



C. L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

April 11, 2013

The Honorable Scott Bedke
Speaker of the House
Idaho Legislature
Boise, ID 83720

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I hereby advise you that I have returned without my approval, disapproved and vetoed, the following House Bill, to wit:

H278

within the time limited by law, the same having arrived in the Office of the Governor at the hour of 2:13 p.m. on April 1, 2013.

Throughout my tenure as governor, I have fought for state management of wolves in Idaho. State management was a long time coming. Many promises were made and broken by the federal government and by the organizations that supported wolf introduction in Idaho.

We all recognize that wolves have had extreme impacts on wildlife and livestock in Idaho. Sportsmen and livestock owners share concerns about the significant damage wolves have done to deer, elk, moose, cattle, sheep and other domestic livestock. They also share concerns about the effects on Idaho's economy and on rural communities.

In light of the fact that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's budget has been cut, possibly impacting wolf control actions, sportsmen and livestock producers understand they must deal with the depredation issue and should be working together on a long-term solution. I have deep concerns that H278 would divide sportsmen and livestock owners, making a cooperative, long-term solution to wolf depredation costs more difficult to achieve.

In addition and perhaps more central to the discussion is the manner in which this legislation was brought to the Legislature. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Fish and Game Commission, and Idaho's sportsmen were neither consulted nor had the opportunity to review the legislation and provide input to the bill's sponsor prior to its introduction. It is important in drafting legislation that discussions with affected parties be held in earnest so that problems can be solved – not created.

The Honorable Scott Bedke
April 11, 2013
Page 2

In order to craft a long-term, workable solution providing for the costs associated with wolf control, I have asked Fish and Game Director Virgil Moore and Agriculture Director Celia Gould to convene the Fish and Game Advisory Committee to openly discuss the funding issue and to arrive at a collaborative solution. In this way, the groups affected by any changes to funding mechanisms will be represented and have input. The sportsmen and livestock owners can work together and design a proper program.

I am committed to finding a durable funding solution for wolf control actions and depredation in Idaho, and a plan collaboratively crafted by sportsmen and livestock producers is a better path forward than H 278.

As Always – Idaho, “Esto Perpetua”

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C.L. Butch Otter". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho

Cc: Secretary of State