



Attn: Members of the Illinois Legislature
Re: House Bill 2900 – Furbearer Hunting Contests
Date: April 9, 2024
Position: Oppose

Honorable Members of the Illinois Legislature,

I write to you today on behalf of the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation to respectfully request that you oppose the passage of House Bill 2900, which would prohibit organized hunting tournaments of fur-bearing game species. In addition to being a sporting tradition, such tournaments have legitimate conservation benefits as an effective localized management tool of furbearing species, such as coyotes, whose overabundance in specific areas can result in challenges regarding the management of other species, increased human-wildlife conflicts, and attacks. For these reasons, I respectfully request that you reject the passage of HB 2900.

Founded in 1989, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) is the informed authority across outdoor issues and serves as the primary conduit for influencing public policy. Working with the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC), the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus (GSC), and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses (NASC), CSF gives a voice to hunters, anglers, recreational shooters, and trappers on Capitol Hill and throughout state capitols advocating on vital outdoor issues that are the backbone of our nation's conservation legacy.

A misconception commonly spread by anti-hunters is that participants of hunting tournaments are not required to abide by wildlife regulations. Hunting tournament participants are held to the same state regulations, including those related to wanton waste, as every other sportsman and woman in Illinois. In preparation for hunting tournaments, sportsmen and women are required to purchase any necessary licenses, and often support the local economy by purchasing additional hunting-related equipment, such as ammunition – which contributes to the American System of Conservation Funding and therefore provides funding for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to carry out its mission of managing fish and wildlife species. Hunting tournaments can also be effective management tools for localized issues of overabundance of predator species or invasive species and can help mitigate a variety of human-wildlife conflicts. It has been proven that short-term removal mechanisms, such as tournaments, can provide immediate relief to farmers and ranchers by helping reduce livestock losses due to depredation.

In recognition of the cultural and wildlife management benefits that these tournaments provide, I respectfully request that you oppose the passage of HB 2900. I appreciate the opportunity to provide this information and welcome any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

Robert Matthews

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Your Inside Connection to Outdoor Legislation