

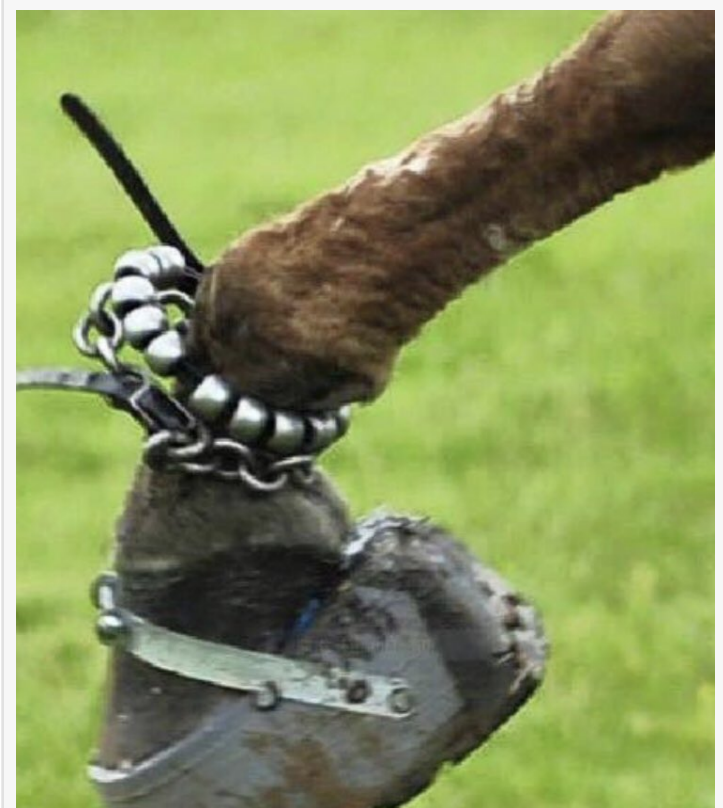
Animal Wellness Action Calls on House to Take Up Two Long Overdue and Mainstream Anti-Cruelty Measures

PACT and PAST Act Have Already Secured a Majority of House Lawmakers as Cosponsors

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, April 22, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Washington, D.C. - Today, [Animal](#) Wellness Action called on key House lawmakers to move forward two anti-cruelty measures, that have both achieved a critical mass of support and that are each expected to attract 400 or more votes on the House floor.

“Animal cruelty is a vice, and Congressional leaders should treat this scourge with the urgency it deserves,” said Wayne Pacelle, founder of Animal Wellness Action. “At a time when the American public is critical of divisive partisanship, lawmakers collaborating for animal welfare reminds the public that Congress can work together for the common good.”

The Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act, H.R. 724, led by U.S. Reps. Ted Deutch, D-Fla., and Vern Buchanan, R-Fla., already has 224 cosponsors. This bill would create a national anti-cruelty statute that allows for a crackdown on perpetrators of malicious cruelty to animals. It would also make bestiality a federal crime for the first time. The companion bill, S. 479, led by U.S. Senators Pat Toomey, R-Pa., and Dick Blumenthal, D-Conn., has 26 cosponsors, and in 2017, an identical version passed the Senate by unanimous consent.



