

Reps. Jeff Fortenberry and Don Bacon Work to Protect Iconic American Horses while Rep. Adrian Smith Sides with Abusers

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, USA, August 14, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- 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. Reps. Jeff Fortenberry and Don Bacon, both longtime cosponsors of the PAST Act, voted in support of the measure, while Rep. Adrian Smith – a longtime champion of horse slaughter, and other animal abuses, broke from the majority of Republicans in the U.S. House, voting against the measure.

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.

U.S. Senators Deb Fischer and Ben Sasse 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. Sasse's predecessor, former U.S. Senator Mike Johanns, was a cosponsor of the PAST Act in the 113th Congress, and a longtime champion to end soring who also served as President George W. Bush's Secretary of Agriculture when the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration – the breed's World Grand Championship event – was shut down in 2006 due to the majority of competitors being found in violation of the Horse Protection Act by USDA inspectors for signs soring.

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U.S. Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID)

“We applaud Reps. Jeff Fortenberry and Don Bacon 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. “We're not one bit surprised that Adrian Smith sided with abusers based on his long-term record against horses, but the landslide support for the bill is a powerful signal to the U.S. Senate that it should saddle up and end this cruelty to horses once and for all.”



Rep. Jeff Fortenberry

"I support the humane treatment of all animals and remain committed to ending the cruel practice of soring," said U.S. Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID). "I appreciate the House's movement on the PAST Act. I will continue to work with my colleagues in the Senate to see that the legislation moves in the Senate and that current animal welfare laws are enforced."

"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 co-chair 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 Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association.

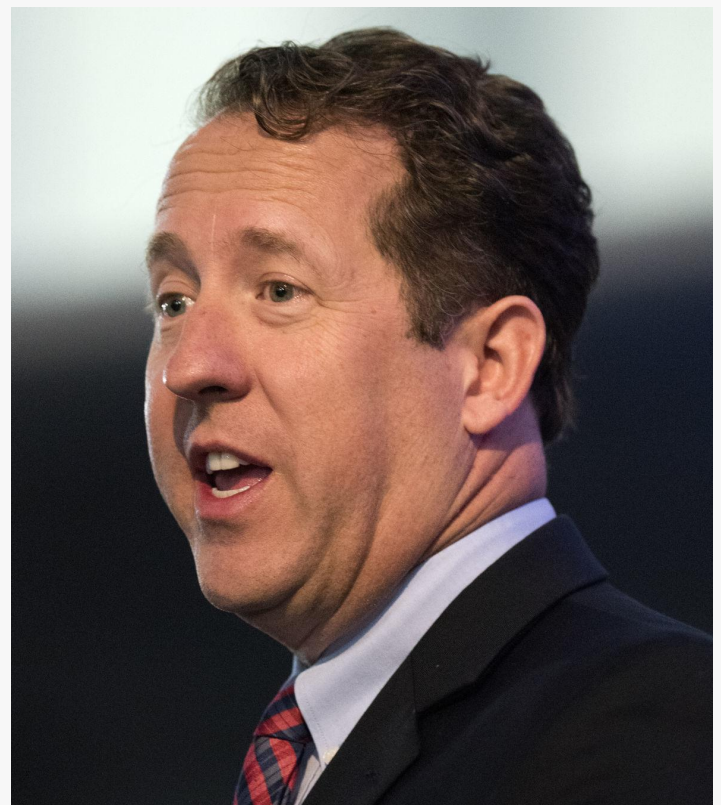
The PAST Act has been blocked for years by a handful of well-placed lawmakers, but a new House rule triggering consideration of any measure that attracts 290 or more cosponsors brought the issue to the floor. PAST attracted 308 cosponsors and was led by U.S. Reps. Kurt Schrader (D-OR) and Ted Yoho (R-FL), co-chairs 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 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



Rep. Don Bacon

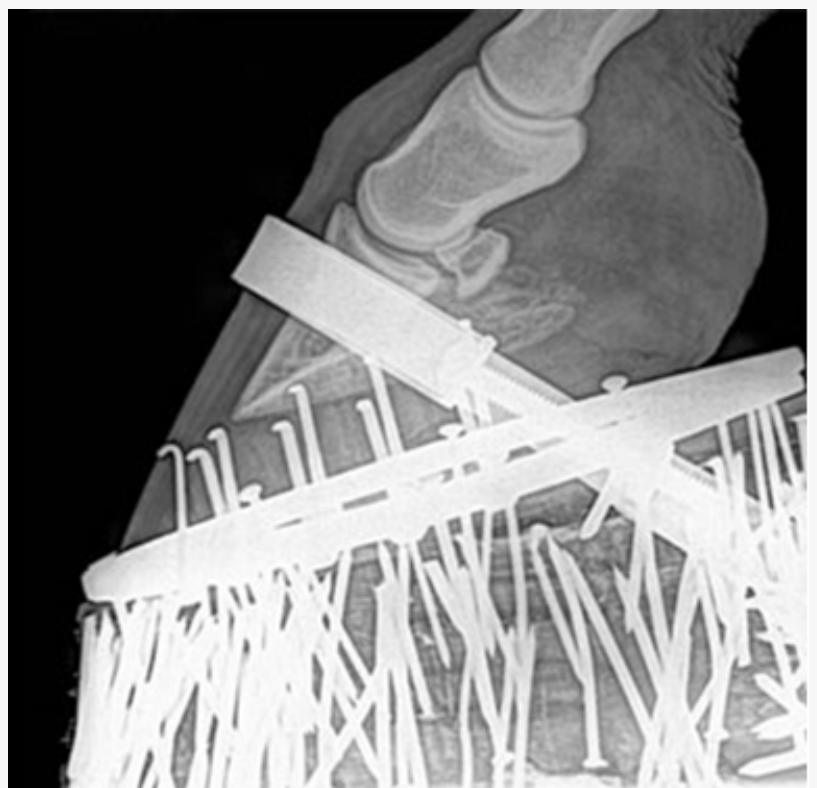


Rep. Adrian Smith

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.

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Example of a 'Big Lick' stacked shoe XRay



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

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