with that and the decline in habitat conditions that we have seen. Not only deer, but bighorn sheep are also struggling. All of our big game species are having issues. Deer, in particular, was one of the things brought up in conversations when this fee was created, and some additional resources toward predator control would help.

In 2015, the 80 percent lethal removal requirement was added to this fee. That was a look-back that said, we have come to this point and the deer numbers have not improved, so let us put this in place. Here we are eight years later, and deer numbers have still not improved. I think this is a bigger issue that needs to be addressed.

Having sat on a county advisory board to manage wildlife, I have heard dissatisfaction from many different perspectives from many different stakeholders. When it comes to predator control and predator management programs, this dissatisfaction is where it is directed: some folks think it is too much; some folks think it is not enough. I understand that when the debate was had on the creation of this fee, some folks ardently believed that they wanted their funds to go to predator removal. I think there is value in that in different parts of the state. It just depends. In some areas, habitat conditions are the limiting factor for a wildlife population. In others, they do have habitat and predation as a significant factor in the health of those wildlife populations. I want to make sure that we can get the resources delivered in a way that provides the greatest possible benefit.

I have had a lot of conversations with folks in the days leading up to this hearing, which led to the conceptual amendment [[Exhibit C](#)]. I will speak to that as I walk you through the bill. Instead of removing the 80 percent designation and leaving it to NDOW to decide how to allocate those funds, I have come up with a proposal that allows the sportsmen to have a choice and a voice in the process. It would remove the 80 percent requirement that is currently in law. What is envisioned is that when sportsmen in the future go to apply for their big game tags, they would be able to choose whether they want to dedicate their \$3 fee toward predator control and removal, toward habitat improvement, or toward other nonpredator removal-related initiatives to help game populations. In my mind, the ultimate impact is that each sportsman gets to dedicate 100 percent of their dollars. This is instead of somebody who is upset that only 80 percent of their fee is going to lethal removal, or another sportsman, like myself, who wants less than 80 percent. This provides a choice and some direction in how that sportsman would like to see those funds spent. That is the place we have arrived at this point in time with the conceptual amendment to the bill. The language might need to be tweaked a little more to ensure we get it into the right place.

I will now walk you very briefly through the bill language, and then I will be glad to take any questions that you have. Section 1, subsection 4(b) is where the 80 percent lethal removal mandate for these funds was in place. Both in the bill and the conceptual amendment, that is removed. In the conceptual amendment [[Exhibit C](#)], you will see that all of the proposed additional language providing some guidelines for how the funds should be spent have also been removed. Instead, in section 1, subsection 1, the amendment is proposing to modify the language so that these funds that are dedicated and set aside would be directed by the applicant—the sportsman applying for tags—to go to costs related to either "(a) Developing and implementing an annual program for the management and control of predatory wildlife; or (b) Wildlife management activities relating to the protection of nonpredatory game species and the habitat of such game species."

Historically, a lot of focus was placed on big game species predator removal. Now, there are significant programs aimed at protecting sage grouse and trying to reduce predation on sage grouse; those are not big game. This will ensure that the predator removal will benefit the species most in need, but also benefit the game species that sportsmen enjoy pursuing. This will not apply to predator control for the benefit of all wildlife species, but it will apply to the benefit of all game species in the state under the proposed amendment. The amendment is

also removing section 1, subsection 1(c) related to research. The concept of this amendment is to provide sportsmen a choice. When the sportsman applies for a tag and pays that fee, he would be able to check a box indicating that he wants his \$3 to go toward predator removal, all lethal removal, or to game management and habitat improvement. That concludes my presentation, and I am glad to answer questions that the Committee has.

**Assemblywoman Duran:**

Being new to this Committee, I am not familiar with this. How was the money spent prior, and did that work in any way, other than the problems with the way it was being spent?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

For many of these tricky wildlife management issues, the answer depends on who you ask. After this fee was implemented, there were predator management plans put into place. Funding was used to do a variety of predator control and management, some of which might have been nonlethal, such as hazing and other things, to try and address predator populations, but there was certainly lethal predator removal that was happening. I alluded to that in my opening remarks: there has been almost constant critique of how those funds were spent. There were concerns that too much was being spent on education about predator issues, on research, or on other things and it was not actually going out into the field to remove predators. That was one piece of it. Even after this was put in place, there is still concern among sportsmen that the projects picked and the areas where projects are done or not done is being seen by some as not strategic or appropriate. That is my best attempt at answering your question. We can probably get some additional background, both legislative as well as from NDOW, around how these things happened prior to 2015 and how they have happened moving forward. There was an interest in making sure that more resources from this fee went into all of the lethal removal that happened before 2015. It has still not led to satisfaction, even among sportsmen, about how those projects get carried out.

**Assemblywoman Duran:**

Was there a board or commission created for making decisions on how to best spend this money, or is it just one certain group?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

The Department of Wildlife spends these funds. There is a predator management plan that was created and was approved by the Board of Wildlife Commissioners, Department of Wildlife. There is a report compiled every year on the outcomes of those projects, directing a lot of how these funds are spent. Also, from some of the amendments that have been made in the past, there is the State Predatory Animal and Rodent Committee, which is another body that is involved in forming some of those decisions and how those decisions are made. Ultimately, they are carried out by NDOW. Currently, NDOW puts together a plan and proposal, it gets reviewed, there are questions asked, and ultimately that gets approved by the Board of Wildlife Commissioners for NDOW to carry out.

**Assemblywoman Hansen:**

With the amendment [[Exhibit C](#)], you said when the applicant fills out his hunting application, he can pick either predator control or habitat. What percentage of those funds would go to lethal predator control?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Right now, that is not specified. I am open to some additional conversations about that. If someone wants all their funds to go to lethal removal, if that is what they pick, I would be open to that.

**Assemblywoman Hansen:**

Just to clarify, we are not touching lethal control. That is not being removed from the discussion and is still a tool that NDOW can use.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

That is correct. One thing I want to make clear is at no point was lethal removal ever envisioned as being removed as a tool, even under the original language of the bill. The original version wanted to provide flexibility. Wherever lethal removal made sense, do that. If it is another type of predator control that is nonlethal, do that. If habitat work makes sense, do that. Under this proposal, it is letting somebody choose. Again, I am open to giving the option of lethal predator control, and I am open to figuring out the details of the language for that section as we look at potentially making this change. If the sportsman wants the fee to go to habitat, he can choose that. Lethal removal is envisioned as always being on the table as a predator control tool.

**Assemblywoman Hansen:**

This has been before the Commission. For those who do not know, we have a Board of Wildlife Commissioners. These are appointed positions from all areas of the state and, really dialed into wildlife issues. It is a very good forum to deal with these kinds of issues. This has failed before the Commission by a majority; I think only one member was in support. I am wondering why it comes here when we have a Commission that has vetted it pretty thoroughly. What was the genesis to bring it here?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I am not exactly sure what you are referring to. I know the Commission just took a vote as far as their position on this bill as originally written, and it was in opposition. I believe someone from the Commission may be calling in to provide some details as to why they took that position. I know there was a lot of concern that the bill as written would have eliminated the ability to do predator control for the benefit of sage grouse and is one of the things that I incorporated into the conceptual amendment to address. As far as something outside of that, in terms of looking at this, the Commission reviews and approves the predator management plan. They have to do that within a statutory framework. Since the 80 percent was put in place, they can only make decisions within that framework, just to be clear.

**Chair Cohen:**

The 80 percent was done in 2015 by this body, correct?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

That is correct.

**Assemblyman Gurr:**

I think you have answered my biggest problem with this bill by getting sportsmen involved again. Sportsmen put this in place, asked for it on themselves, and they have been paying that fee for 20-plus years; that was my biggest hang up. If you put it this way, I do not have as big a problem with it, but I would like to talk more offline. Also, do you know how much money is in the fund now?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I do not recall. I think NDOW is available to answer that. They do not have a position on the bill, but I think they are available to come up and answer any questions that you may have.

**Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:**

It sounds like, from both the presentation today and meetings I have had in my office, that many stakeholders felt like they were not really having a say in the process and the plans that were being developed. It seems you are trying to give them more of a say with this option. Can you speak to the ways that this would change the stakeholder engagement? What about the process may change so that they feel more ownership over the way their fees are being used?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

This current proposal with the conceptual amendment does not change anything. Already in statute, this requires some consultation and some engagement with different groups. The current practice is that a plan is developed, approved by the Commission, and carried out by the Department. Through the Board of Wildlife Commissioners' process, there is also participation from every county's advisory board to manage wildlife. There is a stakeholder engagement process built into how many of these programs are managed. Trying to solve for why there is still some dissatisfaction with the end product on a recurring basis, this does not contemplate a solution for that, but it does preserve all of the existing stakeholder engagement that exists now. In my opinion, this adds more by allowing the sportsmen to decide where they think their funds are going to do the best for the species that they are interested in pursuing.

**Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:**

If most of the sportsmen choose "A" and there is almost nothing in the "B" fund, would those funds be protected and separate, or would they be able to dip into one another?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Currently, these funds have to be allocated and budgeted separately. There is a running tally and the Department will be able to provide for you what the amount in that fund is. Since 2015, the math equation has been put into place that 80 percent of that has to be used on lethal removal projects. The way I envision this with the conceptual amendment is that moving forward, sportsmen would check a box and it would be allocated. It would be set aside in a fund. If 90 percent of the applications choose predator control, then 90 percent of those dollars that come in during that season need to go to that purpose. For the 10 percent who chose habitat, it would go to that fund.

**Assemblyman DeLong:**

This is probably a minor point, but if we create the option for someone to check one of two boxes, there will be people who check no boxes and people who check both boxes. What do we do about that?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I think it is important that we make sure we get the programming right. Having designed some surveys myself, I know that sometimes you put the check box, but you meant to do the little radio dial where you can only pick one. We have to make sure that there is a "check only one of these before you proceed." There is still the ability to do some stuff analog, but we have a fantastic system, very adaptive online for processing big game applications. I think that both the system and the sportsmen, if we design it right, are savvy enough to go through that. I know when I am going through and trying to get all my points, I have to do the same thing a lot of times, and I am confident that we can figure out a way to make it work pretty easily.

**Assemblyman Yurek:**

Thank you, Assemblyman, for once again filling my inbox with tons of emails on the issues that you bring. I always try to look for a theme of what is going on with concerns or pros and cons. It seems with this amendment, you have addressed in large part the concerns that were communicated to me and my colleague, Assemblyman Gurr. The big issue is, people felt like this was a contract: we wanted it, we put it in, and there it is. Addressing this in this new way is going to resolve some of that. Also tagging onto Assemblyman Gurr's concern earlier, and I apologize for my ignorance, but I do not know if these funds roll over year to year. Whatever is in the fund currently, what would be the plan for using those funds that were appropriated at 80 percent and 20 percent? Would those funds be used consistent with what all of my constituents have initially paid? Will this be done on a moving-forward basis?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

First, as it relates to your inbox, you are welcome. As it relates to the vision for this moving forward, particularly with the bill as written, that is a great question. Probably it could have either been done on a going-forward basis or a look-back basis to take that wall down, so to speak. This is new framework for how the fund would operate, and I would see that being implemented on a going-forward basis. I am happy to work on any adjustments to that



effect. We are not going to send out emails to everyone and have them do checkboxes for money that is already in there. There are funds that remain. When the last change was made in 2015, there were pre-2015 funds that were more flexible and post-2015 funds that had to be managed within the new statutory framework. I would imagine something similar, where anything that has come in prior to this legislation taking effect would follow those rules, and this would be for any funds coming in afterward.

**Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod:**

I think the amendment is great. What happens if a sportsman wants to pick both funds and split it half and half? Also, when I read this bill, I did assume that it was for big game and now I am trying to wrap my head around what other game looks like, such as waterfowl. Is that what we are talking about? Could you extrapolate on that?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

This is assessed on each application. Theoretically, if you put in four applications during the season, those checkboxes would come up each time, and you could choose to put some here and some there; 50 percent for one fund and 50 percent for the other might be a possibility for an individual. Moving on to your other question about game species, we have a wide variety of game species and I am probably going to forget some off the top of my head. We have big game, including deer, elk, and bighorn sheep. We have upland game, which are birds that are not waterfowl. Chukar is the one that immediately comes to mind, also sage grouse. Even though we are doing a lot of management work with sage grouse, there is a season on sage grouse. Fish are also game. There is small game as well: certain types of rabbits and other things fit into that category. That is just to give you a sense of some of the different categories that game species fit into.

**Chair Cohen:**

Do we have any understanding why the deer numbers have not gone up in the last eight years?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

No.

**Chair Cohen:**

Seeing no other questions, I will move on to those wishing to provide testimony in support. We will start in Carson City, then go to Elko, then Las Vegas, the phones, and back to Carson City, if we have time.

**Be-Be Adams, representing Friends of Nevada Wildlife:**

I represent a small group of Nevadans who are wildlife advocates, and we support this bill and appreciate Assemblyman Watts bringing it to you. I had a wonderful testimony, but with the amendment [[Exhibit C](#)], it really does not work. We have not talked a lot about that amendment, but from what I gather, we are in support.

**Rebecca Goff, Nevada State Director, Humane Society of the United States:**

We support this bill. [Written testimony was also provided [Exhibit D.](#)]

**Patrick Donnelly, Nevada State Director, Center for Biological Diversity:**

I think there are a couple of issues here and we are not tackling all of them. There is the issue of predator management and the sort of flawed idea that killing coyotes creates deer and that is just flawed. Then there is the issue of how NDOW spends this money. Right now, NDOW's hands are tied on how they spend the money. If you take a look at the predator management plan, you are not necessarily going to see that it is the most effective thing with killing as many predators as possible. Actually, they spend a lot of those funds on other things that sort of relate to lethal management but are not directly lethal management. It seems at times, NDOW's hands are tied, and they are not exactly sure what to do with the money. The bill, as originally proposed, would have addressed that by freeing NDOW's hands and letting them spend the money for projects that would benefit big game. The amendment, I think, is an incremental progress. I would have given you my full-throated support on the original bill and I would say we are also supportive of the amendment, but it is sort of incremental progress inasmuch as it does not then have NDOW's hands completely tied to an arbitrary number for how much of that money will be spent on lethal management. In that way, it is incremental progress and we support the amended bill.

**Chair Cohen:**

Is there anyone in Elko in support? Seeing no one, I will go to Las Vegas.

**John Hiatt, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I support the bill as originally written, but I could also live with the conceptual amendment. I think if they are going to do that, there is a problem, and that is most sportsmen are really not familiar with the predator management plan and exactly what the money would be spent on. If you are going to do that, there needs to be money made available so that NDOW can inform the people paying the money about what projects the money will go for, what specific predator control projects, and what specific habitat improvement projects.

**Nick Christenson, representing Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club:**

On behalf of the Sierra Club and our members and supporters statewide, I am speaking in support of Assembly Bill 70. Currently, the \$3 hunting game tag fee collects about a million dollars each year in an attempt to increase the number of deer, sage grouse, bighorn sheep, and other species. By law, 80 percent of this fee has to be used to lethally remove predators. This is required whether these predators are the cause of the population declines of the game animals. Sierra Club supports A.B. 70 because the lethal mandate is not necessary and is actually harmful. We should allow NDOW the flexibility for its biologists to use the most scientifically proven methods to protect the game species along with the predators and all of their ecosystem. This may include the use of guzzlers, seeding sage grouse, or other habitat enhancing programs to increase deer, sage grouse, and bighorn sheep populations. Of note, since the 80 percent lethal mandate has been in place, deer and sage grouse populations remain in steep decline. Obviously, the current program has not done as intended and only serves to remove predators that our ecosystems depend on for balance. Please allow NDOW

to use the best science to improve the populations of game species, predators, and their habitats. We agree with Mr. Donnelly that we support the bill without the amendment but would also support it with the amendment although that is not preferable.

**Chair Cohen:**

Seeing no one else in Las Vegas, is there anyone on the phone? Hearing no one, I will go back to support in Carson City.

**Warren Hardy, representing Nevada Conservation League:**

We do support the amendment as drafted and as amended to give NDOW the flexibility they need to address these programs. We appreciate Assemblyman Watts for bringing this forward.

[Written testimony in support of A.B. 70 provided but not mentioned include [Exhibit E](#), [Exhibit F](#), [Exhibit G](#), [Exhibit H](#), [Exhibit I](#), and [Exhibit J](#).]

**Chair Cohen:**

I will now move on to those in opposition in Carson City.

**Larry Johnson, President, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife:**

We signed up in opposition of this bill in its original form. I want to thank Assemblyman Watts for meeting with us last week and I think that probably precipitated his amendment. Without seeing the exact wording of that amendment, we have more questions than we have answers. One of the things that this Committee needs to be aware of is that predator populations are in an overabundance in Nevada and have devastating effects on our wildlife resources. For example, it is well documented that 50 years ago in western Nevada, we did not have mountain lions. That is documented by textbooks, biologists, outdoorsmen, and so forth. Today, we have an absolute abundance. I had a mountain lion travel 400 yards from my house last night. My neighbor cautioned me against my normal cross-country run saying he has seen an abundance of large lion tracks. Today deer and chukar hunters commonly see lions in the fields. Similarly, there is an abundance of coyotes. I just got off the phone with a professional trapper and animal damage control. He stated to us that in the deep snows in northern Nevada, such as we are having this year, the coyotes are butchering our deer herds. We need more, not less predator control. With that being said, I want to meet with Assemblyman Watts on his proposals. When the box for predator control is checked on your application, if 100 percent of that money goes to lethal control, we have room to talk.

**Chair Cohen:**

If you are interested in the amendment and want to let us know that you are going to talk to Assemblyman Watts, please feel free to testify in opposition, but let us know that.

**Rex Flowers, Director, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife:**

I came here opposed to the bill as written. With this new amendment, I too would like to see what the details are before I pass judgment.

**Mel Belding, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:**

I am a lifelong resident of Nevada. Thank you for allowing my testimony. Predator control, if properly applied, can be very effective at protecting our big game animals and sage grouse. Without predator projects, the most successful bighorn sheep reintroduction anywhere in the world, which is what happened here in Nevada, would probably have failed. The mule deer in Unit 014 in the Granite Range in Washoe County has suffered miserably since ending the predator project there. I oppose the bill. I will look at the amendment. I ask you to oppose it also.

**Chair Cohen:**

We will go to Elko for those wishing to testify in opposition.

**Lance Stitzel, President, Nevada Trappers Association:**

On behalf of the seven people in this room, we oppose this bill.

**Chair Cohen:**

Thank you, sir. Does anyone else in Elko want to speak, or are you speaking for everyone?

**Lance Stitzel:**

I am speaking for everyone.

**Chair Cohen:**

We will go to Las Vegas for those in opposition.

**Ron Stoker, Vice President, Wildlife and Habitat Improvement of Nevada:**

We would be interested in seeing the amendment to this bill, but at this time we will have to oppose it because there is no indication that if we do check the predator box, that 80 percent control will be maintained at a minimum. That concerns me. I have a family of seven and we all put in for tags for multiple species and that is money that my family pays. When we pay that money, we expect it to go to a cause which we believe in. It has been said that predator control is not effective. The deer herds in Utah have not drastically changed as much, but they have a very effective predator management control where they actually pay a bounty on coyotes. That has been very effective and is paid through the Department of Wildlife. The argument of predator control not being effective does not seem to be a real thing.

**Chair Cohen:**

The amendment [[Exhibit C](#)] is up on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS), and we have copies out on the table. Is there anyone on the phone in opposition to Assembly Bill 70?

**Martin Paris, Executive Director, Nevada Cattlemen's Association:**

The Nevada Cattlemen's Association respectfully opposes A.B. 70 and the intent to open up critical predator control funding administered through the Department of Wildlife. While habitat restoration work is just as critical as predator control, there are several different

funding sources available to do that type of work through other state and federal funding sources. The current 80 percent allocation guarantees that funding will be used to do critical predator management. Also, a substantial amount of this funding goes to United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services to conduct their predator control efforts. I have not witnessed a baby fawn or elk calf being born, but I imagine that Nevada's predators, namely ravens, crows, and coyotes wreak just as much havoc on our big game wildlife populations as they do on our cattle and sheep herds. Ravens and crows also continue to be one of the biggest reasons for our declining sage grouse populations. We need all of the available tools in the toolbox to address our ongoing predator issues. There is little data offered to substantiate why wildlife populations continue to decline. With that said, we were not aware of the conceptual amendment [\[Exhibit C\]](#) ahead of this afternoon's meeting and would like to work with the bill sponsor on a potential solution.

**Brian Burris, President, Wildlife and Habitat Improvement of Nevada:**

Wildlife and Habitat Improvement of Nevada is the largest all species conservation organization in Nevada. I am rising today in opposition to A.B. 70 as originally written. Unlike the other testifiers, I am also in opposition of this as it would be amended. I think the amendment opens this up to where we could actually have zero lethal control, if everyone put their dollars into the conservation and habitat management side. I will tell you that our organization does a ton of habitat management. That is our key goal and our key function. What we are seeing is declines in population of not only mule deer and all the other big game species, but on the waterfowl side. Predators are a very big part of the problem we have with the wildlife conservation side and making sure we manage our duck populations as well. This amendment as written would pose undue risks for wildlife, even more than the reduction of the 80 percent. The sportsmen have asked for 80 percent before this process, and I would ask that you vote no on A.B. 70, even as amended.

**Neil Channey, Vice President, Nevada Trappers Association:**

I am in Panaca in a room with 50 other people, and we oppose this bill.

**Tiffany East, Commissioner, Board of Wildlife Commissioners, Department of Wildlife:**

The Board of Wildlife Commissioners opposes A.B. 70 as written as we have concerns with NDOW's ability to manage ravens and coyotes who prey on sage grouse and our desert tortoises under the proposed bill. On average, the \$3 predator fee generates approximately \$900,000 annually. A portion of the money goes to administrative roles, as you have heard. The current predator plan involves approximately 13 projects of which 6 are lethal removal to protect sage grouse and big game species. I do not see the amendment on NELIS, but I will tell you that I appreciate the conversation I had today with Assemblyman Watts. I will take the conceptual amendment to the next commission meeting in April to discuss it. I just want to mention also, one of your members asked about the effect of the decline of mule deer. While I am not a biologist, over the years we have heard that there are a number of factors that affect our mule deer. Those include drought, wildfire, and predators. The predators do not just affect our mule deer, but they also affect other sagebrush obligates. Thank you so much for your time.

**Chair Cohen:**

Hearing no more callers, we will go back to Carson City for those in opposition.

**Ashton Caselli, Director, Northern Nevada Safari Club International:**

Coyotes, mountain lions, and ravens are common predators in Nevada. While predators are important to a balanced ecosystem in some areas of the state, these predators endanger the establishment of new wildlife populations or contribute to the decline of existing species. Wildlife damage management can be effective when well-defined predator problems are identified. When predators endanger wildlife, populations are threatened with declining species. Lethal controls can be implemented to manage those problems.