Example of a 'Big Lick' stacked shoe and ankle chains

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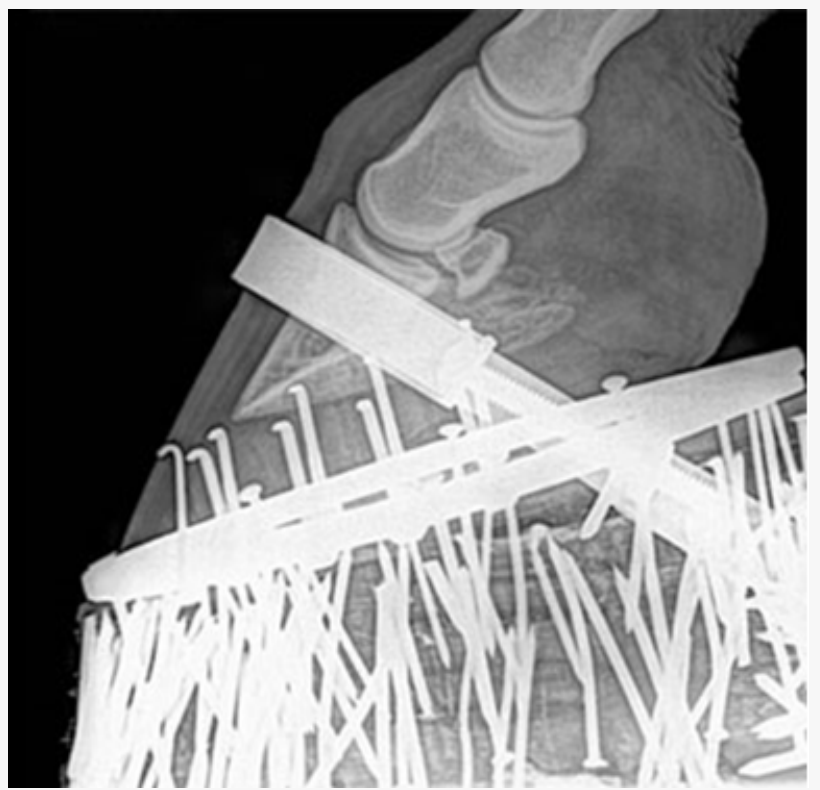
Wayne Pacelle, founder of Animal Wellness Action

The Prevent All [Spring](#) Tactics (PAST) Act, H.R. 693, led by U.S. Reps. Kurt Schrader, D-Ore., and Ted Yoho, R-Fla., has already garnered 220 House cosponsors. The measure would ban the use of stacked shoes and ankle chains on the feet of Tennessee Walking, Racking, and Spotted Saddle horses, eliminate the existing industry self-regulation program, and toughen penalties for violators of the [Horse](#) Protection Act. The Senate companion, S. 1007, led by U.S. Senators Mike Crapo, R-Ida., and Mark Warner,

D-Va., was introduced recently with five Republican and six Democrat lawmakers as original cosponsors.

Last Congress, Senate Republicans and Democrats came together on the PACT Act and passed it by unanimous consent. However, House Republican leaders did not bring up either bill, even though PACT had 284 cosponsors and PAST had 290.

The PACT Act has no outspoken opponents and has a strong grassroots campaign behind it. Sydney Helfand, a high school student in Maryland, initiated a change.org petition urging lawmakers to support the PACT Act and she is closing in on 500,000 signatures. "Sydney is the very embodiment of a young person working through the system to take a stand against animal cruelty and make the world a better, safer place for animals and for people," added Pacelle. "Lawmakers should heed her plea to adopt a national anti-cruelty statute to remove that gap in our federal legal framework related to malicious cruelty."



Example of a 'Big Lick' stacked shoe XRay

The PAST Act seeks to eliminate the barbaric abuse of Tennessee Walking, Racking, and Spotted Saddle horses by a small group of trainers and owners who intentionally injure their horses' feet to force an exaggerated gait known as the "Big Lick," in order to win prizes in horse shows.

"As former president of the trade association for the Walking Horse industry, I've seen firsthand how a subset of horse show enthusiasts are torturing horses to win ribbons at shows," said Marty Irby, executive director of Animal Wellness Action and an eight-time World Champion rider. "I know the dirty underside of the 'Big Lick' faction, and the insidious maiming of horses involved in this sport must stop.

Earlier this year, Animal Wellness Action brought in one of its celebrity ambassadors, Priscilla Presley, and she met with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, urging them to advance an animal welfare agenda that includes passing PAST and PACT.

Animal Wellness Action (Action) is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty. We champion causes that alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife. We advocate for policies to stop dogfighting and cockfighting and other forms of malicious cruelty and to confront factory farming and other systemic forms of animal exploitation. To prevent cruelty, we promote enacting good public policies and we work to enforce those policies. To enact good laws, we must elect good lawmakers, and that's why we remind voters which candidates care about our issues and which ones don't. We believe helping animals helps us all.

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