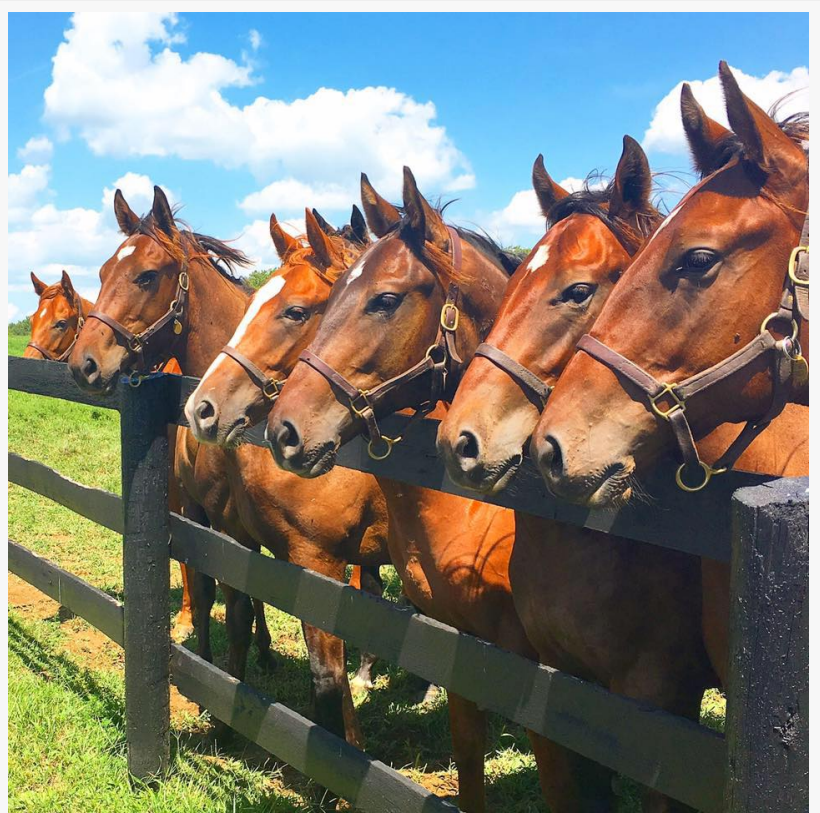


# House Passes Animal Wellness-Led Amendments to Protect Wild Horses and Burros, Combat Animal Fighting and Horse Soring

*Amendments Taken Up for Massive 2021 Spending Bill*

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, July 23, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, the U.S. House of Representatives passed three key animal protection amendments conceived and advocated for by Animal Wellness Action and the Animal Wellness Foundation. The measures will be included in the full spending package: H.R. 7608, the State, Foreign Operations, Agriculture, Rural Development, Interior, Environment, Military Construction, and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, for fiscal year 2021, that is set to pass the U.S. House tomorrow. The Senate will take up its own spending bill in the coming weeks or months.



Yearlings at Stone Farm in Paris, Kentucky | Photo Credit: Marty Irby

“The BLM and USDA’s horse-related programs have long been considered ineffective and unsuccessful and we’re sick and tired of inept and lazy bureaucrats in the swamp failing to protect our iconic American horses,” said [Marty Irby](#), a lifelong horseman and executive director at Animal Wellness Action. “Rep. Steve Cohen is laser-focused on getting the Bureau of the Land Management and the Agriculture Department to stop their nonsense and do better when it comes to protecting horses.”

“Enforcing laws against animal cruelty is as crucial as enacting them in the first place,” said Holly Gann, director of federal affairs for Animal Wellness Foundation. “Active enforcement of animal welfare laws by USDA OIG is needed to put a stop to widespread animal fighting and other forms

of heinous animal cruelty for the protection of both animals and our communities.”

“I’m pleased this provision will force the Bureau of Land Management to move away from cruel and costly helicopter roundups toward humane management of these national symbols of our wild lands,” said U.S. Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN). “It requires the Bureau of Land Management to utilize \$11 million of its Wild Horse and Burro Program budget to implement PZP -- a humane and reversible fertility control vaccine to manage wild horse populations.”