The goal of NDOW's predator management program is to conduct projects consistent with the mission to preserve, protect, manage, and restore wildlife and its habitat for the aesthetic, scientific, educational, recreational, and economic benefits of Nevada and the United States. *Nevada Revised Statutes* 502.253 authorizes the collection of a \$3 fee for each big game tag application. Management activities occur under the guidance of the Board of Wildlife Commissioners and provide that unspent monies remain in the wildlife fund account and do not revert to the State General Fund. In 2015, Assembly Bill 78 of the 78th Session, was adopted, amending that statute to read that the Department, "Shall not adopt any program for the management and control of predatory wildlife developed pursuant to this section that provides for the expenditure of less than 80 percent of the amount of money collected." In fiscal year 2021 predator fee revenues totaled \$858,601, and NDOW expected to allocate about \$686,000 on lethal removal of predators. Proposed predator projects for fiscal year 2023 includes \$759,000 for lethal predatory management. The numbers support more funds for control of predators, not less money or diverting the funds somewhere else. Last reminder of policy 22, which is policy regarding the introduction and reintroduction of wildlife into the state; the Department of Wildlife is required to administer sound wildlife management and restoration programs including private transplants. The Department will determine if predator control is necessary. If it is determined that predator control is necessary, it will be accomplished before and after transplants can occur. No on A.B. 70.

**Steve Walker, representing Eureka County:**

Eureka County opposed the original bill as it is with the county policy and what sportsmen agreed to when the predator fee was set. The conceptual amendment has not been reviewed by Eureka County staff, but in their lobbyist's opinion, could change their position. We are more than willing, as always, to work with Assemblyman Watts.

**Bryce Pollock, Policy Co-Chair, Nevada Chapter, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers:**

My original testimony was to testify in support of predator management, its effectiveness, and the necessity to keep its funding. The numbers are well-documented, not just for big game, but also for small game. The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) did a really interesting study where they watched the population of 80 porcupines in a very small region nearly go extinct from 80 animals to less than 5 in just three years. We have a lot of factors at play now that affect populations like drought, overpopulated feral species, you name it, including human development. Predator population is something that needs to be a tool that

we have at the ready and is well-funded at all times. The amendment is an interesting one. My concern with the original argument was that NDOW needs to be able to use this fund in the best scientifically possible way. I do not know how throwing it to popular vote and letting the sportsmen choose would solve that problem, though I do support sportsmen being able to choose where their dollars go. I have to review that amendment a little closer. As the bill was originally written, I urge you to please vote against A.B. 70.

**Linda Linton, Private Citizen, Wellington, Nevada:**

Thank you for hearing my testimony in opposition. As everyone else has stated, if I look at the conceptual amendment, I may change my mind, but it may be doubtful. As it is, the lethal management of predators seems not to be working because it is not being used. I have talked to wildlife biologists in my region where I live. I have called them about three mountain lion kills that occurred within five minutes from my home, and they advised me that they did not have enough funding to come out to the area. I have also personally witnessed coyotes taking out of the womb the fawn of the doe and that of an antelope. I also called about that. Mine was not the only call they received, and they said they could not do anything about it. I think the problem is managing the funds, not actually boots on the ground. The other problem we are talking about, habitat, et cetera, migration quarters are not being used. Developers are taking some of the land that the deer are using for bitterbrush, for example, and destroying it. The Department of Wildlife is not talking to the city planning commission at the time saying that this is going to affect the major deer population in this area. There are a lot of other efforts that could be used. Thank you.

**Joel Blakeslee, representing Southern Nevada Coalition for Wildlife:**

The people who I represent told me to oppose this bill. I will talk to them about the amendment and see what their thoughts are on that as we go forward. As far as predator management goes, it is something that is necessary. I was here when this first happened, so I will just give you a little history really quick. There was not any talk about lethal management when this bill went through. It was just assumed that was going to happen. The way I remember it, sage grouse were not even on the radar screen back then. This was paid for by big game hunters for big game management. We have amended it down the road and we have added sage grouse. We have done this, and we have done the rest of it. The statement was made that maybe lethal management does not work because the deer herds have not responded in the time we have been doing this. That begs the argument of whether habitat works because apparently nothing is working, seeing how the deer are dropping. That is my two cents, and I will just leave it at that.

**Roger Heath, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:**

I received my bachelor of science degree from UNR and I am now a retired mechanical engineer. I have lived and hunted in Nevada for over 55 years. I have been involved in wildlife conservation as the northern vice president and newspaper editor of the Nevada Wildlife Federation; chairman of the Carson City Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife; and president of the Ormsby Sportsmen's Association. I am opposed to A.B. 70.

Many sessions ago, I remember NDOW being asked by the Legislature to manage deer and big game like a business. As an example, productive cattle ranchers maximize their herd population to the market demand. Specifically, one management technique cattlemen use is to remove predators that impact the herd population. Shortly after this legislative request for NDOW to manage game herds to meet hunter demand, the Legislature passed a bill that provided the money from a special additional big game tag fee to manage predators. This money could have been used to control predators to level populations and prevent large predator peaking when game population is growing. Other than recently transplanted bighorn sheep, NDOW has been reluctant to control predation near known fawning areas, wintering areas, and when predator population near major big game herds is beginning to peak. Hunters know their demand will not totally be satisfied with predator control, but NDOW has not taken the steps, provided training, or made the effort to improve big game populations using predator control. I am still optimistic that changes to manage wildlife by managing both prey and predator can be optimized.

I believe Aldo Leopold's conservation premise that using hunting as an acceptable method of controlling predator and game populations can be successful. Assembly Bill 70 sends the wrong message for game management and for hunters in Nevada. I ask the Committee to please reject A.B. 70. I thank the Committee for your attention to my concerns.

**Gerald Lent, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:**

I have lived in Nevada for over 80 years and graduated from UNR with a biology degree. I have written books on wildlife and been involved in wildlife conservation for over 60 years. I am past chairman of Nevada's Board of Wildlife Commissioners, appointed by the governor. I was one of the original sponsors of this \$3 predator bill in 2001. Many years ago, the majority of sportsmen in the state wanted to maintain populations of game animals in the state, which this bill does. Game animals are managed by hunters per quotas and areas. Many years ago, there were minimum quotas and anyone could hunt in Nevada. As population in this state increased, we had to put quotas on wildlife to protect the populations. We need to manage nongame animals the same way. If we do not, one species will overtake all others and we will lose populations of certain animals. We have to manage all animal population in the state, both game and nongame.

In 2001, Assembly Bill 291 of the 71st Session was passed which mandated a fee of \$3 for programs for the management and control of injurious predatory wildlife to be charged for processing each game application. These fees were to protect game populations from ravens, lions, and coyotes creating a symbiotic relationship. Symbiosis is the art of living together. Eighty percent mandatory utilization was added a few years later with Assembly Bill 78 of the 78th Session because over \$500,000 of these funds produced annually were not being used the way the law implied them to be. They were used to buy computers, uniforms, file cabinets, attending out-of-state meetings, and did not put projects on the ground to protect wildlife, which was the purpose of the bill.



One might ask why some biologists in other states have a viable and very successful program to protect their wildlife. Everyone is a product of their training and not all wildlife management schools teach active and successful predation control, even though it is a recognized principle of wildlife management. States like Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and California all have successful predator programs. You cannot just manage one part of wildlife and not the other. The current predator fee provides funds to do that. This bill gives NDOW the authority to not do this. I urge this Committee not to pass A.B. 70 because as chairman of the Wildlife Commission, we had many successful projects for taking game animals in Nevada with the way it currently is.

**Mike Ryan, Director, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited:**

We are in opposition to this bill also. We would like to see it stay as it is currently written. I will take the proposed conceptual amendment back to our board for future consideration. Thank you.

**Thomas Bentz, Private Citizen, Pahrump, Nevada:**

I was born in the state of Nevada in 1960. I have lived here my entire life. I have been a lifelong member here of the wildlife community itself, not just the people in the state of Nevada. I watched my state turn into something that is hard to recognize because of the growth. I can tell you that growth itself is one of the biggest problems our wildlife face. I live in Pahrump, which used to be a small community outside of Las Vegas. It took an hour to go from Las Vegas to Pahrump and back took another hour. You could see wildlife the entire time.

The problem that we are having with the predation that is being talked about today is that coyotes can feed easily in Las Vegas and in Pahrump and do so every day. The prey they feed on include kangaroo mice, snakes, and lizards. All the stuff that coyotes feed on do not have that opportunity. During the drought, they have to suffer and their numbers drop. If we take away the ability for the Department or anyone to control predators, then we take away the ability to sanction those specific groups that are causing all the detriment. Instead of thinking it was a deer or a coyote, keep the deer alive. That is not the concept here. The concept is when an overpopulated group of coyotes start causing trouble, we should be able to reduce that number, lethally, so that all species are protected by our action. That money should be dedicated. I am totally opposed to A.B. 70, even in its amended form. Thank you for your time.

[Written testimony in opposition to A.B. 70 provided but not mentioned include [Exhibit K](#) and [Exhibit L](#).]

**Chair Cohen:**

Do we have anyone in neutral in Carson City?

**Michael Cassiday, Director, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife:**

I belong to many hunting organizations, and I generally strongly support the people that are in opposition to this, but I do not know enough at this time and a whole mess of stuff has

been dumped on the plate. I really want to understand it. I am probably going to come out in support of it if it is 90 percent now. If all the hunters vote 80 percent, 75 percent, 90 percent, whatever, for predator control, it follows what the hunters want. If there is some trick or gimmick in it, and it does not follow what the hunters or sportsmen want, I will be opposed to it. I am willing to sit back and listen at this point and remain neutral. Thank you for letting me testify.

**Deni French, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:**

As neutral, I think I would like to add a suggestion. Science is really important. Everything that has been brought up today is very important. I do not hear much about the DNA decline in the health. When trophy hunting, you take the biggest, the strongest, and the most handsome animals. That depletes the gene pool that helps support herds of deer and otherwise. There is also a factor right now of a health issue that deer are going through that is brought on by major differences in the weather, circumstances of availability of food, water, and correct environments. I think that those things have to be added into this. I understand trophy hunting. I understand hunting for food. I am not so inclined to think for trophies and I would like to have the DNA decline in the gene pool and the strength of herds to be considered. I am neutral on the fact, and I am appreciative of the fees that do help go to the proper balance keeping. I do think that the health of the deer and such now are in decline and are having issues that need support. I appreciate that. I am in neutral and I would like you to consider my additional suggestion of thought. Thank you.

**Chair Cohen:**

Thank you, Mr. French. We hope you enjoyed Veterans Day here at the Legislature. I hope all the veterans here today enjoyed Veterans Day at the Legislature. Is there anyone else in neutral in Carson City? Seeing no one, is there anyone in Elko or Las Vegas? Seeing no one, is there anyone on the phone? Hearing no one, would the sponsor like to make closing remarks?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I really appreciate all of the thoughtful comments, feedback, and respectful dialogue among all of those testifying on the bill, in support, opposition, and neutral. There are a couple of things that I just wanted to highlight in closing. One is the importance of resourcing this work. The Department needs more resources. When you talk about half of our habitat being degraded from wildfire, invasive species, et cetera, that is a tremendous issue and it requires a tremendous amount of work, not just from NDOW, but from a whole host of agencies and entities to address.

We certainly need more resources to address interactions and incidents on the urban-wildlife interface. We have coyotes and other predators that are entering into urban areas, going after people's pets, and all kinds of things. We need resources to be able to address some of those calls and concerns that were brought up in some of the testimony. I am hoping that we can get the Recovering America's Wildlife Act passed in Congress, which would provide a huge infusion of resources to do additional wildlife management techniques.

