

Animal Wellness Action Applauds New York Congressional Delegation for Working to Protect Iconic American Horses

ALBANY, NEW YORK , USA, August 30, 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. Chris Collins, one of the bill's leadership team members, was joined by the entire New York Congressional Delegation that voted in support of the measure: Reps. Lee Zeldin, Peter King, Thomas Suozzi, Kathleen Rice, Gregory Meeks, Grace Meng, Nydia Velázquez, Hakeem Jeffries, Yvette Clarke, Jerrold Nadler, Max Rose, Carolyn Maloney, Adriano Espaillat, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, José Serrano, Eliot Engel, Nita Lowey, Sean Maloney, Antonio Delgado, Paul Tonko, Elise Stefanik, Anthony Brindisi, Tom Reed, John Katko, Joseph Morelle, and Brian Higgins. Each of these Members were also co-sponsors of the PAST Act with the exception of Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, whose office did not respond to multiple requests for co-sponsorship.

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" animal cruelty will be exhibited for the next 2 days at the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration in Shelbyville, Tennessee.

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand is also a cosponsor of the Senate companion bill, S. 1007, led by the senior U.S. Senator from Idaho, Mike Crapo, that mirrors the House passed legislation and currently has 43 cosponsors in the Upper Chamber. U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer has yet to cosponsor the legislation in the 116th Congress but has supported the measure in previous Congresses.

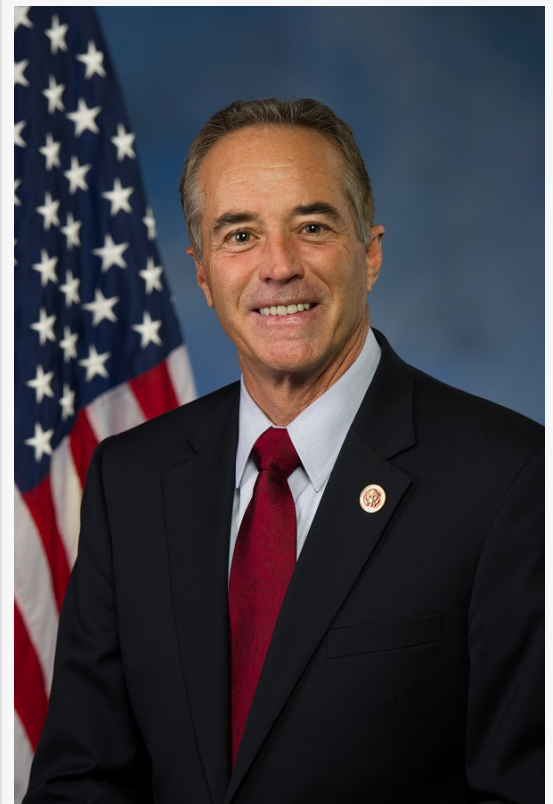
“

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Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action

“We applaud Rep. Chris Collins for his tremendous leadership, and the entire House Delegation from New York for their terrific work to help end the practice of

soring that has marred the show horse world for six decades,” said [Marty Irby](#), executive director at Animal Wellness Action and a past president of the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' & Exhibitors' Association. “The PAST Act's overwhelming support sends a strong signal to the U.S.



Rep. Chris Collins, one of the PAST Act's leaders

Senate that it should saddle up and swiftly move this legislation, and I hope Leader Chuck Schumer will push for a vote on the bill before the year is over."

"As co-chairman of the Congressional Horse Caucus, I am proud to support this legislation that will bring an end to horse soring," said Rep. Paul Tonko (NY-20). "By strengthening penalties and banning the use of devices associated with soring, the PAST Act will ensure that these majestic animals are protected from this inhumane and painful practice."

"The PAST Act is an important piece of legislation in our fight to protect the safety and wellbeing of horses," said Rep. Adriano Espaillat (NY-13). "Despite the presence of previous laws outlawing the practice of soring, or deliberately causing pain to a horse's leg to change gait patterns, it continues to be common practice. The PAST Act will help remedy this problem by adding enforcement and increasing penalties for this abusive practice. We are encouraged by the broad support this bill has garnered from both sides of the aisle and associations across the country and will continue our efforts to end animal abuse and support animal rights."