Cockfighting that runs rampant in Alabama

The amendment details are as follows:

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*Marty Irby, executive director  
at Animal Wellness Action*

Amendment #69 (Interior Appropriations) – Sponsored by Reps. Steve Cohen (D-TN), Dina Titus (D-NV), Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), Joe Neguse (D-CO), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), David Schweikert (R-AZ), David Price (D-NC), Peter King (R-NY), Deb Haaland (D-NM), John Katko (R-NY), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), and Ben McAdams (D-UT). This amendment would require the Bureau of Land Management to utilize \$11,000,000 of its allocated Wild Horse and Burro Program budget to implement PZP humane, reversible fertility control to manage wild horse populations – nearly 11% of its wild horse budget.

Amendment #50 (Agriculture Appropriations) — Sponsored by Reps. Joe Neguse (D-CO), Matt Gaetz (R-FL), Madeleine Dean (D-PA), Bill Posey (R-FL), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Steve Cohen (D-TN), Vern Buchanan (R-FL), Tim Burchett (R-TN), Ron Estes (R-KS), Tony Cardenas (D-CA), Peter King (R-NY), Ann Kuster (D-NH), and Ben McAdams (D-UT). This amendment would provide \$1 million to USDA OIG for enforcement of animal fighting laws. An identical amendment also passed the House en bloc in 2019. Animal Wellness Action recently completed investigations in Oklahoma, Alabama, and Tennessee that clearly proved cockfighting runs rampant in those and other states, and that gamecocks are being illegally shipped from those states to Guam, Puerto Rico, and other U.S. Territories where cockfighting is also illegal.

Amendment #38 (Agriculture Appropriations) – Sponsored by Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN), Brian

Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Vern Buchanan (R-FL), Kurt Schrader (D-OR), Ron Estes (R-KS), Steve Chabot (R-OH), and Peter King (R-NY), and Tony Cardenas (D-CA). This amendment would provide \$750,000 in funding for the USDA's Office of Inspector General to complete an audit report of the USDA's Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service's Administration of the Horse Protection Program, Enforcement of the Horse Protection Act, and the Slaughter Horse Transport Program no later than July 31st, 2021. The last audit was completed in 2010 and clearly detailed the ineffectiveness of the USDA's Horse Protection Program that has failed to end the practice of soring – the intentional infliction of pain to Tennessee Walking, Racking, and Spotted Saddle horses feet and limbs to achieve an artificial high-step known as the “big lick” that’s rewarded at prized events in Tennessee and throughout the Southeastern U.S. The amendment provides funding over and above the \$2,000,000 Horse Protection Program funding provided for in the base bill.

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



Animal Wellness Action Executive Director Marty Irby



Holly Gann, director of federal affairs at the Animal Wellness Foundation

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.

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.

Marty Irby

Animal Wellness Action

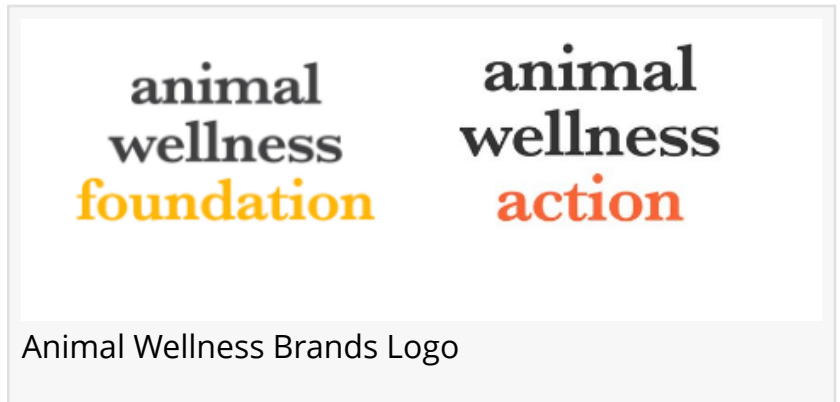
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