

Kurt Schrader Misleads Fellow Congressmen on Tydings Past Act

Whether the House was deliberate or just ill informed, the Senate is urged to convene a session 8/21-8/31/19 in Shelbyville, TN and see first hand.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- On July 24, 2019, during a congressional session on HR693/Past Act, Congressman Schrader stated: "Some people may argue that these action devices are not harmful for horses but the experts at the American Veterinarian Medical Association, the American Association

of Equine Practitioners, the United States Equine Federation all say that pressure from these items contained in this package produce pain in the hoof and in the leg that the horse lifts its feet higher and faster in an exaggerated gait beyond what they are naturally able to do."

While these organizations do support the HR693, none have said that action devices or padded horse shoes cause a horse to suffer pain.

In 2012, the AAEP published a White Paper on soring that stated "Continued reliance on the use of traditional techniques dependent upon the subjective response of the horse would appear a wasted effort and funding for the development of objective methodology for use by qualified veterinary inspectors must be provided."; "The AAEP believes in and supports equine research. More research is needed to improve the methods of detection of soring." and research was needed to "Determine the effect of shoeing alone and shoeing plus chains of variable weights in the development of pastern irritation and scarring on both young and mature TWHs."

<https://aaep.org/position-practice-soring>

On June 18, 2014, Dr. Whitney Miller, Assistant Director Government Relations at the AVMA stated "While the chains and pads, in and of themselves are not causing soring, they are a means and an incentive to sore the horses" The AVMA supports the ban of pads on Walking Horses because they are a way to "hide the bolts and other ways" of soring.

The US Equestrian Federation is not on record anywhere stating that action devices or padded shoes cause soring as many breeds who show under USEF rules wear padded shoes.

The padded shoes and action device argument has been going on for 50 years. Take a brief look into the past to see if the Past Act has a hoof to stand on.

Following the passage of the Horse Protection Act in 1970, Lois Hinson, USDA's Chief Staff Veterinarian for Horse Protection, from 1973 until 1978, conducted studies and clinics before authoring shoeing regulations to ensure the health and well being of the horse. Prior to this federal regulation, there were no rules for shoeing with pads. This federal regulation is still in



HSUS photo used minus "Photo Courtesy of Sarah Barnett and HSUS Facebook page"

place and calls for the padded shoes to follow the natural angle of the hoof and heel/toe ratios.

The USDA commissioned other studies like the Ames Study published in 1975, and the Auburn Study which took place from 1978 to 1982, both were studies using thermography in detecting inflammatory processes in horses to diagnose soring. Both used controls which had not been sored versus those that had been chemically sored and evaluated a variety of action devices on both. The results led the American Horse Protection Association to sue the USDA to implement rulemaking to ban both padded shoes and action devices.

In *AHPA v Lyng* (<https://openjurist.org/812/f2d/1>), the Court ordered the USDA to institute rulemaking based on the Auburn Study which found that action devices weighing ten ounces or more “could” cause soring. The finality of that litigation was a federal regulation (9 CFR 11.2) which prohibits any action device that weighs more than six ounces as six ounces would not cause soring.

Not satisfied with the Court's ruling, AHPA turned to litigation. In *AHPA v Yeutter*, (<https://openjurist.org/917/f2d/594/american-horse-protection-association-inc-v-yeutter>) the District Court found “The Secretary was not under an express duty to prohibit any practice, however safe by itself, that might indirectly cause or perpetuate abuses already separately prohibited by the regulations. If such were the duty, the Secretary might have to eliminate horse shows entirely because they perpetuate the practice of soring.” AHPA never alleged that padded shoes or action devices weighing more than six ounces caused pain.

You would think the argument on padded shoes and action devices would have been over following the ruling in *Yeutter*, but the Tennessee Walking Horse has remained under attack for the use of padded shoes and action devices from animal rights activist like the HSUS and AWA.

Since the ruling in *Yeutter*, Mississippi State University conducted several Walking Horse gait studies. Those studies included data collected from newborn foals, yearlings, flat shod and padded horses. The padded shoe gait study was written in 2003 by Dr. Molly Nicodemus. There is no mention in the study of pain, inflammation or any harmful side effects on her padded studies. Although the study was one of gait, it is reasonable to conclude that if there had been any adverse effects witnessed, it would have been noted.

More recently, the [University of Tennessee](#), in 2018, published “The Effects of Stacked Wedge Pads and Chains Applied to the forefeet of Tennessee Walking Horses for a five day period on behavioral and biochemical indicators of pain, stress and inflammation” That study can be found <https://avmajournals.avma.org/doi/full/10.2460/ajvr.79.1.21>. Although a brief study, it has gone beyond what other studies have done, in evaluating blood for indications of stress. No indication of stress was found.

There is one more element of proof that padded shoes and action devices do not cause pain - look in the showring. Walking Horses compete into their teens and twenties. If a horse experiences pain on a padded shoe, pain being an indicator of suffering damage, how long could you expect these horses to compete? There's no scientific data to answer that question, but common sense tells you they would not be able to continue competing for very long.

It is incomprehensible that Congressman Schrader would ignore the past facts in order to further the Past Act/HR693. He swore an oath when he became a veterinarian to use “scientific knowledge” and he swore to uphold the Constitution, the very Constitution that establishes liberty and justice. Do campaign contributions from AWA and animal rights groups negate these oaths? Will this behavior lead to an ethics investigation like Whitfield?

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