

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 8492

To prohibit wildlife killing contests on public lands, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 22, 2024

Mr. COHEN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BUSH, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. LIEU, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. MENG, Mr. NADLER, Ms. PORTER, Ms. STANSBURY, Ms. TITUS, and Ms. TLAIB) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To prohibit wildlife killing contests on public lands, and  
for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Prohibit Wildlife Kill-  
5 ing Contests Act of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Wildlife killing contests are organized  
2 events in which participants kill animals for cash,  
3 prizes, entertainment, or other inducements. Judg-  
4 ing categories for wildlife killing contests include,  
5 but are not limited to, the number of animals killed,  
6 the weight or the sex of animals killed, a tiered point  
7 system by species killed, or the smallest or largest  
8 body or body part size of animals killed.

9           (2) Wildlife killing contests often target eco-  
10 logically important carnivores, including foxes, bob-  
11 cats, and coyotes.

12           (3) Scientific evidence does not support claims  
13 that wildlife killing contests permanently reduce pop-  
14 ulations of targeted species, increase populations of  
15 deer or other game species, or prevent conflict be-  
16 tween native carnivores, humans, pets, and livestock.

17           (4) Because participants often wastefully dis-  
18 card targeted wildlife, wildlife killing contests do not  
19 embody the hunting principles set forth by the  
20 North America Wildlife Conservation Model, which  
21 includes a requirement that wildlife only be killed for  
22 a legitimate purpose. As a result, numerous State  
23 agencies and officials have recognized that these  
24 contests can undermine public support for hunting

1 and damage the reputation of sportsmen and sports-  
2 women who abide by traditional hunting ethics.

3 (5) As of March 25, 2024, Arizona, California,  
4 Colorado, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico,  
5 New York, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington have  
6 banned wildlife killing contests that target certain  
7 species.

8 (6) Wildlife killing contests held on Federal  
9 lands undermine Federal wildlife management prac-  
10 tices, public trust duties, and conservation ethics.

11 **SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON WILDLIFE KILLING CONTESTS.**

12 (a) PROHIBITIONS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-  
14 graph (2), it is unlawful for any person to organize,  
15 sponsor, conduct, or participate in a wildlife killing  
16 contest on public land.

17 (2) EXCEPTIONS.—This subsection shall not  
18 apply to—

19 (A) field trials;

20 (B) wildlife killing contests that exclusively  
21 target ungulates or birds of the orders  
22 Galliformes or Anatidae; or

23 (C) lethal control actions by State or Fed-  
24 eral agencies that target wildlife classified as

1           invasive by the National Invasive Species Infor-  
2           mation Center.

3           (b) REGULATIONS.—Not later than one year after the  
4           date of enactment of this Act, each head of a public land  
5           management agency shall issue such regulations as are  
6           necessary to carry out this section.

7           (c) EFFECT ON PREEMPTION.—This section shall not  
8           be construed to preempt or limit any requirement of any  
9           law or regulation of a State or political subdivision of a  
10          State that is more restrictive than the requirements of this  
11          section.

12          (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

13           (1) WILDLIFE KILLING CONTEST.—The term  
14           “wildlife killing contest” means an event in which  
15           participants kill wildlife for cash, prizes, or other in-  
16           ducements regardless of value.

17           (2) WILDLIFE.—The term “wildlife” means all  
18           animal life except for fish, shellfish, and crustaceans.

19           (3) PUBLIC LAND.—The term “public land”  
20           means any land—

21                   (A) owned by the United States; and

22                   (B) managed by the head of a public land  
23           management agency.

24           (4) PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY.—The  
25           term “public land management agency” means the

1 National Park Service, the United States Fish and  
2 Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management,  
3 the Bureau of Reclamation, or the United States  
4 Forest Service.

5 (5) FIELD TRIAL.—The term “field trial”  
6 means a trial of sporting dogs under field conditions  
7 where dogs chase or pursue wild animals under spe-  
8 cific rules of nationally or regionally recognized  
9 hunting dog associations.

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