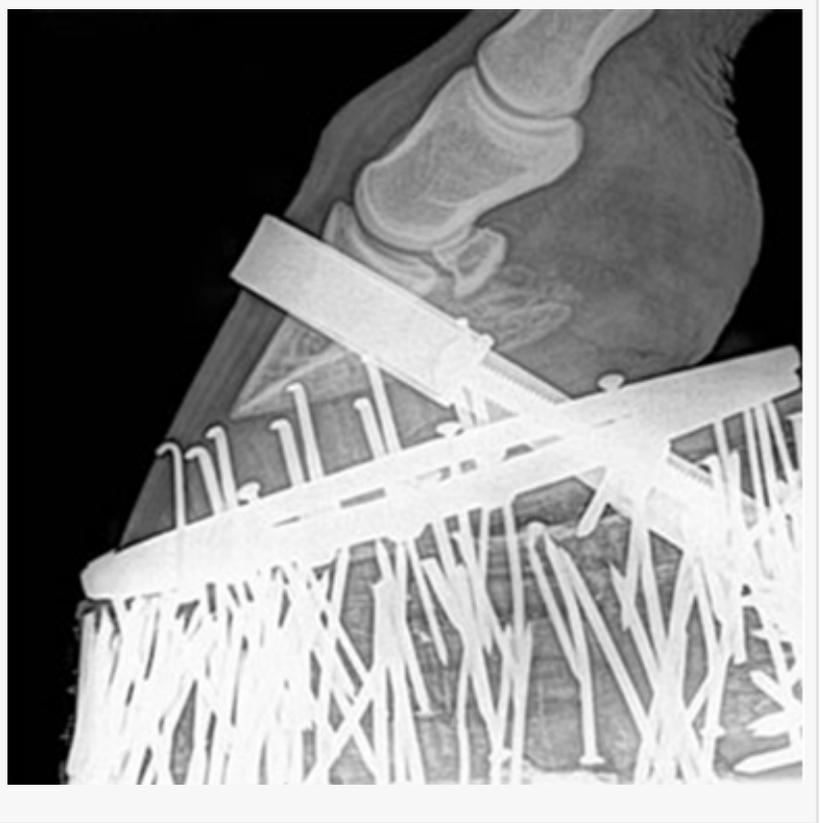


Arkansas Delegation Split: Hill and Crawford Vote to End Horse Abuse, Womack and Westerman Vote to Keep 'Soring' Alive

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, USA, August 13, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS – The U.S. House of Representatives recently passed the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act, H.R. 693, by a vote of [333 to 96](#). U.S. Rep. French Hill, a longtime cosponsor of the bill, and Rep. Rick Crawford both voted in support of the PAST Act, while Reps. Steve Womack and Bruce Westerman sided with animal abusers in voting against the bill.

The PAST Act seeks to strengthen the Horse Protection Act and end the torturous, painful practice of soring Tennessee Walking, Racking, and Spotted Saddle Horses. Soring, the intentional infliction of pain to horses' front limbs by applying caustic chemicals such as mustard oil or kerosene or inserting sharp objects into the horses' hooves to create an exaggerated gait known as the "Big Lick," has plagued the equine world for six decades.



Tennessee Walking Horses once covered the State of Arkansas, when famed trainer Joe Webb from Searcy, who rode Rodger's Perfection, Perfection's Carbon Copy, and Mark of Carbon to the 1959, 1964, and 1978 Tennessee Walking Horse World Grand Championships, respectively, trained and exhibited horses for decades in the state.

“

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Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action

U.S. Senators John Boozman, and Tom Cotton have yet to take a position on the Senate companion bill, S. 1007, led by the senior U.S. Senator from Idaho, Republican Mike Crapo, that mirrors the House passed legislation.

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"We applaud Reps. French Hill and Rick Crawford for their support and key role in overwhelmingly passing the PAST Act to end this barbaric and indefensible practice that has marred the horse show world for decades," said [Marty Irby](#), executive director at Animal Wellness Action and past president of the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' & Exhibitors' Association. "Womack and Westerman, sure know how to pick the wrong horse by voting against PAST, but the landslide support for the bill is a powerful signal to the U.S. Senate that it should pony up and end this cruelty to horses once and for all."

"The bottom line is you are either for animal cruelty, or you are against it," said Rep. Ted Yoho (R-FL), lead Republican sponsor of the PAST Act, and cochair of the Congressional Veterinary Medicine Caucus.

The PAST Act would ban the use of painful large stacked shoes and ankle chains and would also eliminate the existing system of self-regulation by the industry and toughen penalties for violators of the Horse Protection Act. It's supported by the American Quarter Horse Association, Animal Wellness Action, the American Horse Council, American Veterinary Medical Association, American Association of Equine Practitioners, United States Equestrian Federation, National Sheriff's Association, and Arkansas Veterinary Medical Association.

The PAST Act has been blocked for years by a handful of well-placed lawmakers, but a new House rule triggering consideration of any measure that attracts 290 or more cosponsors brought the issue to the floor. PAST attracted 308 cosponsors, and was led by U.S. Reps. Kurt Schrader (D-OR) and Ted Yoho (R-FL), cochairs of the Congressional Veterinary Medicine Caucus, along with Reps. Steve Cohen (D-TN), Ron Estes (R-KS), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), and Chris Collins (R-NY). The Senate companion has garnered 43 cosponsors.

See what Members of Congress from across the nation have to say about the PAST Act by [clicking here](#).

The Animal Wellness Foundation (Foundation) is a Los Angeles-based private charitable organization with a mission of helping animals by making veterinary care available to everyone



Example of soring that enforcement of the Horse Protection Act would prevent



with a pet, regardless of economic ability. We organize rescue efforts and medical services for dogs and cats in need and help homeless pets find a loving caregiver. We are advocates for getting veterinarians to the front lines of the animal welfare movement; promoting responsible pet ownership; and vaccinating animals against infectious diseases such as distemper. We also support policies that prevent animal cruelty and that alleviate suffering. We believe helping animals helps us all.

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.



Many liken "Big Lick" soring events to cockfighting pictured

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