



December 10, 2019

Rebecca Noecker
St. Paul City Council
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, Room 310
St. Paul, MN 55102

Re: Support for Resolution Against Wildlife Killing Contests

Dear Councilmember Noecker:

On behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity, I write to support the St. Paul City Council's efforts to pass a resolution opposing wildlife killing contests. The Center is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection and restoration of biodiversity. The Center has over 1.6 million members and supporters, including more than 18,000 who live in Minnesota.

Each year in the United States, thousands of ecologically important, native carnivores and other wildlife—such as coyotes, foxes and bobcats—are killed in wildlife killing contests where cash or weapons, like military-style assault rifles, are awarded to participants who kill the most or the largest animals. Not only are these contests unsporting and wasteful, but they are also ecologically harmful and deeply at odds with the principles of the North American Wildlife Conservation Model requiring that wildlife only be killed for a legitimate purpose.

This type of mass killing disregards the critical roles that native wildlife play in healthy ecosystems—such as coyotes controlling disease-carrying rodent populations—and creates chaos in the family structures of the targeted carnivores, which may result in increased conflicts with livestock, pets and people.

Wildlife killing contests also put non-target animals, like family dogs or endangered species like wolves and lynx, at risk of being shot or trapped. Over 20 dogs have been killed because they have been mistaken for coyotes. And discarded, lead-riddled carcasses may poison eagles or wolves.

At least nine killing contests occur annually in Minnesota, and many others likely remain hidden from public scrutiny. Public opposition to these events is key to passing local and statewide bans and convincing local sponsors, such as gun shops and bars, to withdraw support. Rapidly growing opposition to wildlife killing contests has led to full or partial bans in Arizona, California, Colorado, Maryland, New Mexico and Vermont.

A resolution by the City Council of Minnesota's capital city is key to turning the tide against these harmful and cruel events. The Center for Biological Diversity and our thousands of

Minnesota members and supporters enthusiastically support a resolution opposing wildlife killing contests. If you have any questions, please contact me at 651-955-3821.

Sincerely,



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