

Animal Wellness Applauds U.S. Rep. Peter Welch for Protecting Iconic American Horses

MONTPELIER, VERMONT, USA, August 21, 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. Rep. Peter Welch, a longtime cosponsor of the measure, voted in support of the bill. Both U.S. Senators Bernie Sanders, and Patrick Leahy are cosponsors of the Senate companion bill on, S. 1007, led by the senior U.S. Senator from Idaho, Mike Crapo, that mirrors the House passed legislation.

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. The "Big Lick" cruelty is exhibited annually at the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration that began today in Shelbyville, Tennessee.



Animal Wellness Action Executive Director Marty Irby with U.S. Rep. Peter Welch in July of 2018

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Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action

"This legislation will close loopholes that enable the cruel practice of "soring" horses," said U.S. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer. "I thank Rep. Schrader for being a champion of animal welfare issues and building on the legacy of my late friend, Senator Tydings. I urge Senator McConnell to take up this bipartisan legislation without delay."

"I am deeply grateful for Rep. Peter Welch's longtime support of the PAST Act, and applaud his vote and key role in securing the passage of this legislation to finally end this horrific practice that has marred the show horse world for sixty years," said [Marty Irby](#), executive director at Animal Wellness Action, and past president of the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' & Exhibitors' Association. "The overwhelming support for the PAST Act sends a strong signal to the U.S. Senate that it should saddle up and help end this cruelty.

"Timing is ripe, and the majority of Americans want to see Congress work to protect these iconic American horses upon whose backs our country was built upon," said Animal Wellness Advocate Priscilla Presley. "U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell should swiftly schedule a vote on the PAST Act, and execute the will of the American people, and I call on him to do so!"

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 Vermont Veterinary Medical Association.

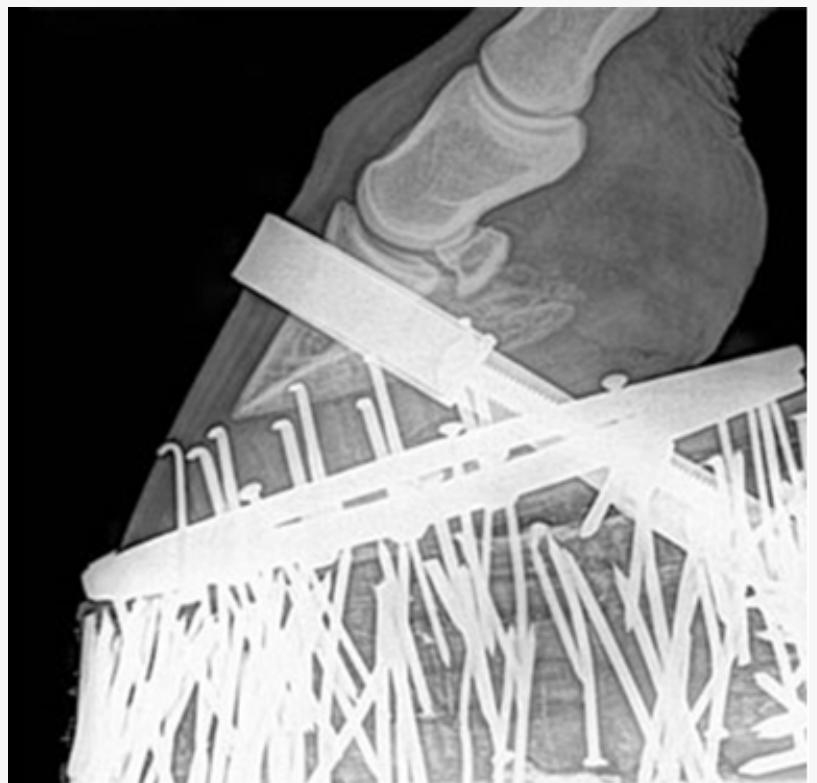
The PAST Act has been blocked for years by a handful of well-placed lawmakers, but a new House rule triggering consideration of any measure that attracts 290 or more cosponsors brought the issue to the floor. PAST attracted 308 cosponsors, and was led by U.S. Reps. Kurt Schrader (D-OR) and Ted Yoho (R-FL),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



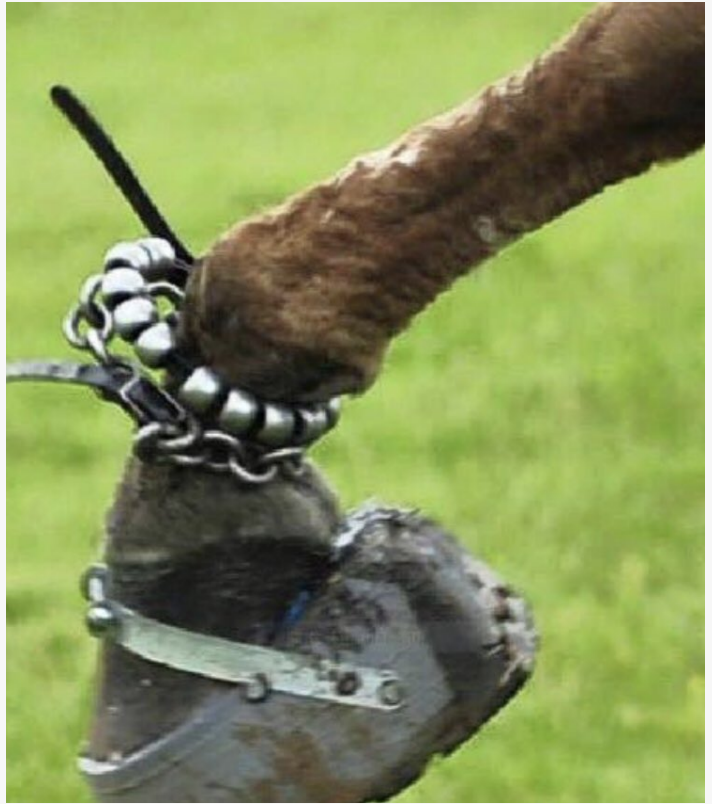
Priscilla Presley, U.S. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Holly Gann, and Marty Irby on Capitol Hill Discussing the PAST Act



Devices the PAST Act would outlaw

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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Devices the PAST Act would outlaw



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

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