

Dear Chair Ware and Members of the House Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources Committee:

As a resident of Fairfax, Virginia, I respectfully urge you to vote in support of HB1247, which would ban wildlife killing contests. I support this bill for two primary reasons: (1) killing contests are cruel and not aligned with the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation; and (2) killing contests are inconsistent with a wildlife management approach based on science.

Wildlife killing contests are cruel and violate principle four of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, which states “[w]ildlife can only be killed for a legitimate purpose. Wildlife is a shared resource that must not be wasted. The law prohibits killing wildlife for frivolous reasons.”¹ Competing against other participants to kill as many animals as possible for cash, entertainment and prizes is not a legitimate purpose—it is the height of frivolity. The animals targeted in these events are also often wasted, as usually neither their meat nor their pelts are used by contest participants, in violation of principle four.

The indiscriminate killing promoted by wildlife killing contests does not represent a science-based wildlife population management. As a student at Virginia Tech, we were taught the value of Virginia’s predators, including coyotes, foxes, and bobcats, to our state’s ecosystems. We were also taught about the social structure of predators, and how disturbing that structure by randomly killing individuals can negatively impact both the targeted species and other animals. Killing contests can remove hundreds of predators from a relatively small geographic landscape in a single weekend, which significantly disrupts those populations and severely reduces the beneficial role that coyotes, foxes, and bobcats play within the ecosystem.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to vote in support of HB1247.

Sincerely,



Cathy Liss

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¹ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (Sept. 2018). Available at: <https://www.fws.gov/hunting/north-american-model-of-wildlife-conservation.html>.