

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1940

To prohibit the use of M-44 devices, commonly known as “cyanide bombs”,  
on public land, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 13, 2023

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. HEINRICH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

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## A BILL

To prohibit the use of M-44 devices, commonly known as  
“cyanide bombs”, on public land, 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 “Canyon’s Law”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 Congress finds the following:

7 (1) Sodium cyanide is the highly toxic pesticide  
8 active ingredient used in M-44 devices, also known  
9 as “cyanide bombs”, and is used to kill wolves,

1 coyotes, foxes, and wild dogs suspected of preying on  
2 livestock and poultry.

3 (2) Sodium cyanide is registered for restricted  
4 use under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and  
5 Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136 et seq.) as a Cat-  
6 egory One acute toxicant, the most hazardous Envi-  
7 ronmental Protection Agency classification available,  
8 due to the harm it poses to people and the environ-  
9 ment.

10 (3) Poisoning by sodium cyanide leads to cen-  
11 tral nervous system depression, cardiac arrest, res-  
12 piratory failure, paralysis, and blindness.

13 (4) The Environmental Protection Agency au-  
14 thorizes the use of M-44 devices nationwide, and in  
15 recent years, M-44s were used in Colorado, Idaho,  
16 North Dakota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada,  
17 Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia,  
18 and Wyoming.

19 (5) In 2017, an M-44 device exposed an Idaho  
20 child to a sublethal dose of sodium cyanide with sub-  
21 sequent short-term and long-term medical complica-  
22 tions. Two Wyoming children were also exposed to  
23 the poison from another M-44 device. Three family  
24 dogs died in these two separate incidents.

1           (6) The indiscriminate M-44 device commonly  
2           harms nontarget wildlife and people; at least 42 peo-  
3           ple have accidentally triggered a cyanide bomb caus-  
4           ing exposure to cyanide gas and injuries since 1984.

5           (7) M-44 devices kill targeted animals only 53  
6           percent of the time. Thousands of nontarget species  
7           of animals have been killed by M-44s, including bald  
8           eagles, golden eagles, gray wolves, black bears, griz-  
9           zly bears, bobcats, fishers, and family dogs.

10          (8) Despite the United States Fish and Wildlife  
11          Service determining in 1993 that M-44 devices  
12          could kill endangered species like the California Con-  
13          dor, the use of the M-44 continues in areas where  
14          endangered species are found and continues to result  
15          in the deaths of endangered species.

16 **SEC. 3. USE OF M-44 DEVICES ON PUBLIC LAND PROHIB-**  
17 **ITED.**

18          (a) IN GENERAL.—Preparing, placing, installing, set-  
19          ting, deploying, or otherwise using an M-44 device on  
20          public land is prohibited.

21          (b) REMOVAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date  
22          of the enactment of this Act, any Federal, State, or county  
23          agency that has prepared, placed, installed, set, or de-  
24          ployed an M-44 device on public land shall remove each  
25          such M-44 device from public land.

1 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

2 (1) M-44 DEVICE.—

3 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “M-44 de-  
4 vice” means a device designed to propel sodium  
5 cyanide when triggered by an animal.

6 (B) COMMON NAMES.—The term “M-44  
7 device” includes any device that may be com-  
8 monly known as an “M-44 ejector device” or  
9 an “M-44 predator control device”.

10 (2) PUBLIC LAND.—The term “public land”  
11 means any Federal land under the administrative ju-  
12 risdiction of a public land management agency.

13 (3) PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY.—The  
14 term “public land management agency” means each  
15 of, or a combination of, the following:

16 (A) The National Park Service.

17 (B) The United States Fish and Wildlife  
18 Service.

19 (C) The Bureau of Land Management.

20 (D) The Bureau of Reclamation.

21 (E) The Forest Service.

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