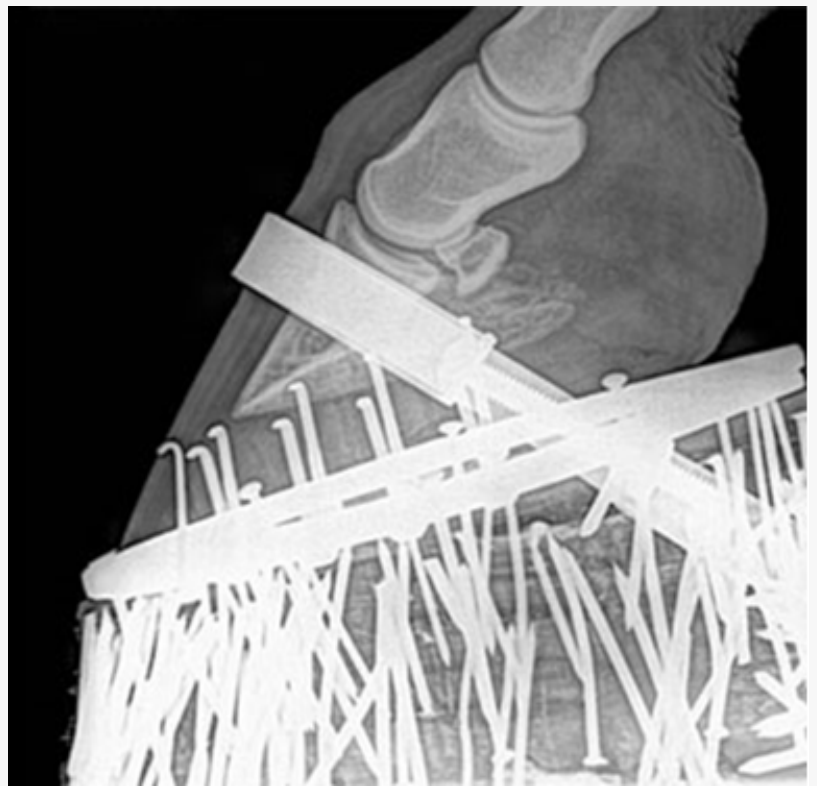
"Horses have a special place in American culture, and they deserve additional protections from needless cruelty," said Rep. Anthony Brindisi (NY-22). "I am proud to support the PAST Act to end the painful practice of horse soring, and I am pleased to see this bill pass the House with strong bipartisan support."

"Congress took action to prevent soring tactics in 1970, but it's time we strengthen penalties for abusers," said Rep. Nydia Velázquez (NY-07). "All of us should care deeply about improving current regulations, as well as banning practices like chemical burn and stacked horseshoes. We must end the culture of animal abuse that prioritizes blue ribbons and unscrupulous trainers over our horses. The PAST Act will bring greater transparency to our horse competition community and help ensure that all horses are protected."

"The practice of soring is abusive and reprehensible," said Rep. Joe Morelle (NY-25). "It is despicable to endanger the health and safety of horses simply for human sport. I am proud to



World Grand Champion Tennessee Walking Horse performing the "Big Lick"



co-sponsor this legislation that seeks to strengthen USDA oversight and enforcement as well as bring harsher punishments to those who continue this inhumane practice."

"I am proud to cosponsor and vote for the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act, which would eliminate the practice of horse soring," said Rep. Grace Meng (NY-06). It is time Congress pass legislation to protect horses from mistreatment and end this barbaric practice of inflicting pain to a horse's hooves to achieve an artificial gait used in horse shows. I will continue to be a strong advocate for this important cause and work together with my colleagues to pass animal protection laws."

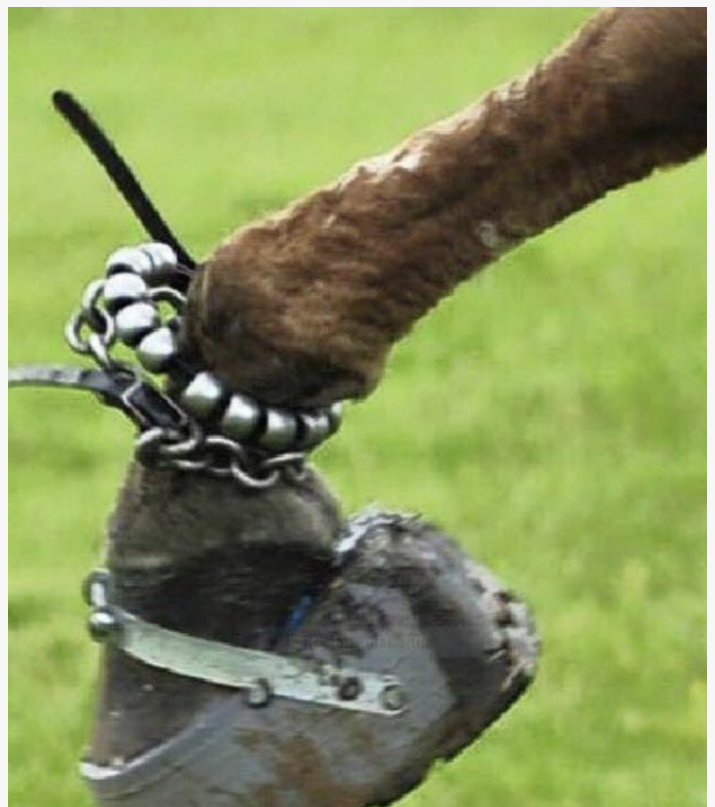
The PAST Act would ban the use of painful large stacked shoes and ankle chains and would also eliminate the existing system of self-regulation by the industry and toughen penalties for violators of the Horse Protection Act. It's supported by the American Saddlebred Association, American Quarter Horse 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 New York 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 Rep. 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).

Check out what Members of Congress are saying about the PAST Act by [clicking here](#).

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



Priscilla Presley and Animal Wellness Action Executive Director Marty Irby Lobbying for the PAST Act on Capitol Hill in January of 2019

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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