

The Honorable Representative

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Senators

The U.S. Senate, U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representative and Senators:

The Prevention of Equine Cruelty Act of 2009 (H.R. 503) is back on the legislative calendar, after moving through the Judiciary Committee with bipartisan approval in the last Congressional session. Please help pass this measure to ban the possession, shipping, transporting, purchasing, selling, delivering or receiving of a horse or horseflesh for human consumption.

I am counting on you to support H.R. 503, reintroduced 1/14/09 by House Judiciary Committee Chairman John Conyers, Jr. and Rep. Dan Burton. I encourage my Senators to introduce and endorse a companion bill that also activates an export-for-slaughter ban on our nation's horses.

In 2007, state courts closed America's last three equine processors in Texas and Illinois. Still, the lack of a federal law let over 100,000 horses go to slaughter in Canada and Mexico in 2008.

To reach kill plants, horses are jammed in double-decked cattle trailers that hurt their heads and necks. Food, water and rest are withheld for 24 or more hours. Horses arrive weak and injured. Some are dead by journey's end. Others kept in the over-packed trailers endure hot or cold weather extremes. Horses who collapse are brutally offloaded.

Slaughter is excruciating for these easily excitable animals. Horses are goaded into the kill box with fiberglass rods. Workers pummel their faces, necks, backs and legs. The captive bolt pistols used in Canada often don't work on such long-necked animals, and leave them thrashing in pain.

In Mexico, killers use a "puntilla knife" to sever a horse's spinal cord. Investigative footage from a San Antonio News-Express expose in 2007 shows alert horses stabbed repeatedly around the withers. When a horse finally falls, he is merely paralyzed while workers dangle him by his hind leg and slit his throat. Some horses even remain sentient when dismembered.

Violent slaughter should never be an alternative to rescue, adoption or humane euthanasia. Furthermore, without a federal law horse kill plants may reopen in states where they are not currently banned.

As a constituent, I ask my Representative to back the Prevention of Equine Cruelty Act (H.R. 503). I urge my Senators to initiate similar legislation to end slaughter and domestic/global transport of horses for human consumption. Your feedback is very important to me.

Thank you,