When it comes to having science decide, I think that is what I would ultimately like to see. I think you have gotten a little bit of additional history and context and how even with where we are at now, there is not total satisfaction. Part of that is a resource issue; part of it is just an ongoing debate about what is going to be the most effective tactic to address some of the issues that we see. Coming back to this issue of the science versus the sportsmen's choice, when I brought this forward, I wanted to make sure that the Department could do whatever it felt was going to be in the best interest of the natural resources, our wildlife resources in this state. I heard a lot of concerns, the same concerns that you heard about the negotiations and the contract that has been made with sportsmen. Eighty percent lethal requirement is not scientifically based. Neither is the proposal in this conceptual amendment [[Exhibit C](#)]. The one thing that gives me some comfort with this is that NDOW does have other sources of revenue that they can use flexibly. I think they need more resources to carry out their statutory charge. My hope is that this allows us to strike some balance on this issue between allowing sportsmen to decide what they want to have done for the biggest benefit of wildlife. The Department of Wildlife can then take other funds, which they could before this was put into place. The history of this is they could do predator management, predator control, and lethal removal before this was ever put into place. The goal was to create a dedicated funding source. This will still allow sportsmen to dedicate. You have heard where many sportsmen are and their interests and concerns. This would allow this contract to continue to be honored. My hope is that the Department will have the resources it needs to carry out all of its activities in the way that is going to provide the greatest benefit to the state. I appreciate a lot of the comments made by representatives of different sportsmen's groups, and the conversations that we have had about this issue. I look forward to following up with them to discuss this proposed conceptual amendment and potentially refine the language further before bringing it back for your consideration. Thank you very much for the time.

**Chair Cohen:**

With that, I will close the hearing on A.B. 70 and open the hearing on Assembly Bill 102.

**Assembly Bill 102: Prohibits certain competitions in which certain animals are taken.**  
**(BDR 45-128)**

**Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15:**

I am glad to present Assembly Bill 102 for your consideration today, which would ban certain wildlife killing contests within the state of Nevada. I want to preface this by saying that predator control is necessary. It is necessary not only to protect wildlife, it is necessary to protect livestock, it is necessary to protect our communities, and that urban-wildland interface. That is not the issue here. What we have seen, though, is that certain unprotected species, coyotes in particular but others as well, are seen as nuisances. There have been contests put together that emphasize racking up the largest number of kills in an area within a given amount of time, rewards for biggest creature taken during the competition, et cetera. I believe it is a complicated ethical issue. It is also one that there is growing public concern with. Many of the neighboring states around Nevada, both red states and blue states, have actually taken action to end this practice.

At a high level, the charge of the state is to manage all of the wildlife for all of the people in the state. As a sportsman, it is important that we continue to make sure that our wildlife management practices and the practices of sportsmen are done in an ethical way. We entered the era of regulated hunting, fishing, trapping, et cetera, after extricating certain species and putting others to the brink through massive hunting, sometimes for food, sometimes for commerce, sometimes just to remove it as a resource, either because it was a nuisance or because it was a benefit to rival populations. We transitioned into a different model, one that recognizes the need for humans to be involved in the management of wildlife, to balance those different wildlife populations, and to instill some regulations to protect the resources and instill some ethics in how some of those practices are carried out.

We have heard a little bit already about coyote management, for example. The populations are extremely resilient. These contests do not really have a major impact either way. How they are put together is not in consultation with biologists about what the impact is going to be. They may make some small impact in the short term, but long term, they really do not. These contests are not something that is putting the coyote population at risk. They are also not necessarily delivering substantial benefits. The way that these are carried out, with an emphasis on the mass taking of animals, is something that has become an issue of growing concern. The concern is one I share: mass killing of animals in a tight time period devalues the value of life of even problem animals. That is something that we should always take very seriously. These are not fishing derbies and these are not big buck contests. Those species are regulated. When we talk about big game competitive lotteries, there are season regulations and limits on how many tags go out. Fishing has bag limits, et cetera. These are separate and this proposal does not envision touching any of those other things. This bill is for those unprotected species, and due to the fact that they can be nuisances, they should be able to be legally removed without needing a hunting license, without having limits by season, by area, et cetera.

Some of these contests have pretty substantial cash prizes. At times in certain areas, that has even incentivized some additional unethical behavior, such as weighing down a coyote carcass with rocks to try and get it to weigh the most in a contest, for example.

All that this bill seeks to do is address the issue of these contests. It would not change the unprotected status of these animals or reduce the ability to legally remove them under any circumstances. It would not prevent landowners from lethally removing any pest animal. It would not have any impact on those fishing tournaments or those big buck contests. This has been addressed in Arizona, California, Colorado, Massachusetts, Vermont, Washington, and Oregon so far. This issue came before our Board of Wildlife Commissioners, Department of Wildlife recently; it failed on a 5-4 vote. It was a very contentious issue and I felt that it was one that was appropriate to bring to the Legislature for additional consideration. I think the fact that the Board, which includes a majority of sportsmen, fall on opposite sides of the issue shows you how contested it is. There are many sportsmen who feel that these types of contests are not aligned with the hunting that we normally do and, frankly, can provide a negative image of most of the sporting activities that most sportsmen conduct within the state.

The former Director of the Department of Wildlife, Tony Wasley, said [page 1, [Exhibit M](#)]:

Killing contests are ethically upsetting for most members of society. Hunting should not be a competition as such behavior ultimately degrades the value of life and undermines respect for the animals being hunted . . . . The North American Model that we often prop up as the anchor of modern wildlife management disapproves of, I quote, 'frivolous killing.' . . . as a hunter I hope to defend a deeper and more profound sense of hunting than what I fear coyote contests say to the general public about hunters and our ethics. Hunters need to be conscious of the public image we protect and the way in which the public perceives us.

That is the sentiment that I share and is why I brought the bill forward.

This is a difficult conversation; it is not meant to spur a regional divide. I have heard from folks all over the state, urban and rural areas, on both sides of this issue. I do think that as new technologies have come about, and as time has moved on, we have consistently made modifications to the ways that we hunt, fish, et cetera. We have put limits on the things that we can do. One of the things you will hear about is that if it does not make a difference, why not allow it? I think that there is a robust history within the sporting community of acknowledging that just because we can do something, it does not mean that we should. Preserving some of the ethics such as fair chase of pursued animals and of wanton waste—unprotected animals are not subject to that. You do not have to harvest a pelt. You do not have to harvest any meat—you would not off of a predator. Ultimately, it is just the removal of that animal from the landscape.

Studies have shown that if you have not done the legwork and the science in advance, these contests and mass removals can have a minor impact, no impact, or they can actually increase predator populations and incursions by destabilizing the predator community in the area. That is why I brought Assembly Bill 102 forward.

I will walk you very quickly through the bill. Section 1, subsection 1, adds a provision that says, "A person shall not organize, sponsor, promote, conduct or participate in any contest, tournament, derby or other type of competition in which a covered animal is taken for prizes or any other form of inducement." The covered animals is what is addressed in the conceptual amendment [\[Exhibit N\]](#). We are trying to make sure that all the different unprotected species are covered. In addition to those that were already listed, it adds badger, crow, raccoon, and ring-tailed cat. We also want to make extremely clear that the provisions of this do not prohibit competitive field trials for hunting dogs or for falconry, and under no circumstances prevent a landowner from taking any of these animals as long as it is not in a contest format.

Section 2, subsection 4, provides that for organizing, sponsoring, promoting, or conducting any of these competitions, the person is liable for a civil penalty. Section 2, subsection 5, denotes a lesser civil penalty for anyone who participates in such a contest.

In closing, we are going to hear a lot about this issue. I have heard from many folks about it. I completely understand the value that predator management has, and I understand the necessity to be able to remove some of these nuisance animals when needed. I also appreciate the bond that comes from getting people together and trying to do something for the benefit of wildlife or for the benefit of livestock. Ultimately, I do think that these contests miss the mark and open the door to a negative perception of sportsmen across the community. The same urban areas that have struggled with predator incursions on the urban-wildlife interface, Clark County and the City of Reno, have also passed resolutions asking for an end to this practice. Thank you for your time and attention, and I am glad to answer any questions that you have.

**Chair Cohen:**

Before we go to questions, you mentioned the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. As a hunter yourself, will you talk about what those tenets mean to you?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I guess I will step back even further. I provided a little bit of broad-brush history about what happened before we enacted a kind of wildlife management model in this country; for example, hunting certain species to extinction or to the brink of extinction. What the North American Model recognized was that humans can dramatically impact wildlife; that we have a responsibility to manage them; that sportsmen are a part of that management; and that we need to be guided by science. The North American Model started to put in some ethics, things such as fair chase, giving animals that we are pursuing a decent chance; making sure that if we are harvesting an animal that it is for a point, for a purpose, that we are putting meat in the freezer, or collecting a pelt that can be put to use; or in the case of predator management that you are removing an actual, problem animal from the landscape. Those are some of the key things.

Importantly, sportsmen have put their money where their mouths are in providing funds both through all the licensing and fees that we have discussed that help support wildlife management agencies through a range of purchases made relating to firearms, hunting and fishing, and excise taxes that help support wildlife management practices. To me, it is a responsibility; it is a privilege that I think needs to be considered; and ethics is something that is constantly a part of that. It is a difficult thing. People land on certain issues and there are going to be differences. This is something that has been consistently returned to with some of those principles around fair chase; around making sure that an animal that is being taken is being put to use; and around avoiding frivolous killing of animals. These are things that I think are important. It is also important that we continue to reevaluate as time moves forward and as society moves forward. Some of those decisions have been complicated by technology in other areas.

**Assemblywoman Anderson:**

I know it has been a difficult road but thank you so much for opening the conversation. You had mentioned that sometimes these contests have actually increased other activities from the

coyotes. I believe in particular it has to do with possibly the killing of the adults so that the young are unable to learn to hunt properly. Could you expand on that a little bit? I realize it is not in the language, but I want to hear more about that issue.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I am not a biologist, and I do not want to go too far into it because I might misrepresent. I also want to emphasize at a high level, the impact either way, especially over the long term, is not significant. Coyote populations are extremely resilient. We have coyotes across the entire United States. They rebound very well, but they do have pack structures. When those pack structures become destabilized, something that can potentially happen is that there are animals that get bolder in order to try and provide for their young. Those are some of the dynamics that can pop up. I think it is difficult to speak in generalities about that. Sometimes it may have a short-term impact that is beneficial. Sometimes it may have an impact that is negative. Ultimately, I do not think it has a significant impact either way.

**Assemblywoman Anderson:**

I do have a question that relates to the bill. What is the date that you are planning on implementation? I do not see a date on the current language. Additionally are there any counties and cities that currently outlaw this on their own?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

This does not really happen in urban areas, so it has not been something that has been taken on. Much of this happens out on public lands. It falls within our wildlife management policies, which are set at the state level either by the Wildlife Commission or by the Legislature. Without having an effective date explicitly printed in the bill, I believe it is October 1, 2023.

**Assemblyman DeLong:**

Thank you, Assemblyman, for bringing forward another bill that demands a large audience. In talking with groups about this bill, I have had a question that no one has been able to provide any information on. How frequent is this? Is this something that is happening every week, or is it once every decade?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

They do happen annually, more than one. I can definitely speak to that. As far as the exact numbers, you may hear some numbers provided in testimony. One of the things that I will say is, this is an activity that is completely unregulated. The species are unprotected, so no license is needed. There is nobody who has to be informed that these things are going on or what the outcomes are. This actually makes it a little bit more difficult to state exactly how many there are or how many animals are being taken.

