

Animal Wellness Calls on New Horseracing Authority and USADA to Join and Implement Anti-Doping Law as Congress Intended

Disagreement Between Key Parties Threatens Effective Enforcement of Anti-Doping Law

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, January 4, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Animal Wellness Action leaders addressed the recent [breakdown in discussions](#) between the new Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority (HISA) and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) in letters delivered to the leaders of both organizations.



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“USADA’s involvement is the very bedrock and foundation of the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act,” said Animal Wellness Action executive director [Marty Irby](#) and president [Wayne Pacelle](#), who through the years testified before Congress and urged medication reform in racing. “Throughout the course of our

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Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action

engagement with all the members of the Coalition for Horseracing Integrity, there has truly only been one constant within a wide array of bills introduced over the years, and that constant has been USADA as the drug-testing entity.”

“Quite frankly, the legislation enacted was written with language specifically tailored to comply with Constitutional concerns and oversight from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to effectively allow USADA to contract with an entity that has authority granted by Congress, and the law calls for a five-year agreement between USADA and the HISA,” added Irby and Pacelle.

Aware of the public outrage over the mounting number of race horse deaths on American race tracks, readers at Animal Wellness Action worked for the better part of six years to secure enactment of the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act that was signed into law in December of 2020 by President Donald Trump following a Congressional hearing in January of 2020, and the indictment of dozens of individuals involved in illegal doping scandals across the country. The legislation, led by Reps. Paul Tonko, D-N.Y., and Andy Barr, R-Ky., in the U.S. House, and Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., as well as Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., and Diane Feinstein, D-Calif. was designed to execute and enforce a uniform national standard for drug testing, and national regulations that would be overseen by USADA and implemented at every Thoroughbred racetrack in the U.S.



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

The legislation established the new HISA board of directors, who have been in negotiations with USADA for most of 2021, but the HISA board has failed to secure an agreement with USADA to execute the intent of the legislation. USADA publicly announced on December 23, 2021, that it was walking away from the negotiations due to what it described as insurmountable differences with HISA. The Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act specifically calls for implementation of the legislation by mid-2022, and a five-year-contract between the HISA board and USADA.

“Learning negotiations between HISA and USADA had broken down just two days before Christmas was an unexpected gut punch to those of us who worked for more than half a decade to enact the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act,” added Irby.

“It is critical for the lives of countless horses and the future of American horseracing that the HISA board secure a five-year-contract with USADA and see that there is robust and effective enforcement of the national anti-doping rules,” added Pacelle.

A copy of the letter sent to HISA can be found [here](#) and a copy of the letter to USADA can be found [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

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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