

Tennessee Doubles Down in Support of Animal Cruelty by Showcasing the “Big Lick” on New State Archives Building

New Building Features Tennessee Walking Horse Performing Unnatural, High-Stepping Gait Induced by Torturing and Soring Horses

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Animal Wellness Action, the Animal Wellness Foundation, and the Center for a Humane Economy, weighed in on the State of Tennessee’s New Archives Building that features a giant engraving of a ‘big lick’ Tennessee Walking Horse on its walls. While the new facility opened in April of this year, the engraving of the ‘big lick’ horse on its entrance went largely unnoticed until a local anti-soring advocates contacted AWA about the display this week.



Tennessee State Archives Building Displays 'Big Lick'

“

It’s shameful to see the State of Tennessee double down in support of the pain-based ‘big lick’ gait that’s now displayed on the walls of its new archives building.”

*Marty Irby, executive director
at Animal Wellness Action*

“It’s shameful to see the State of Tennessee double down in support of the pain-based ‘big lick’ gait that’s now displayed on the walls of its new archives building,” said [Marty Irby](#), executive director at Animal Wellness Action and a past president of the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders’ & Exhibitors’ Association who was recognized in 2020 by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, II for his work to end soring. “This exaggerated movement of the horses’ front legs is induced by driving nails into the sensitive part of the horses’ feet or by applying burning chemicals onto their pasterns and then putting giant, stacked shoes and

ankle chains on their feet. This image should be archived only as a historical footnote about this

animal cruelty that runs rampant in the state.”

The Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act, which would help end soring, has long been blocked by Senators from Tennessee and other southeastern states and enforcement of the 1970 Horse Protection Act by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture has been intermittent at best, with just a handful of criminal prosecutions of violators. AWA has been pushing for comprehensive legislation to root out soring and stop this abuse from being put on display at numerous horse shows in the South.

“Placing the ‘big lick’ on the façade of the new state archive building is a brazen and embarrassing display of animal cruelty, especially when the University of Tennessee and other state institutions don’t want anything to do with this kind of malice toward horses,” added Wayne Pacelle, president of the Center for a Humane Economy. “Since the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act was first introduced in 2012, more than 350 members of the U.S. House and Senator – strong majorities in both chambers, including lawmakers from both parties – have called for reform and the end of this abuse.”

Earlier this year, Animal Wellness Action executive director Marty Irby published a [series of articles](#) on the scourge of soring, and the political maneuvering that has ultimately led to a stalemate on the issue of soring in Washington, D.C. And this new development comes on the heels of convicted horse-abuser [Jackie McConnell](#), returning to the world championship show.

Background:



Tennessee State Archives Building Displays 'Big Lick'



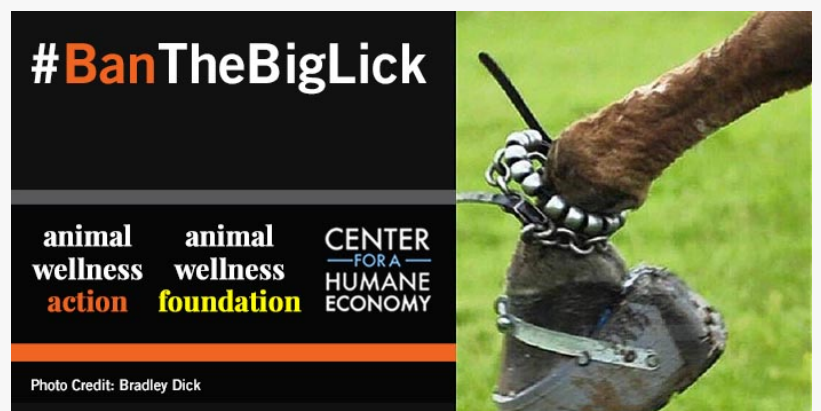
Tennessee State Archives Building Exterior | Photo Credit: Elvis Wilson

Leaders at Animal Wellness Action have worked to enact the PAST Act since 2012 when it was first introduced in the U.S. House by Reps. Ed Whitfield, R-Ky., and Steve Cohen, D-Tenn. The original measure would ban the use of large, stacked shoes and ankle chains in the showring, eliminate the industry's failed self-policing program, and would increase penalties for those caught soring horses.

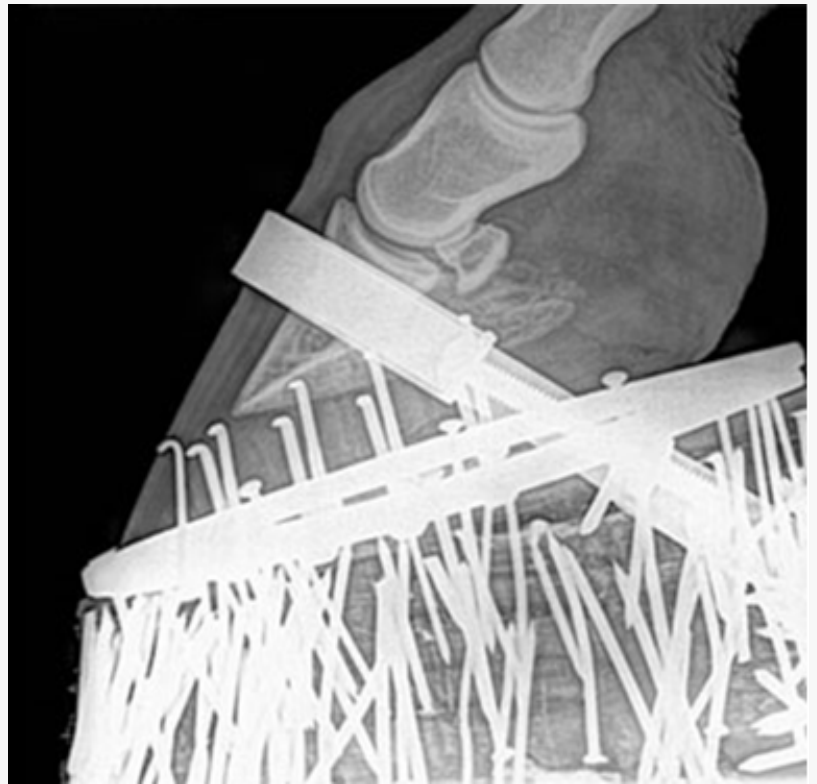
The PAST Act only achieved passage of the measure through the House in 2019 as result of changing the bill's name to the U.S. Senator Joseph D. Tydings Memorial PAST Act to honor the late Joe Tydings, a Democrat for Maryland who authored the HPA in 1970 and passed away in 2018. The measure cleared the U.S. House by a vote of 333 to 96, but with opposition from Senators who hailed from Tennessee and Kentucky and 96 House Republicans opposing the measure, the bill was dead on arrival in the Upper Chamber. In light of that circumstance AWA pulled together representatives still involved in the breed to form revisions to the PAST Act that would help get the measure through the Senate, but that effort failed as well.

The PAST Act has been reintroduced in the 117th Congress by Sens. Mike Crapo, R-Ida., and Mark Warner, D-Va., now with 51 cosponsor in the Senate, and in the House by Cohen, and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Pa., now with 243 cosponsors, and remains pending with referral to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and Senate Committee on Science, Transportation, and Technology.

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



#BanTheBigLick



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.

The Center for a Humane Economy ("the Center") is a non-profit organization that focuses on influencing the conduct of corporations to forge a humane economic order. The first organization of its kind in the animal protection movement, the Center encourages businesses to honor their social responsibilities in a culture where consumers, investors, and other key stakeholders abhor cruelty and the degradation of the environment and embrace innovation as a means of eliminating both.

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