**Assemblyman DeLong:**

You talked about the fact that this is an unregulated activity. Since we are looking at passing a law making it illegal, what are you envisioning as far as enforcement and who is going to police this?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Notice of these things does go out. This is a slightly unrelated topic, but our game wardens do tremendous work. They are stretched extremely thin. The amount of square miles that each wildlife enforcement officer has to cover in this state is a little bit mind-boggling. However, I would say, this would function on tips and other things. They do incredible work. I think we have their presentation here. Thinking about those numbers, it is incredible to me that we ever catch a poacher, but we do. Unfortunately, it is something that happens: it gets discovered and it gets caught. I do think that there is an existing framework where, if this were on the books, the Department of Wildlife's enforcement would find out about it through any sort of tips or information floating around, and they would be able to go out there and address it.

**Assemblywoman Hansen:**

I am wondering about the idea of coyote packs, and when you take out a male, another one comes in. I do not know that there is consensus on that theory of how wildlife operates. I live in a suburban corridor in Washoe County. I can tell you there are no contests going on where I live. I have an abundance of coyotes in my yard attacking my dog. I see it on my neighborhood watch. I think that is still in question in regard to that theory. With the thought of where this is occurring and how big of a problem it is, I know we say that the state governs certain things. Similar to the conversation we had on Clark County's issue with the septic tanks, the lead from me on this with the rural direction is, If there is a problem with coyote contests, or whatever animal contests, how about the counties decide? Maybe Lander County wants to keep one or Lincoln County wants to keep them. Maybe Clark County does not have an appetite for this. Do we have that ability to let those counties make these decisions in regard to that?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

First of all, back to the issue of the suburban incidents. Unfortunately, we have a whole variety of things when we specifically talk about coyotes. Anyone who has seen coyote scat knows they will eat anything. Any urban footprint is filled with food: pets, trash, everything. That helps bring those animals in. I think we need a significant increase in resources to address those wildlife conflicts in our suburban communities. Also, because of the nature of these contests, that is never going to address those really. Going to your question about the involvement of local governments, I would certainly be open to having the conversation about what could be involved. At the end of the day, we really do not know exactly what is going on in a given area. I would be glad to continue to have that conversation with you.

**Assemblywoman Hansen:**

I appreciate that you are always willing to further the discussion and that does not go unnoticed. When we talk about the penalties in section 2, subsection 4, they seem to be pretty draconian. If you organize a contest, there is a penalty of \$5,000 and not more than \$30,000. If you participate, \$50 to \$1,000. In looking in section 2, subsection 1, and existing language, if you kill or possess a trophy big game mammal, you are liable for the same amount of penalty—\$5,000 to \$30,000—as you would be if you organized a coyote contest.



I know all animals have value, but the same penalty for a coyote and a trophy animal, we are saying that you have that kind of a draconian penalty. I was curious where the thought process came from for that kind of a penalty. In Nevada, you know, you can steal \$1,200 worth of stuff and you barely get a slap on the hand.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I am glad that you noted the existing language in that section. For participation, a lot of it was really modeled on section 2, subsection 2. For the unlawful killing or possession of fish and wildlife not included in subsection 1, a person is liable for civil penalty of not less than \$25 or more than \$1,000. This is \$50 instead of \$25. In my mind, if this were to be put into effect, there is a differentiation between someone who sees a notice and goes out to participate and somebody who is involved in putting the event together. The hope is that folks should be pretty aware that this is not something that would be allowed going forward. If they are doing that in defiance of the law, that is a more substantial violation for someone who is putting together the prizes and pulling everybody together to participate. That is why it actually mirrors the penalties in section 2, subsection 1(a) related to poaching a trophy big game animal.

**Chair Cohen:**

Along those lines, has there been any thought to what happens to the purse?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

No. The hope is that if this were to come to pass, this will not be happening.

**Assemblyman Yurek:**

Thank you, again, for filling my inbox. We use the word "ethics." I just looked it up; it is moral principles that govern a person's behavior. I am trying to wrap my brain around this because it sounded like you conceded that this is not affecting populations, nor is it solving our predation issues. It is the sport, and it is the appearance. As a legislator, I am looking to identify policies and promote policies that are solving problems. It does not look like this is necessarily solving a problem. I am making a statement looking for a response that can help me understand this a little bit better; that is, we are not solving a specific problem. I imagine we are going to hear from different people. As my colleagues have suggested, it might be kind of an urban-rural thing with different ethical considerations at stake. It seems to me that this is at a statewide level and might lead to my colleague's suggestion of maybe a county-by-county consideration. We are basically trying on a statewide level to elevate one group's ethics and put them over another group's ethics. How do I reconcile that versus solving a true problem?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I have a couple of thoughts. One is that the overarching mandate of our state government is to manage all of the wildlife for all of the people. To me, that means we have to take in the considerations of everyone at large and be aware of the impacts that certain ethical and perception issues have, particularly over the long term, on the continued ability of sportsmen to exercise their rights and privileges to pursue game. The other thing I will say is, these are

difficult issues. You cannot always legislate ethics or morals. However, we do enact and evaluate policies about these issues all the time. During some of my time on the county board to manage wildlife, there were debates about and policies enacted related to using a .50-caliber rifle for sporting. At the end of the day, questions were raised about certain things like fair chase or the impact on the ability to harvest things. Answering some of those more specific questions can be tricky. There are still some ethical considerations that probably need to be addressed: things such as putting trail cameras around water sources, impacts that can have on fair chase, and the amount of data that can be collected to track where animals are, et cetera. I think there is a precedent in taking on some of these thorny issues both through legislation as well as through Wildlife Commission policy. That is what led me to bring this forward.

**Assemblyman Gurr:**

You know where I stand on this Assemblyman, but you bring up the words "fair chase" a lot in your conversation. What about a coyote calling contest is not fair chase in your mind? Or define "fair chase" in this regard for me, please.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

In my opinion, fair chase is a critical ethical consideration. I want to bring up some of the overarching principles. I think in some of the ways that coyotes are lured or baited could be debatable. Ultimately, the bigger issue for me is that piece from the position about the North American Model and frivolous killing. That is one of the key issues that comes up for me in relation to this. I understand that if there is a problem animal, you want to be able to get rid of it. I think it is really some of the other dynamics that come into play when a contest has been put together that is making it more of an issue from my perspective.

**Assemblywoman Hansen:**

I need some clarifying on section 1, subsection 1, about inducement. It states, "A person shall not organize, sponsor, promote, conduct or participate in any contest, tournament, derby or any other type of competition in which a covered animal is taken for prizes or any other form of inducement." How about if three or four guys or gals go out in a truck to call some coyotes just on their own, and they say, I bet you \$20 I can get three. Does that qualify as an inducement? A follow-up to that is, we have a record book. It is kind of a big deal when you have a big game animal that might qualify for the Nevada Wildlife Record Book. Is being in the record book an inducement to take a trophy animal?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I will answer your questions in reverse order. First of all, with the definitions of covered animals, this makes sure it does not impact any sort of big game, any sort of fishing, any of those records, any of those types of contests or derbies. Those species are all pursued in a much more regulated framework, which is one of the considerations with the policy. As far as the other form of inducement, I will certainly say that is not the intent. If anyone would like to work with me on the language to clarify that intent, that is not what we are envisioning. There are organized, promoted contests with significant thousands of dollars in prizes going on. That is what we are attempting to address. I think the other form of

inducement was an initial attempt to try and button this up because sometimes when you put these policies in place, people want to try and wordsmith to find a loophole to get around it. We wanted to make sure that does not happen. But again, the scenario that you discussed is not what is intended to be impacted by the bill.

**Chair Cohen:**

Those contests have people coming sometimes from out of state, correct?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Yes, frequently from out of state.

**Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:**

Thank you for another round of many, many questions which I am about to add to. As I think the Committee knows, I grew up on a ranch in rural Nevada and my family did not participate in these contests for many of the principles and ethical reasons you spoke to. We did have coyotes attacking our herds. We did manage that problem, and there were times when we invited friends out to manage that problem. I want to make clear on the record, that would still be allowed under this bill. Is that correct?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Yes, that is correct. I wanted to make sure that we added that section around the landowner's ability to do whatever they need to do on their property. I think you will hear a little bit about this, the way some of these have gotten to where they are promoted, people are coming in from out of state, and there are extremely large cash prizes. That is what we are going after. Those types of incentives and structures have sometimes led to some behavior that I think is less than savory. To me, that is separate from saying, Hey, you know what, we have a coyote problem on our property. Can you come over? We will have dinner, and we will go spend a day or two out in the field. That is not the intent of what this bill is trying to go after.

**Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:**

I think you have said this a couple of times, but I just would like to really drill down into why these specific animals were chosen. I know you added some. What was the process that led us to this list?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Coyote contests are the ones that have gotten the most attention and I think are by far the number one. I think there have been contests for other species, and we wanted to make it comprehensive and also tie it to the unprotected. I totally see the need for the unprotected status because these can all present problems and need to be removed, taken, or killed—whatever word you wish to use—without having to get a hunting license and without being subject to additional regulations. We wanted to avoid a scenario where in any case there is a huge, promoted contest going on to go out in an area and rack up a pile of animal carcasses.

**Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:**

You mentioned that there are states, red and blue, that have banned these. Do you happen to have that list of states?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I certainly do. Around us are Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Washington. I think I said Oregon earlier, but I misstated that. Also, Maryland, Massachusetts, and Vermont.

**Chair Cohen:**

I want to put Assemblywoman Hansen's and Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch's scenarios together. If Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch's family has the friends come over and they say, We really want to get rid of these predators. Whichever of our friends takes down the most, we are going to give a six pack, or we are going to give \$100, we are going to do whatever. Is that okay?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

The intent is not to go after that. How you get all the language in a policy, to the exact point, for example, do we put de minimis? I think I would just like to get the intent on the record: if you have some people over, everyone throws down 20 bucks into a pot, a prop is made, and whoever hits it gets the money. That is not what this is going after. These are large, sophisticated, fairly high-dollar, promoted events. This is not something that is attracting friends and family. It is attracting people who have got interest in this and go across the country from place to place on a calendar in some cases, participating in as many as they can. To me that is the differentiation. If that is something that anyone would like to work with me on to try and make sure that the language matches the intent, I am absolutely glad to do so.

**Chair Cohen:**

Having both sat on the Assembly Committee on Judiciary, I think we both really want to make sure we have got really clear legislative record for that. With that, we are going to move on to support. Is there anyone in support in Carson City?

**Rebecca Goff, Nevada State Director, Humane Society of the United States:**

Before I begin, I do want to let everyone know that I did submit for evidence a map that does show to the best of our knowledge all of the contests that happened in Nevada, the species, and when they happened. [Map was not entered as an exhibit.] Our research shows that about 15 of these contests happen every year. As a Nevada resident and on behalf of our supporters, I respectfully ask you to pass A.B. 102. Slaughtering our native wildlife for fun and prizes is a disgrace to our state. Killing contests treat animals as nothing more than disposable pieces in a game. During the killing period, participants lure animals into gun range with electronic calling devices that mimic the sounds of dependent young or prey in distress. They shoot them with assault style rifles fitted with night vision and thermal imaging scopes, driving around shooting as many animals as they see. These tactics violate the traditional hunting ethic of fair chase.

My organization has gone undercover in 14 contests in nine states, documenting participants utter disrespect for the animals killed. Investigators witnessed competitors dragging coyote bodies across blood-soaked grounds, cutting slits in their legs to hang them upside down on a scale for weighing. They haphazardly throw the animals into piles and line them up to take photos next to the bloody bodies. These animals are ripped apart by bullets, rendering even their pelts useless for sale. Participants have talked about how they have an itch to kill, and they enjoy the thrill of the kill.

