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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Moore/Steinborn ORIGINAL DATE 02/06/19
LAST UPDATED 02/12/19 HB _____

SHORT TITLE Prohibit Coyote Killing Contests SB 76/aSCONC

ANALYST Hanika-Ortiz

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY19	FY20		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)
New Mexico Attorney General (NMAG)
Department of Game and Fish (DGF)
New Mexico Livestock Board (NMLB)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Amendment

The Senate Conservation Committee Amendment to Senate Bill 76 corrects a misspelled word.

Synopsis of Original Bill

Senate Bill 76 prohibits organized or sponsored competition with the objective of killing coyotes for prizes or entertainment and establishes penalties. A person that organizes, causes, sponsors, arranges, provides a venue for, or holds a coyote-killing contest would be guilty of a misdemeanor and a person who participates in a coyote-killing contest would be guilty of a petty misdemeanor.

Senate Bill 76 further provides that killing a coyote in the protection of a person or property will continue to be permitted, unless otherwise prohibited by law.

No significant fiscal impact.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Senate Bill 76 has been introduced in response to an uptick in coyote killings in New Mexico. In 2015, 566 coyotes were intentionally killed with firearms in New Mexico and 69,000 were killed nationally, AOC reported. Advocates say 20 to 30 coyote-killing derbies are organized across New Mexico yearly with contests awarding prize money for most coyotes killed or biggest coyote killed. During a derby, contestants often use rifles with telescopic sights, shooting any coyote that is flushed out by dogs or comes to investigate calls that mimic wounded prey. Coyotes who are not killed, are often wounded and suffer. Also targeted in these contests are other animals including bobcats, foxes, raccoons, crows, rodents and wolves. Despite knowledge about the roles that all species play in healthy ecosystems, state wildlife agencies for the most part have kept mute.

The following is from a press release issued by the State Land Office.

On January 10, 2019, Commissioner Stephanie Garcia Richard signed her first Executive Order (2019 – 001) banning killing contests on State Trust Lands. As she signed the order, Garcia Richard was joined by animal and wildlife advocates from Animal Protection Voters, The Sierra Club, Project Coyote, Wild Earth Guardians, Prairie Dog Pals and Wildlife Conservation Advocacy Southwest. “These are not hunting contests. They are animal cruelty contests. It is an inexcusable practice, and today I used my authority to ban organized killing contests of unprotected species on any of the nine million acres of State Trust Land that I am charged with overseeing.” Garcia Richard stated in her remarks. “The position of the State Land Office under my direction is that all wildlife are sacred and all wildlife play a vital role in our environment. This action does not restrict a rancher’s ability to humanely remove or kill an animal causing harm to agriculture or domestic pets on State Trust Lands. What we are addressing is the blood sport where participants kill dozens of animals without sound justification and play for cash and prizes,” Garcia Richard added.

Aside from the Executive Order (2019-001), Commissioner Garcia Richard has also sparked important conversation on the use of traps and snares on state trust and public lands.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

As a proposed new criminal provision, SB 76 if passed, will require the courts to afford persons charged under this law all relevant constitutional protections.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The NMLB reports it has no plans to be involved with coyote killing contests. In its analysis, DGF just cited what the bill did and did not discuss any significant issues or implications.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

It will be legal to organize and participate in coyote killing contests on non-state trust lands.

AHO/gb