



7338 Baltimore Ave
Suite 102
College Park, MD 20740

Committee: Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs

Testimony on: SB 200 – “Natural Resources - Organized Killing Contests - Restriction”

Position: Support

Hearing Date: January 21, 2021

The Maryland Sierra Club submits this testimony in support of SB 200, which would prohibit sponsoring, conducting, or participating in wildlife killing contests involving coyotes, foxes, or racoons. These contests interfere with beneficial activities of wildlife species and are inhumane. Seven states already have enacted this prohibition (Arizona, California, Colorado, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Vermont, and Washington).

Wildlife killing contests interfere with beneficial wildlife activities.

The best available wildlife management science does not support these contests. All wildlife species, especially top carnivores, are crucial for keeping our ecosystems balanced. Coyotes and foxes, for example, minimize populations of rabbits and rodents that can damage gardens and crops and transmit diseases. Top carnivores also help spread seeds, clean up dead animal carcasses, and increase biodiversity.

Wildlife killing contests can exacerbate conflicts with humans.

Killing contests do not help us resolve conflicts with wildlife and can even exacerbate the number of conflicts. For instance, randomly killing coyotes tends to dysregulate populations and increase coyote numbers because the pack’s stable structure is disrupted, and their biological response is to reproduce faster since there is less competition for food and habitat. With increased numbers comes greater likelihood of conflict with humans.

Wildlife killing contests are inhumane.

Participants in these contests compete for cash and prizes, and then frequently dump the bodies after prizes are awarded. Animals also may be orphaned or injured and left to die from exposure, starvation, or predation. These events devalue wildlife by glorifying kill numbers and placing prizes above respect for wildlife and their habitats.

We urge the Committee to report this bill favorably.

Dan Rosenberg
Maryland Sierra Club Volunteer
danrosenberg@hotmail.com

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

Lily Fountain
Chair, Natural Places Committee
Maryland Sierra Club
lily.fountain@mdsierra.org

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 75,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.