Wildlife belongs to all citizens, not just the tiny percentage of people who mass kill the public's wildlife for private gain. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the Wildlife Management Institute have recently noted public attitudes about wildlife are shifting substantially, especially in western states, away from the traditional view, which believes that wildlife should be managed for human benefit, and toward the view that we should coexist with wildlife. Just 3.4 percent of Nevadans are licensed hunters. Of that, only a small percentage participate in these killing contests. We urge your support of A.B. 102. [Written testimony was also provided [Exhibit O](#).]

**Naomi Duerr, Council Member, Ward 2, City of Reno:**

I am here to support A.B. 102. Of note, I am also the chair of the Washoe County Animal Services Advisory Board, although they have not taken a position on this bill. About seven months ago in support of the work by the Wildlife Commission and in anticipation of a possible bill here, the Reno City Council passed a resolution in support of a ban on wildlife killing contests. We have submitted that resolution electronically and I have a hard copy here today [\[Exhibit P\]](#).

We want to thank Assemblyman Watts and Senator Scheible for bringing this bill. Why does the City of Reno care about this issue? The city is part of a diverse ecosystem that includes a wide variety of wildlife, especially in the urban-wildland interface. This ecosystem plays an integral role in maintaining biodiversity and the ecosystem includes coyotes and other wildlife as listed in the bill. The City of Reno recognizes the importance of this ecosystem in the city's master plan which promotes the protection and conservation of wildlife habitats. Many Reno residents engage in legal hunting. Hunters have a code of ethics which includes the use of animals for food, protecting property, and managing wildlife. This does not include wanton killing. However, some organizations host contests to take out wildlife for pleasure—the largest, the most, the highest weight. These contests are often organized right on the border of the city and the county. These events do not align with the traditional tenets of wildlife management and sportsmanship. In fact, sometimes the extreme taking can actually induce or spur reproduction of the animals to fill in the gaps.

It should be noted that this bill would not impact, as has been discussed here, the taking of individual animals on a site-specific basis. This is focused on contests. Our perspective is this practice of contests devalues all life and is an anathema to ethical hunting practices. The city's residents represent about 8 percent of Nevada's population, and about 55 percent of the population of Washoe County. We put a great deal of thought and deliberation into our

resolution. On behalf of the City of Reno, I urge you to pass A.B. 102 and have Nevada join the numerous states around us in banning these contests. Thanks so much for considering my testimony.

**Deni French, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:**

I would like to put my support to A.B. 102. I would like to ditto both prior speakers and Assemblyman Watts. I appreciate the information. I have learned so much in this process. In my service, I qualified with an M16A1 rifle. I qualified as expert. I understand hunting. One bullet can take them down if you are considerate about the location. I am not into contest hunting. I do not consider that hunting at all. It is just massacre. I wish to say that it does not help my idea or consideration towards hunting in general. As an individual that does not hunt, I do not think it does not have an impact, it has a big impact on a person like me. I understand the need to hunt. I have known people who have hunted for their meals, for the pelts, and for their livelihoods; I appreciate that and respect that. I think this bill will put a good perspective on the need to take care of, to regulate, and to take care of the issues that you have with overabundance of one species over another. I appreciate this bill and I would appreciate your consideration on voting for it. Thank you very much.

**Chair Cohen:**

Is there anyone in Elko in support? Seeing no one, is there anyone in Las Vegas in support?

**John Hiatt, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am here to speak in support of A.B. 102. I think coyote killing contests or other wildlife killing contests are contrary to any kind of reasonable hunter ethics. I would note that the proportion of the population involved in hunting is continuing to fall over the past half century. Coyote killing contests do nothing to actually say to the public that hunters are responsible, ethical people. These contests are an example of wanton killing and they are not helpful at all to those people who consider themselves ethical hunters. Again, I would just ask you to vote in favor of A.B. 102.

**Nick Christenson, representing Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club:**

On behalf of the Sierra Club and our members and supporters statewide, I am speaking in support of A.B. 102, which would address wildlife killing contests that take place throughout the state. I come from a family of hunters. These contests are not what my family participated in for enjoyment or for food when I was growing up. These are organized events where animals are killed only for the sake of killing them with no intent to use them for food or any other productive purpose. Prize money is awarded to those participants who simply kill the most, the biggest, the smallest, or whatever on Nevada land. Nevada's Department of Wildlife agrees that they serve no useful wildlife management purpose as they are ineffective in controlling predator populations. They do nothing to increase population of game species such as deer, and they do not reduce conflicts with livestock. I know there are many sportsmen who oppose these contests. These contests are a waste. I like the phrase made by Assemblyman Watts. He called them "frivolous killings." They give Nevada and our ethical hunters a black eye. Thank you for supporting an end to Nevada wildlife killing contests by supporting A.B. 102.

**Karen Layne, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am a non-hunter. I served as a public member on the Wildlife Commission. The first two times this issue was heard before the Commission, I was the only commissioner to vote for the proposal to ban wildlife killing contests both times. I have to tell you that I am very frustrated that this practice of wanton waste of wildlife continues. I have seen too many photos of truckloads of dead coyotes or even worse, carcasses littering the desert. Wildlife habitat is being threatened by land development, climate change, wildfires, and most importantly, decreasing water supplies associated with climate change. This wanton waste of wildlife is an outdated activity that is unpopular with the majority of Nevada's population. Please do what the Wildlife Commission refused to do and pass this legislation. I would also like to thank Assemblyman Watts for his very detailed explanation of this somewhat complicated situation. Thank you.

**Chair Cohen:**

I am going to go to the phones for those in support. Hearing no one, I will go back to Carson City.

**Warren Hardy, representing Humane Society of the United States:**

Many of you know that I spent a lot of years in this building as a legislator. I am very proud of the fact that I always had very high rankings with sportsmen's groups and First and Second Amendment groups. The concept of the notion of hunting is a proud tradition in Nevada. I have always supported ethical hunting. I am not a hunter myself, but I recognize the passion of those who are. This legislation is very narrowly crafted to outlaw one very specific activity that I as a supporter of these activities consider problematic. I think there was a very good question by the Committee regarding the ethics. When my client first let me know that they wanted to support this legislation, I tried to recall all the conversations I had about ethical hunting as a legislator. I went back and looked up ethical hunting across the board. It varied a lot, what different groups and organizations considered ethical hunting. There were at least two things that consistently appeared in the definition for every organization and group, sportsmen's groups and otherwise. That was fair chase and utilizing the animal that you harvest. I struggle with the concept of coyote killing contests and wildlife killing contests. I want to say that is really what this is about: wildlife killing contests. I know the most prevalent are coyotes, but please look at the other species that are involved. I really struggle with the notion that fair chase is not involved. In Nevada, we do not even allow baiting for big game; yet we use artificial methods to call these animals in so we can frivolously kill them. That violates the very nature of ethical hunting. The second part is with regard to utilizing the harvest. Those two things are violated by every definition. I would encourage the Committee to support this.

**Be-Be Adams, representing Friends of Nevada Wildlife:**

We, of course, support Assemblyman Watts's sponsorship of A.B. 102. We have met with every member of the Committee, and we have had some wonderful discussions, even with people we do not always have the same viewpoint of. We have also been painted as an extremist group in a recent wildlife publication. I think we have all had very thoughtful, respectful, wonderful conversations and hopefully they have been informative as well. I do

not want to repeat everything else you have heard. I pretty much want to say ditto, but I do want to say this cannot be stressed enough: this does not address regulated hunts. It does not outlaw killing of predators on wildland or stop farmers or ranchers from protecting their animals or their livestock. It does stop contests that pay out prize money for indiscriminately killing Nevada's wildlife on our public lands for prize money. Thank you for your time today and for your many meetings for the last several weeks. You have had a lot of information to read and listen to, and I really appreciate your time on this. We ask for your support.

**Patrick Donnelly, Nevada State Director, Center for Biological Diversity:**

I want to thank Assemblyman Watts for sponsoring this important legislation. This has been a long-simmering issue, and we are hoping it can be brought to resolution this session. This bill is not about predator management. As I said earlier, I would love to debate predator management. We have some issues with predator management, but that is not what this bill is about. This bill is about a very specific activity: contests to kill animals. The Department of Wildlife has said in earlier testimony in front of the Commission that by and large, killing contests have no net effect on the population of wildlife in this state. There is simply not enough of them to affect the large numbers of wildlife we have. As a result, this is an ethical question. This is about our relationship to wildlife. We heard discussion earlier, whose ethics? We believe that this is part of a universal moral code, that these contests to kill as many animals as you can in 24 hours is not a moral way to interact with the natural world. There have been other instances of societies killing as many animals as they can. Eventually the society decided that is not what we want our relationship to be with wildlife; for instance, killing all the bison on the plains and Chairman Mao killing all the sparrows in China in the 1960s, and all the consequences of that. Society has decided we are not going to actually continue killing as many animals as we possibly can in a set period of time. It is about the evolution of our universal moral code as to how we interact with wildlife. This bill would not impact predator management and predator management activities would continue. But this bill is about examining how we relate to wildlife. Please support A.B. 102. Thank you.

**Jeff Carlton, Private Citizen, Reno Nevada:**

I am on my church's legislative committee, and I am speaking in support of this bill. Most of our concerns have been said, so there is not a whole lot to say, except one of our moral tenets is the respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are part, that brings my whole denomination in support of this bill. Thank you.

[Written testimony in support of A.B. 102 provided but not mentioned include F, [Exhibit G](#), [Exhibit H](#), [Exhibit I](#), [Exhibit J](#), [Exhibit Q](#), and [Exhibit R](#).]

**Chair Cohen:**

Seeing no one else in support at any of our locations, I am going to move to opposition, starting in Carson City.

**Davy Stix, Member, Nevada Cattlemen's Association:**

I am a rancher and I also have a sportsman's identification number. The Nevada Cattlemen's Association represents many hardworking families whose livelihood depends on the success



of having newborn calves survive the many pitfalls that come in feeding our nation, and yes, our world. Predator control is as old as raising livestock. To give you a quick idea of how old it is, and a historical reference, those shepherds guarding their sheep by night were not out there just to get out of their houses to gaze at the stars.

The coyotes in this case have an instinct to find an easy meal; they are opportunistic. It is all too common to come upon a mama cow cleaning her newborn baby only to find that the calf is half-eaten. This type of kill is consistent with killing the calf during birth. Another common trait with this killer instinct in the coyote, which is especially prevalent in areas right now with a lot of snow, is to see the predator standing near a calf and its mother in such proximity as to make the mother not want to leave her calf. Therefore, she sticks by her calf, even eating snow to survive, to see how long the waiting game lasts and who prevails.

We need all the help we can get in predator control. Yes, even our friendly horses need our help. Due to incrementally declining revenues and cost increases in government programs, we are unable to keep up with prudent predation programs that have a positive effect on raising cattle in our state. The coming together of people and communities to help in this endeavor is a generational activity that may be as old as fishing derbies and many other wildlife competitions that are conducted across the state and our country. We do not condone the social media activities that take place during these events and ask our friends to stop telling the world. Just as Facebook has opened our eyes to what predators are capable of doing in our cities, killing our pets, it has hurt us as well. I must reiterate, we are animal lovers and believe strongly in predator control. It works. Ethical reconciliation, our penance is our baby calves. In closing, I would like to say please vote no.

