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01/xx/2025

The Senator/Representative (INSERT NAME)
Name.Surname@sdlegislature.gov
[605-xxx-xxxx](tel:605-xxx-xxxx)

Subject: Requesting your sponsorship of a bill to stop SDGFP's the 'Nest Predator Bounty Program'

Dear Senator/Representative Surname,

I am a resident of City, South Dakota. I am writing to seek your support and invite you to become a sponsor of a bill to stop the SD 'Nest Predator Bounty Program' (hereinafter NPBP), aimed to terminate the aforementioned program.

The Game, Fish and Parks Commission has funded bounties and trap give-aways so as to kill mesocarnivores & omnivores (raccoons, striped skunks, badgers, opossums, and red fox) believed to prey on bird eggs or nestlings, with the intent of improving nesting success of ground nesting birds. Kristi Noem promised [a pheasant predator bounty program](#) when she ran for election in 2018 and this program is often attributed to her & her Second Century Initiative. The NPBP raises many concerns, some of them (but not all) are pointed out below.

- **NPBP is a waste of money.** Aimed to increase nesting success, SDGFP has spent more than \$500,000 for bounties in each of 5 years of operation and \$131,950 in 2020. GFP reported [\\$1.7 million](#) expenses on the program for 2019 alone. There were additional costs, such as 5 years of employee time and incidentals, however they have spent at least \$3,963,214 in the past 6 years. In the sixth year of the NPBP implementation, [GFP confirmed](#) that there is no data to show the program has increased the state's ground nesting bird's population. Number of animals killed has been [limited by allocated funds](#), except for 2020 when bounty was lowered from \$10 to \$5 per tail.

- **NPBP is not supported by residents and professionals.** In 2019 Remington Research Group conducted [a social survey](#) of South Dakota residents regarding the NPBP and showed, that a minority of South Dakota residents (37%) approve of trapping in general and [only 26% of residents approved the NPBP](#). GFP received >600 public comments on the NPBP (e.g., [2019](#), [2020](#), [2021](#)), ~90% of which were opposed. On the [special meeting 5/23/2019](#), GFP received 186 public comments, 183 (98%) of which were opposed to

trapping on public lands and NPBP. Here is a [summary of comments](#). Ten South Dakota non-government organizations on behalf of many thousands of members submitted a [joint letter](#) to GFP, requesting to postpone any action on the NPBP. Similar [bounty program bill failed](#) in neighboring Iowa as a result of strong opposition from residents and NGOs.

- **Nest predator bounties is a technique used for decades, well known for its inefficiency.** There have been countless examples in the past, showing how bounty programs collapsed after decades of operating due to its ineffectiveness and under their own financial weight, e.g., in [Missouri](#), [Georgia](#), [Kansas](#), [North Dakota & Nebraska](#), [Montana & Colorado](#)...

- **There are cheaper & effective alternatives to NPBP.** Less-expensive methods to improve bird populations have focused on [increasing area and diversity of habitats](#), that increase nesting success by up to 80 percent via reducing the effectiveness of predators rather than exterminating the latter.

The above points are just the tip of the iceberg. Other concerns are briefly described in the [Appendix](#).

We also attach two versions of potential bills. One is just focused on stopping the NPBP, another one stops the NPBP but would also improves professionalism of other conflict wildlife management efforts, so has a larger impact. You can also visit Prairie Hills Audubon Society's [web page on the NPBP subject](#).

Your sponsorship would help secure bipartisan support and save SD over \$500,000 dollars of wasted money each year.

I would be happy to provide additional information, answer any questions, or meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss this further. Please feel free to contact me directly at (605)xxx-xxxx, Sender'sName@xyz.com.

Thank you for your time, attention, and commitment to serving our community. I look forward to the possibility of working together on this important initiative.

Sincerely,
