

# Animal Wellness Action's Lobbying Yields Record Breaking Funding for Enforcement of the Horse Protection Act

*New HPA Funding Provides USDA with Resources to Crackdown Against Soring of Tennessee Walking Horses*

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, USA , October 20, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Animal Wellness Action (AWA), the Washington-based non-profit political advocacy group that worked to pass the U.S. Senator Joseph D. Tydings Memorial Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act through the U.S. House in 2019, applauded appropriators in Congress for their inclusion of the highest-ever funding levels for enforcement of the Horse Protection



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Act (HPA) of 1970. The [House spending bill](#) for agriculture appropriations provides for \$3,400,000 for FY2022, and [Senate bill](#) provides for \$2,340,000 for the same year.

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*Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action*

Until 2019, federal funding for HPA enforcement had never exceeded \$700,000 for a single fiscal year. AWA, which was formed in 2018, has made HPA funding a top priority in the war to end 'soring' – the intentional infliction of pain to horses front limbs to induce an artificial high-step known as the 'big lick' that's prized at Tennessee Walking Horse shows in the Southeastern U.S.

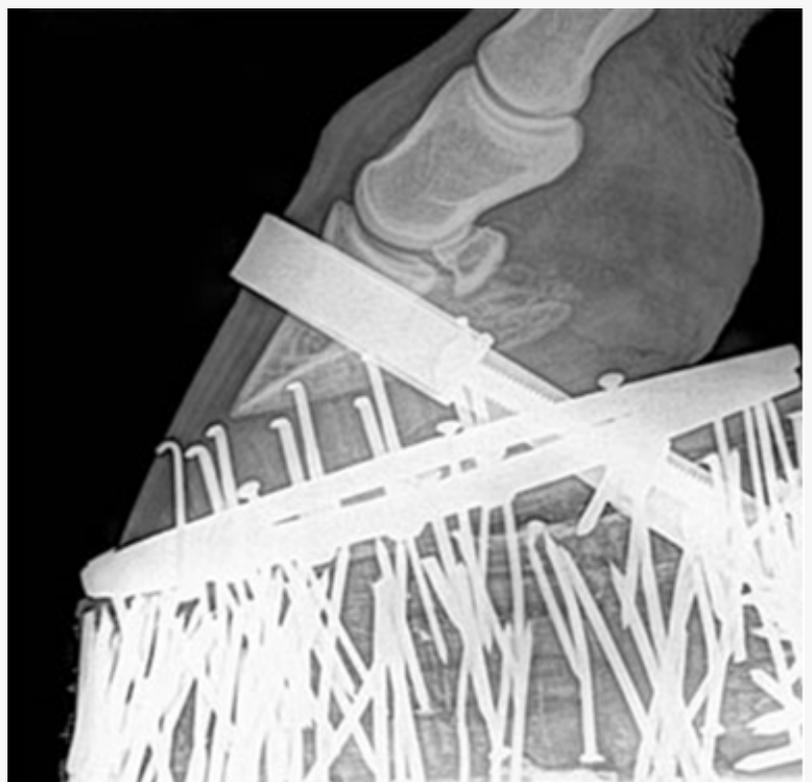
The larger equine community and animal protection world has long recognized that a lack of HPA funding for enforcement has contributed to the soring events that run rampant in Tennessee and Kentucky. AWA also helped secure HPA funding in the amount of \$1,000,000 for

FY2020, and \$2,009,000 for FY2021 in collaboration with leaders in the Tennessee Walking Horse industry who've conceded that soring must end, and Members of the Tennessee and Kentucky Congressional Delegations.

"We applaud appropriators in Congress for responding to our pleas to end soring by providing record-breaking funding to wipe-out this painful scourge that's marred the show horse world since the 1950's," said [Marty Irby](#), executive director at Animal Wellness Action, and a past president of the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' & Exhibitors' Association who was honored by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II in 2020 for his work to end soring. "While legislation that would also help stamp out soring continues to flounder in Congress, we remain steadfast in exploring new avenues and opportunities to work with leaders in the breed on provisions that we can all agree upon."

"I applaud the Congress for recognizing the need to increase funding and step-up enforcement of the Horse Protection Act to better protect Tennessee Walking, Racking, and Spotted Saddle Horses," said Monty Roberts, one of the most widely recognized non-violent horse trainers on the planet. "The scourge of soring must be eradicated, and I am proud to continue working with Animal Wellness Action on new and creative ways to ensure its end and promote non-violent training methods within the show horse world."

Members of Congress who did the heavy lifting with AWA and walking horse leaders to secure this new funding include Reps. Sanford Bishop, D-Ga., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Ron Estes, R-



Kansas, Hal Rogers, R-Ky., Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., John Rose, R-Tenn., as well as Sens. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wisconsin, John Kennedy, R-La., Cory Booker, D-N.J., and retiring Senate Appropriations Ranking Member, Richard Shelby, a Republican from Alabama where soring has long flourished and plagued the Yellowhammer State's 'Alabama Racking Horse' breed as well. Members from both sides of the aisle made appropriations requests at the urging of Animal Wellness Action and walking horse breed leaders that also called for "\$741,000 for APHIS to begin utilizing swabbing, x-rays, thermography, and other science-based testing methods as part of its inspection protocols."

The House Agriculture Appropriations bill has cleared that chamber and the Senate version is still awaiting further action, but the two will most likely be married in a year-end spending package to fund FY22 that will end up with final funding somewhere between \$2,340,00 and \$3,400,000.

Animal Wellness Action (AWA) 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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1992 Tennessee Walking Horse 2-Year-Old World Grand Champion JFK | Photo Credit: David Pruett

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