**Joel Blakeslee, representing Southern Nevada Coalition for Wildlife:**

I want to respond to a couple of things that have been said. The first one is regarding the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. That model was designed to keep wildlife management away from pure politics, and that is where we are today. This issue has been vetted through all the county game boards in 2015 and 2021. The result was the same. That is going to be discussed later. The North American Model was designed to do this in a certain way not to have it be a pure political thing. The other thing I want to talk about is money, because apparently this is the ethical problem we have: we are having a contest for money. I will suggest that there are many different levels of money involved in this. I would suggest to you that there is more money in this room being paid to different people than is paid to all of the people in the wildlife contests right now. There are professional organizations and you have heard this is a national movement to chip away at hunting. Just go on the websites and you can see that this is their ultimate obligation, and I will just leave it at that. [Documents also provided but not discussed include [Exhibit S](#), [Exhibit T](#), and [Exhibit U](#).]

**Rex Flowers, Director, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife:**

The prohibition of calling contests has been heard many times over the years. That has come forward through both the petition process and the last time from a commissioner on the Board of Wildlife Commissioners. The last time it was heard for over a year period of time

and was well vetted by all those who wished to participate in the hearings. In the end, Nevada's Board of Wildlife Commissioners voted to oppose any action to eliminate these contests. History has repeatedly done this. Each time this subject, as with any regulation, is heard, it is heard numerous times in numerous meetings at both the Commission and county advisory board (CAB) levels with input by the public. Never has the Board of Wildlife Commissioners supported such a prohibition, and not one CAB throughout the state has ever supported this prohibition or any portion of the same subject. I believe that the democratic process, as we have been taught, and the state's open meeting laws have always been met in each hearing. For this reason, I would request the Committee oppose this bill.

**Chair Cohen:**

I will now go to Elko for those in opposition.

**Embry Drew Edwards, Private Citizen, Spring Creek, Nevada:**

I would like to say that I am not a coyote hunter, but I have been active in helping to put on several contests. I would like to bring up the question of ethics and say that a coyote contest creates revenue for the area. We love coyotes. We love the animal. We have huge respect for them, and we have proven that by mounting them and putting them in our homes. I would also like to compare with the alternative. The alternative is government trappers, government killers in airplanes and helicopters who kill sometimes hundreds in a day, and they are left on the ground to rot. In our contests, we donate our coyotes to the area. We give them to a guy who takes care of pests and things like that. He skins every coyote, and he sells those skins. They are not wasted. When a government killer kills coyotes, they rot on the ground. Thank you for listening to me. If you have any questions, since I am involved in putting on a contest here and there, feel free to ask.

**Lance Stitzel, President, Nevada Trappers Association:**

I am an avid outdoorsman and predator caller. We have a lot of them in this room today, ranging from trappers, hunters, predator callers, and houndsmen. Everybody in this room is opposed to A.B. 102, and we are asking you to oppose it as well. Thank you.

**Pace Saxton, Private Citizen, Spring Creek, Nevada:**

I am an avid hunter and outdoorsman. Last year I was hired as predator control for one of the bigger ranches in Nevada. I have some very graphic videos and photos of what a coyote can do to a sheep herd, lambs in particular. I got videos of coyotes tearing the guts out of does. I do not think we need to eradicate the coyote. I do not think there is any chance that we could eradicate the coyote if we wanted to. Their numbers are overwhelming. I oppose this bill. I think any means that we can take to control the coyote population is necessary.

**Chair Cohen:**

I will now go to Las Vegas for those in opposition.

**Robert Bentz, Private Citizen, Pahrump, Nevada:**

One of the points that I want to bring up is that we support, as a state, catch and release of fish. They torment fish, catch them, hook them, let them go, and call that ethical. We are

reducing the population of coyotes, and somehow it is not ethical. I was a commercial reptile collector for 34 years in this state until they outlawed it. One of the things is with the use of this, we are putting 100 percent of our effort into reducing the coyote population to protect the wildlife, the people, and the pets of the state of Nevada. We are not putting part of our efforts, as was mentioned before, on anything like taking trips or getting file cabinets with the money that they are getting from the \$3 fee. All the money is going right to reducing the coyotes that we are having a problem with, and we are doing it for other wildlife. The sportsmen are doing it for the big game; we are doing it for the desert tortoises that are not getting a \$3 fee for them. I am saying that we are putting our two cents' worth in by doing these contests to reduce the coyote populations. That is what my point is, that we are doing it for the desert tortoise out there that cannot outrun a coyote; they are just fair game all day long. Coyotes eat all the desert tortoises that they want.

The sportsmen are not backing this because the sportsmen do not want to be the next one in line that are going to be taken off, saying that we are going to do away with you because it does not look good what you are doing. A population problem is what we have, and we cannot reduce the population. We have to reduce the other things in regard to the overpopulation that we are bringing into this state. If it is too much, all you need to do is regulate. I keep hearing that it is a problem that is not regulated. If it is a problem, regulate it. Make sure that they are not doing this in a fashion that is so overwhelming that we cannot control. I think that is just about all I need to say.

**Dave Stowater, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am a trapper. I have trapped southern Nevada for over 45 years, and I have caught many coyotes with mange. This year I caught my first gray fox with mange. To make a long story short, we need all the help we can get to manage our wildlife. Those little contests do nothing but help us. Just use common sense. When I see a deer, bighorn sheep, elk, rabbit, quail, or chukar, I smile knowing that I helped save them. Just use common sense, and I oppose this bill.

**Ron Stoker, Vice President, Wildlife and Habitat Improvement of Nevada:**

I spend a lot of my time protecting wildlife, hip deep in the marshes, cutting bulrush down, pulling pipes up hills, blowing out my knees, and blisters on my hands after a long day's work. My hands are often dirty, but they are not dirty with the blood of coyotes because that is not something I am into. Every coyote we take off the landscape opens up the opportunity for another deer to live. I know there are disputes on that, but I love the coyotes as much as I love the mule deer. A lot of my projects with my group are taking those coyotes off the landscape, and that is something I have to pay for. If I have a group of free citizens willing to go out there and do that as an activity for a little cash reward, that is one less thing I have to do. I wish I could pay them for it. Along with that, it helps a lot of these little rural communities. I feel like a lot of the gripe is coming from Clark County and Reno, where the big urban communities live, and it kind of neglects the rural communities. I feel like the loudest voices are the ones that have the most people. A lot of these contests take place in rural communities, and it is an economic stimulus boost. If we were to do a year-long tally and make an overall winner in the state of Nevada for the most coyotes killed, it would

definitely be the Department of Wildlife (NDOW). They kill these coyotes. They let them sit, they let them rot, they shoot them out of helicopters, they poison them, and they trap them. That is something that needs to be done. If we have individuals who are willing to go out and spend their own time and their money to do these things, I do not see why we should stop them from doing it. We have the right to assemble. Setting precedents similar to what was set during COVID-19 and taking away people's freedoms is not a prudent thing to do in the state of Nevada. We are a battle-born state, and we have battle-born hunters, and battle-born sportsmen who are willing to work for this wildlife. I strongly suggest that we do not impede their efforts to help the wildlife in the state. Thank you so much. I oppose this bill.

**Chair Cohen:**

I will now go to anyone in opposition on the phone.

**Neil Channey, Vice President, Nevada Trappers Association:**

I have 60 people here with me who are all against this bill. I want to mention NDOW spends millions of dollars each year to help with water resource and habitat restoration for every single game species in the state. Calling contests are cost-effective and efficient management tools for predators that will also go hand in hand with those projects and help boost the game species. There are massive amounts of money each year spent on predator control as they talked about. These predator contests remove predators at no charge to NDOW or taxpayers. It simply makes sense to get the service done for free. This bill is being pushed directly by emotion, and as we can see by our neighboring states, these decisions will lead to overpredation and disease outbreaks in predator populations. Decisions like this should be made on factual scientific data. Thank you for your time.

**Brian Burris, President, Wildlife and Habitat Improvement of Nevada:**

I am here to oppose A.B. 102. First and foremost, the coyote population in the state of Nevada is far from threatened. In fact, anecdotal evidence would say that they are thriving, posing significant problems for not only the wildlife, but the citizens of the great state of Nevada. The area the sponsor of this bill serves is arguably a master class in how shortsighted policy creates even larger problems. The coyote population in Las Vegas Valley has exploded, and it is now common to have these animals roaming the streets both day and night following the changes to the laws that eliminated trapping in the area. This bill, unfortunately, is one more step in the wrong direction for the state of Nevada. These contests not only help control the population of the target species, but they have impacts on small local economies that have a limited means of economic development. These are some of the reasons that no wildlife board in the state of Nevada has approved the banning of these contests. Many counties actually passed resolutions supporting these contests because they bring economic drivers to their valley and protect the livestock and game in those communities. I would encourage this Committee to stand with the wildlife community and the majority of Nevada counties, and vote no on A.B. 102.

[Assemblywoman Anderson assumed the Chair.]

**Vice Chair Anderson:**

Hearing no further callers, I will go back to Carson City.

**Bryce Pollock, Policy Co-Chair, Nevada Chapter, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers:**

I hope to provide you with a different perspective and an alternative to the senseless and unethical competitions that you have heard purported. These competitions are part of the culture in many small communities around our great state. Furthermore, they serve as a means to raise funds for small organizations in those communities. To name a few, the McGill Volunteer Fire Department, the Tonopah High School Rodeo Club, and the Silver State Sportsmans Association all use these competitions as fundraisers.

I will elaborate on the last one because that is the competition that I participate in. I participate in that one because my brother lives in Eureka and it is a chance for me to visit my family and my two adorable nieces. This competition in particular is made up of community members and their families. It is by invite only. Teams of brothers, sisters, fathers, daughters, mothers, and sons pair up and spend a day together in the outdoors. Last year's competition had 92 teams of two people registered. If you are familiar with the population of Eureka, you understand what percentage of the town that represents. Of the 184 people that spent hundreds of hours and thousands of miles of hunting, the total number of animals harvested was six. Why? Because we are not that good at hunting coyotes, but also because that is really not what it is about. This competition is a fundraiser for the Silver State Sportsmans Association nonprofit. There is a big community gathering with a feast at the end of the day. Those funds raised go straight into habitat projects like the restoration of grasslands around springs. The last two projects completed grossed over \$16,000 in funds raised from those competitions. Those were paired with matching funds from NDOW and grants from other organizations to complete \$50,000 in habitat work right here in our state. More importantly, the volunteers that put in the hundreds of hours to complete those projects are the same people who are participating in those competitions. Assembly Bill 102 would ban a means of rural communities and families to gather and raise funds for the causes that they support without any scientific justification or any call for such a ban from within those communities. I urge you to please vote against A.B. 102.

**Ashton Caselli, Director, Northern Nevada Safari Club International:**

I want to speak a little bit about an inducement that Assemblywoman Hansen brought up. An inducement is an incentive that applies to an external influence, such as an expected reward inciting to action. Inducement comes in many forms, from personal gratification and participating in the annual rotary fishing derby with my daughter, to the reward of family time shooting squirrels in Kings River Valley. The state of Nevada provides a record book every five years for those lucky enough to be rewarded with their name in it for meeting state requirements. How about a buckle for the top three mountain lions harvested each year in our great state, the inducement worn on the Nevadan with pride. This bill attacks the culture of Nevada. How do I know? *Nevada Small Game Hunting Regulations and Seasons* from 2021 is advertising a contest hunt on the back. It is our culture. This bill attacks 52 teams that met on March 11 of this year for a contest in Eureka. Fifty-two teams. Seven coyotes were harvested by 52 teams; I guess they were not as good as Mr. Pollock's hunters.

