

Chairman Vitale, Vice Chair Kick, Ranking Member Denson, and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Mark Landefeld and I appreciate the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on HB 553.

As a retired Ohio State University Extension Agricultural Agent, a livestock producer, landowner and avid sportsman, I truly believe H.B. 553 needs to be passed. In my career working with livestock producers and landowners in Ohio I have had many occasions to discuss coyote ecology and management. I have presented information to producers about coyote management and I have coordinated and held meetings for livestock producers and sportsmen where wildlife specialists and professional trappers were brought in to educate people about coyotes, their habits and effective solutions for management.

The coyote is mainly a nocturnal animal active from dusk to dawn. Trapping is the most effective way to manage coyote populations and control unwanted and nuisance coyotes. However, many livestock producers do not have the skill set, or time needed, to effectively trap unwanted coyotes. Individuals who possess adequate trapping skills must to be allowed to trap year-around to keep the population in check, since there are no natural predators for coyotes in Ohio, but man.

On occasion, coyotes are seen during daylight hours, but if landowners are limited to shooting unwanted coyotes on their own property, the chance to shoot the animal may be eliminated. In many circumstances the coyote may be across the property line while it is in sight, but then go out of view by the time it is on the livestock producer's property. It is acknowledged the livestock producer would need prior approval from the neighbor to shoot an animal on that property, but this permission is almost always granted in rural livestock producing areas between neighbors. Passing H.B. 553 will maintain this needed control option when it occurs.

Coyotes pose a constant threat to my farm/livestock. As a livestock producer, loss of a calf, or calves, to coyote predation would be very expensive for me or others. As a commercial cow/calf producer calves regularly sell for \$600-\$800 at auction and through other avenues. Purebred breeders often sell their calves for two to three times that amount for breeding purposes, while Club Calf producers may sell show stock for \$5000-\$10,000 per calf. Other livestock are affected by coyote predation too. While sheep, goat and poultry producers may not lose as much money per animal as cow/calf producers, when coyotes kill livestock, the incidence of coyote predation on those species is more frequent in many situations resulting in great loss.

Maintaining an open season for taking and possessing coyotes and maintaining an exemption from obtaining a fur taker permit provides me the options and flexibility I need to protect my property or enlist the help of others without undue burden. Thank you again Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for this opportunity to testify today in support of HB 553. Please contact me at 740-472-5758 or via email at landefeld36688@gmail.com