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CALIFORNIA  
FISH AND GAME  
COMMISSION

Jerry Barber  
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May 11, 2014

Sonke Mastrup

Executive Director

California Fish and Game Commission

1416 Ninth Avenue

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Mastrup:

At the April meeting of the Fish and Game Commission, your staff was directed to write proposed regulations to eliminate prizes and inducements for predator hunting contests. I am a retired CHP officer and the Vice-president of the San Diego County Varmint Callers and have some concerns about this. Our organization is comprised of hunters AND environmentalists who offer our predator-hunting services to ranchers and homeowners when coyotes, or any other predator, impact their lives adversely.

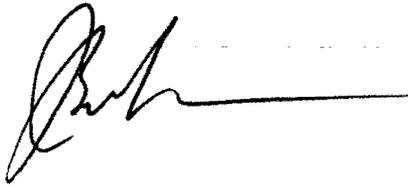
First of all, I am adamantly opposed to any legislation that would prohibit the taking of coyotes, or any other game or non-game animals, during any hunting competition. The taking of coyotes is totally unregulated now and it should stay that way. Coyotes are varmints and provide sport for hunters to get out in the field to pursue their legal hobby year round. Hunters are NEVER going to decimate the coyote population to a point where they won't recover. Hunters enjoy getting out in the field to pursue game animals. Coyotes are a wary adversary that can become a real problem when their numbers get too high and they start preying on domestic animals or livestock. The killing of just one calf costs a rancher over \$1,000 and pets are family members, just like children.

The Humane Society and Project Coyote, among others, are proposing a ban on coyote hunting competitions. This is ridiculous and totally unnecessary. Hunting and fishing contests have been around since time began. Competitions are an enjoyable and legal way for hunters and fishermen to get out in the field for sport and camaraderie. Hunting competitions in no way affect coyote populations. HSUS and Project Coyote would have you believe that hundreds of poor coyotes are being decimated by these competitions. That is just not so. They try to convince people that "coyotes mate for life", leaving the impression that, when a coyote becomes a widow or widower, they crawl under a bush to weep and mope around for the rest of their lives. That too is just not so. When one coyote dies or is killed, the surviving "spouse" merely finds another unattached coyote and life goes on. PLEASE do not advance their ill-conceived ideas by banning hunting competitions. What is next...fishing contests?

I am also concerned about the wording that's states "prizes and inducements" would be eliminated. These terms need to be precisely defined. Does this mean that we can't present a small trophy to the person who is the top hunter of the year? There are also hunts organized to eradicate one specific target species, feral pigs and ground squirrels for example, in one specific target location to reduce environmental or invasive damage. Would these be banned?

These hunting contests are usually held over large geographical areas so the environmental impact is totally negligible. Please don't succumb to the wishes of a few vocal "environmentalists" who would shut down a perfectly legal and enjoyable hobby that has been a part of life for hundreds of years. Hunters and fishermen are environmentalists too. We encourage well thought out and sensible regulations that improve the well-being of the animals. Eliminating hunting contests is not in that category. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive name followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.