All were incited to action by spending time in our great outdoors with family and friends. I wonder what the economic impacts were. Taxpaying businesses sponsor these events with the incentive that their business will be awarded with a patron or two. Current contests are visible, managed, and public with no negative biological outcome. It is no different than a carp fishing derby at Lake Lahontan. Emotion-based politics is a slippery slope with an inducement that often influences changes with an unexpected reward, often at the expense of the constituents. Ironically, Assembly Bill 70 eliminates the lethal predatory control by the state, and A.B. 102 eliminates predator control by the citizens. Wonder what will happen? Vote no. Thanks.

[Assemblywoman Cohen reassumed the Chair.]

**Mel Belding, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:**

I am opposed to A.B. 102. Several of Nevada's counties, including Elko, Pershing, Lincoln, and several more go to the point of what Assemblywoman Hansen was bringing up. These counties have written resolutions and letters against A.B. 102 [[Exhibit V](#), [Exhibit U](#), and [Exhibit T](#), respectively]. Also, Nevada Association of Counties has done the same. There are several counties in this state, especially in the rurals, that do not support this bill. I would like to point out during testimony on this bill, there might have been a slip of the tongue. Maybe he can explain himself, but Assemblyman Watts listed animals that he said were unprotected. When I look over this list, these are not unprotected animals. The bobcat has a season, it is protected. You cannot possess a bobcat after the last ceiling date, or you will be fined. The fox is protected, the beaver is protected, the otter is protected, the rabbit is protected, and one species of the rabbit is going to be getting a whole bunch more protection here pretty quick, the pygmy rabbit. I would just like clarification when he comes back up when he says they are not protected. Thank you. Please vote against this bill.

**Chair Cohen:**

We are getting very close to our time limit for opposition. So that the remaining people can speak, ditto is acceptable, and if you can take less than two minutes, I am sure your fellow people in opposition would appreciate that.

**George Forbush, Private Citizen, Sparks, Nevada:**

I am against this bill. Under *Nevada Revised Statutes* 501.3855, the civil penalty for killing trophy big game animals is \$5,000 to \$30,000. No one dislikes poachers more than sportsmen, but coyote hunters are not poachers. These current civil penalties are for convicted persons who intentionally cut the antlers off an animal and leave the body to rot or the person who poaches a black bear to sell the organs on the black market. A coyote is an unprotected species with no bag limits and no season. Big game animals are specifically managed by NDOW and require a license, a tag, and a season. Coyotes are typically managed only as part of predator control programs where they are killed in mass numbers and then discarded. Simply put, big game animals have a higher value to the residents of Nevada and therefore require a higher degree of protection than coyotes. You cannot reasonably punish coyote event organizers the same way you punish people who unlawfully kill big game animals. Other felony criminal statutes carry significantly lower fines. If this

bill is passed, an event organizer would face a higher cost than a criminal who receives a conviction for burglary or home invasion. If a coyote hunter was charged with civil penalty and it went unpaid past 90 days, that person would ironically lose his or her license for killing an animal that does not require a hunting license in the first place. Civil penalties are normally a remedy for damages and restitution. When did coyote tournaments suddenly damage the government to justify seeking \$1,000, \$5,000 or even \$30,000? I believe this bill is flawed, and I respectfully urge you to vote no.

**Linda Linton, Private Citizen, Wellington, Nevada:**

I oppose this bill. I ditto what the last person stated, and I want to add that the contests do not harm anyone, resources, or the public, and that the penalties are outrageous and violate the Eighth Amendment.

**Chair Cohen:**

I will now go to Las Vegas for testimony in opposition.

**Thomas Bentz, Private Citizen, Pahrump, Nevada:**

I am a lifelong resident of Nevada. I would like to bring up the point of tolerance and acceptance in the world that we live in right now. It seems to me like what is being lost on this is that we have a different value system where I live and where I come from. I am a longtime Nevada resident and I do not necessarily agree with the views of Reno or Las Vegas. I do not sit there and think that we should have all of the laws that are made in my county be reflected in Las Vegas rules. I do not think it is the same for you to do in reverse. This is a wildlife issue. We have already discussed the fact that it does not have any impact. It is just about the way we go about it. It is not unlike we decided wearing hoodies was a bad idea or gave somebody a bad look, so we should outlaw hoodies. There is no difference in this, it is just the way it appears. If it is an appearance issue, then you should be tolerant of our way and let us do what we have been doing. If it does not harm anything, leave us alone. Thank you. Please vote no.

**Chair Cohen:**

We are well over half an hour, sir, so I am going to let everyone take about 10 seconds to give us your opposition.

**Joe Gomez, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I have lived in Nevada since 1958. Around 20 years ago when they started putting out that \$3 for the predator control, I jumped right in the middle of that; I think it is a good thing. Evidently some of that money has been pilfered off for different things, which is not right. I would be willing to pay more if it could be used for that purpose. I have hunted coyotes, and probably over the last 20 years I have killed exactly four. It is not because I am such a bad hunter, it just that coyotes are the smartest thing out there. I vote no.

**Chair Cohen:**

I will come back up to Carson City.

**Jason Schroeder, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:**

I have held hunts in Washoe County for the last decade. I have also held hunts in Elko County and Storey County. One of the things I heard here today about the bill was that people stuff rocks in the coyotes to get them to weigh heavier, or we use .50 calibers to shoot them. That is totally incorrect. We have a very good policy on how we judge, police, and do the ethics of our hunt. Everything we do is by the law, by the book, and we follow all NDOW guidelines. The other thing that I have an issue with is the fact that they want to compare us and say that we are not a fishing tournament. The reason we are not a fishing derby is because in our contests, we can kill as many coyotes as we want. There is no law that says we can only kill five or seven. If they want to bring that, or make the playing cards fair, then make the playing field fair. Give us a deadline. Say we can only kill five coyotes. Put a limit on them because it is the same thing as a fishing derby or a big buck contest. The only difference is we have no limit. I pose no to this bill.

**Chair Cohen:**

Thank you. We would appreciate it if you can provide us with the guidelines that you mentioned that you use.

**Jason Schroeder:**

We follow everything that NDOW requires. One of the things is that everybody says we just go out and kill coyotes all over. We do not. A lot of these guys go to private ground. The other thing that we use is center fire rifles. They are not all AR15s or AR10s. A lot of them are long guns with bolt action. Some of them are shotguns. We hunt at night only in counties that allow night hunting; you can in Washoe County, you cannot in Lander County. If you have the landowner's permission, you can hunt on their land at night, but you have to have written permission from the landowner in that county.

**Larry Johnson, President, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife:**

Much of this bill, quite frankly, pits urbans against rurals simply because it is a different way of life. In fact, there was testimony in Saturday's Wildlife Commission meeting by an animal rights activist that since Las Vegas has the majority of the state's population, the opinions of the rural counties do not matter. I hope that is not so. We realize we as sportsmen are a minority. There are only 152,000 license holders in the state of Nevada. There would be a lot more if we could grow more critters. These contests do not impact the resource and actually benefit the economy of rural communities. This bill is just part of a national campaign by animal rights groups to chip away at our rural culture and an outdoor way of life. Coyotes just happen to be the low-hanging fruit in this effort. This bill is a perceived solution searching for a problem. Thank you. We urge you to reject A.B. 102.

**Michael Cassidy, Director, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife:**

I am a member of several other sportsmen's organizations. I oppose this bill. Thank you for letting me make that statement.

[Testimony in opposition to A.B. 102 provided but not mentioned include [Exhibit V](#), [Exhibit W](#), [Exhibit X](#), [Exhibit Y](#), and [Exhibit Z](#).]



**Chair Cohen:**

Is there anyone in neutral in Carson City, Las Vegas, or Elko? Seeing no one, is there anyone on the phone in neutral?

**Tiffany East, Commissioner, Board of Wildlife Commissioners, Department of Wildlife:**

As you have heard over time, Nevada's Board of Wildlife Commissioners has considered this activity with the same outcome. Today the Board of Wildlife Commissioners is taking a neutral position on A.B. 102 as presented. The Legislature is the proper forum for legislators and the public to determine this outcome at this time. Thank you so much for your time.

**Chair Cohen:**

Assemblyman Watts is waiving his closing statements because he is working on something else in the building. I will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 102 and will open up for public comment. Is there anyone wishing to provide public comment in Carson City, Las Vegas, or Elko? Seeing no one, is there anyone on the phone for public comment? Hearing no one, we are adjourned [at 7:01 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Nancy Davis  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen, Chair

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

[Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster.

[Exhibit C](#) is a proposed conceptual amendment to Assembly Bill 70, presented by Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15.

[Exhibit D](#) is a letter dated March 15, 2023, submitted by Rebecca Goff, Nevada State Director, Humane Society of the United States, in support of Assembly Bill 70.

[Exhibit E](#) is written testimony submitted by Michelle Lute, Carnivore Conservation Director, Project Coyote, in support of Assembly Bill 70.

[Exhibit F](#) is a letter submitted by Catherine Smith, Private Citizen, in support of Assembly Bill 70 and Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit G](#) is written testimony submitted by Elena Tillman, Private Citizen, in support of Assembly Bill 70 and Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit H](#) is written testimony submitted by G. Scott Clemson, Private Citizen, in support of Assembly Bill 70 and Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit I](#) is a letter dated March 14, 2023, submitted by Chris Smith, Southwest Wildlife Advocate, WildEarth Guardians, in support of Assembly Bill 70 and Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit J](#) is a compilation of copies of emails in support of Assembly Bill 70 and Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit K](#) is testimony dated March 15, 2021, submitted by Ryan Browne, Private Citizen, in opposition to Assembly Bill 70.

[Exhibit L](#) is a letter dated March 15, 2023, submitted by Rex Steninger, Chair, Elko County Board of Commissioners, in opposition to Assembly Bill 70.

[Exhibit M](#) is a compilation of documents provided by Rebecca Goff, Nevada State Director, Humane Society of the United States, in support of Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit N](#) is a proposed conceptual amendment to Assembly Bill 102, presented by Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15.

[Exhibit O](#) is a letter dated March 14, 2023, submitted by Rebecca Goff, Nevada State Director, Humane Society of the United States, in support of Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit P](#) is a letter dated March 14, 2022, submitted by Nic Ciccone, Program Manager, Legislative Relations, City of Reno, and a copy of a resolution, dated September 8, 2021, adopted by the Reno City Council, provided by Naomi Duerr, Council Member, Ward 2, City of Reno, in support of Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit Q](#) is a statement submitted by Camilla H. Fox, Founder and Executive Director, Project Coyote, in support of Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit R](#) is a letter dated March 14, 2023, submitted by Jennifer Hauge, Legislative Affairs Manager, Animal Legal Defense Fund, in support of Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit S](#) is a resolution of the Lander County Board of Commissioners dated March 10, 2023, submitted by Joel Blakeslee, representing Southern Nevada Coalition for Wildlife.

[Exhibit T](#) is a resolution of the Board of Lincoln County Commissioners dated February 21, 2023, submitted by Joel Blakeslee, representing Southern Nevada Coalition for Wildlife.

[Exhibit U](#) is a resolution of the Board of Pershing County Commissioners dated March 1, 2023, submitted by Joel Blakeslee, representing Southern Nevada Coalition for Wildlife.

[Exhibit V](#) is a resolution of the Elko County Board of Commissioners dated March 17, 2021, submitted by Rex Steninger, Chair, Elko County Board of Commissioners, in opposition to Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit W](#) is a letter dated March 15, 2021, submitted by Ryan Browne, Private Citizen, in opposition to Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit X](#) is a copy of an email dated March 14, 2023, submitted by Karen Boeger, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada, in opposition to Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit Y](#) is a letter dated March 14, 2023, submitted by Sven Lindquist, President, Safari Club International, in opposition to Assembly Bill 102.

[Exhibit Z](#) is a compilation of copies of emails in opposition to Assembly Bill 102.