

Record Funding for Horse Protection Act Enforcement, De Facto Ban on Horse Slaughter, Clears U.S. House and Senate

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, March 11, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- oday, 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 the U.S. House and Senate for passage of the FY22 Omnibus to fund the U.S. Government. The measure included the highest-ever funding levels for enforcement of the Horse Protection Act (HPA) of 1970 in the final bill, \$3,040,000 in HPA funding, more than three times the amount appropriated in 2020, and more than \$1,000,000 over the FY21 funding level. The FY22 Omnibus also maintained the current de facto ban on horse slaughter in the U.S., and Animal Wellness Action lobbied tirelessly for the inclusion of these provisions.



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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 gait known as the ‘big lick’ that’s prized at Tennessee Walking Horse shows in the Southeastern U.S.

“We applaud the Congress for maintaining the ban on horse slaughter in the U.S., and 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 the PAST Act 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."

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, especially 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 and Members of the Tennessee and Kentucky Congressional Delegations, all of whom have conceded that soring must end.

Members of Congress who did the heaving lifting with AWA and Tennessee Walking Horse leaders to secure the new HPA 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 Tennessee Walking Horse 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 final bill that passed the House and Senate contained report language that allocated \$300,000

animal wellness action



for that purpose.

The de facto ban on horse slaughter in the U.S. first executed approximately 15 years ago has been achieved by defunding USDA inspection of horse slaughter plants on U.S. soil through language in the annual spending bill, and that provision was maintained for FY22 thanks to the work of Sens.

Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., Bob Menendez, D-N.J., Susan Collins, R-Maine, Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., Vern Buchanan, R-Fla., Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., and the leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. A lack of inspections means horse meat cannot be legally sold in interstate commerce, effectively making horse slaughter illegal. Sadly, thousands of American equines continue to be shipped to foreign slaughter plants, underscoring the need for a federal ban that will finally bring the predatory horse slaughter industry in the U.S. to a long-overdue end.



President [Joe Biden](#) is expected to sign the measure into law today.

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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