

House Energy and Commerce Committee Schedules Horseracing Integrity Act for Committee Action Tomorrow

Compromise Legislation May Now be on Fast Track for Enactment

WASHINGTON, D.C., USA, September 8, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce has officially [scheduled a markup hearing for H.R. 1754](#), the Horseracing Integrity Act, led by U.S. Reps. Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., and Andy Barr, R-Ky., for Wednesday, September 9 at 11:00 AM EST.

The markup announcement – that is expected to result in the Committee amending and approving H.R. 1754, allowing it to be taken up on the House floor – comes on the heels of an announcement last week from U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., that he will introduce compromise legislation. McConnell's bill, expected to be introduced this week, and named the Horseracing Safety and Integrity (HISA) Act, would replicate many of the key provisions within H.R. 1754, including a ban on race-day doping, the establishment of a uniform national standard for rules and regulations for Thoroughbred horseracing in the U.S. that would be overseen by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA). Animal Wellness Action endorses both the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA) and Horseracing Integrity Act (HIA) and has pushed for the committee to take action tomorrow.

“

The end of doping in Thoroughbred racing is within sight, and it's exciting to see so many animal protection groups and horseracing industry organizations unite behind this effort.”

*Marty Irby, executive director
at Animal Wellness Action*



Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act | Photo: Jana Germano

The doping of American racehorses has been a controversial issue over the past five years with hundreds

of horses dying on racetracks annually, and the indictment of 37 trainers and veterinarians in March of 2020.

“The end of doping in Thoroughbred racing is within sight, and it’s exciting to see so many animal protection groups and horseracing industry organizations unite behind this effort,” said Marty Irby, a lifelong horseman and executive director at Animal Wellness Action who [testified in support of H.R. 1754](#) at a hearing in January. “There’s no more important aspect of American horseracing than putting the welfare of the horse at the center of this enterprise, and this legislation does just that.”

The legislative effort is now supported by all three Triple Crown racetracks, as Churchill Downs has endorsed the

effort for the first time. The effort continues to enjoy the support of the Coalition for Horse Racing Integrity (CHRI), which includes the Jockey Club, the Breeders Cup, Keeneland Racecourse, the Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association, the Water Hay Oats Alliance, and animal welfare groups like Animal Wellness Action.

The fractured nature of anti-doping and track safety efforts across the U.S.’s 38 racing jurisdictions has undermined the public’s confidence in horseracing, threatened the integrity of competition, and endangered the human and equine athletes. Enactment of the HISA will address these problems head on while helping to enhance the public’s interest in this very important industry. For the safety of the horses and jockeys, and for the sport of horseracing itself, American horseracing needs the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act of 2020.

Key Provisions

In order to create these uniform performance and safety standards for the sport of horseracing, the HISA creates the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority, which is a private, independent, self-regulatory, nonprofit organization. It will not be funded by the federal government – the horseracing industry will pay the funds necessary for the establishment and administration of the Authority. The Authority is tasked with developing and implementing both a horseracing anti-doping and medication control program and a racetrack safety program.

Composition of the Authority

The Authority will be governed by a Board of Directors consisting of nine members. Five of those



AWA executive director Marty Irby testifying at a House hearing on H.R. 1754 in January 2020

animal
wellness
foundation

animal
wellness
action

Animal Wellness Brands Logo

members will be independent of the industry, and four members will be experts from the following sectors of the industry: owners and breeders, trainers, racetracks, veterinarians, State racing commissions, and jockeys. To assist with the development of these programs, the Board will establish an anti-doping and medication control standing committee and a racetrack safety standing committee, both controlled by independent members outside the industry. All independent members of the Board and standing committees will be subject to strict conflict-of-interest standards.

Anti-Doping Program

The Authority will be required to create a set of uniform anti-doping rules, including lists of prohibited substances and methods, protocols around the administration of permitted substances, and laboratory testing accreditation and protocols. These permitted and prohibited substances and practices will be developed after taking into consideration international anti-doping standards and veterinarian ethical standards, along with consulting racing industry representatives and the public. The new nationwide rules would replace the current patchwork of regulatory systems that govern horseracing's 38 separate racing jurisdictions. For services related to the enforcement of this program, the Authority shall enter into an agreement with the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, which has a proven track record of conducting anti-doping and medication control activities for all U.S. Olympic athletes and its approach can easily be adapted to horseracing.

Racetrack Safety Program

To protect the health and safety of racehorses and jockeys, the Authority will also create a racetrack safety program, consisting of a uniform set of training and racing safety standards and protocols. Those standards include racetrack design and maintenance, oversight of human and equine injury reporting and prevention, and the procedures for undertaking investigations at racetrack and non-racetrack facilities related to safety violations. The Authority creates an accreditation program to ensure that racetracks comply with these safety procedures, and in order to continue gathering information on racetrack safety, the Authority will establish a nationwide database of racehorse safety, performance, health, and injury information within one year of the establishment of the program.

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.

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

+1 202-821-5686

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/525775887>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2020 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.