

The logo for SAFEACT.ORG is centered at the top of the page. It consists of the text "SAFEACT.ORG" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, enclosed within a thin red rectangular border.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMERICA MUST PASS THE SAFE ACT TO PROTECT AMERICA'S VULNERABLE HORSES FROM SLAUGHTER

The SAFE Act is the Most Fundamental Bill for the Protection of
America's Most Vulnerable Equines (SAFEACT.ORG)

HEBER CITY, UTAH – (November 1, 2024) – National equine advocates rally the public to stand up for American horses and petition their legislators to get the Save America's Forgotten Equines Act (SAFE Act) passed this year. The SAFE Act is the most fundamental and universal piece of legislation in Congress to forever protect America's most vulnerable horses by banning the export of American equines to foreign meat plants for slaughter.

Earlier this year, national equine advocates including **All Seated In A Barn, Animals' Angels, Animal Wellness Action, Dawn Olivieri, EquineIQ** and **Horses In Our Hands** introduced SAFEACT.org as a national appeal to urge legislators to pass the SAFE Act (HR 3475/S 2037). SAFEACT.org is responsible for expediting more than 8,000 letters sent to legislators since its June, 2024 launch by EquineIQ. The site provides constituents a convenient way to express their support of the horse slaughter ban with a few quick steps. The user-friendly site quickly identifies legislators based on simple user inputs and uses artificial intelligence from leading Silicon Valley developer Legisletter.org to script messages to legislators. The site also allows messages to be personalized.

Those managing the bill's progress in D.C. believe its primary opportunity for passage would be as an amendment to the Farm Bill which would need to take place before the end of this year. Leading the national charge in lobbying to pass the SAFE Act is Wayne Pacelle, President of Animal Wellness Action. "We are sounding the alarm to Congress that healthy American horses are being butchered in a secretive, inhumane trade. Not one more year of trafficking these iconic animals should be tolerated," he said.

There is urgency for constituents to show up for the horses now by letting their legislators know that horse slaughter is barbaric and unacceptable. Moreover, it's incumbent on us as a country to develop solutions for vulnerable horses. s

"Once you bear witness to what's happening to the American Horse, you can't turn away. Running Moon Mountain Sanctuary and Rescue has brought me to the frontlines of the slaughter pipeline. What is called normal and legal most certainly needs to be reexamined," said Dawn Olivieri, Yellowstone actress and Founder, Moon Mountain Sanctuary. "Foals are being taken from their mommas who are sent to slaughter and we rush in to help them to survive. Any practice where this is happening needs a reform. So my aim is to make content and save lives helping to organize a collective push to most literally, save them all."

More than 20,000 American equines are sold for slaughter annually to benefit foreign meat companies. By no fault of theirs, both domestic and wild horses enter the slaughter pipeline where their experience is inhumane and immoral. All medical care stops once an equine enters the pipeline. Their ordeal worsens as they are tightly packed into cargo trucks and transported thousands of miles in deplorable conditions to meet an unjust fate. According to the USDA, 92.3% of these equines are young and healthy and could otherwise have productive lives while even benefiting the US economy.

Tahlia Fischer, Founder, All Seated In A Barn explained, "I witness conditions at kill pens first-hand and they are deplorable. No American horse deserves this mistreatment. It's our job to develop solutions and to be stewards and caretakers of the iconic American horse."

According to a recent poll, 82% of Americans oppose the slaughter of American equines for meat and it's time legislators take note. Because of many cited instances of animal abuse, slaughter plants in the United States were closed in 2007. This created a dangerous loophole for remaining kill-buyers to truck equines more than 1,000 miles to their deaths. The slaughter pipeline also provides cover for continued animal abuse, predatory horse-trading, and other black market and criminal enterprises like drug trafficking.

"We defunded USDA inspections of horse slaughter facilities in 2007, effectively shutting down horse slaughter in the US due to rampant abuses," said Cameron Ring, Founder, Veterans For Mustangs. "It was wrong to slaughter in the U.S. then and worse to continue to slaughter American horses out of the country where there is no oversight."

Horse slaughter must be banned to save the lives of over 20,000 American equines annually. Passing the SAFE Act is a critical first step to managing the American equine population humanely in addition to responsible breeding, keeping horses in their homes and endorsing compassionate euthanasia when medically necessary. The SAFE Act is a bipartisan bill introduced in the House of Representatives by U.S. Reps. Vern Buchanan (R-Fla.) and Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.). The bill currently has 232 cosponsors and would prohibit the exportation of American equines for slaughter. Spearheaded by Senator Lindsey Graham, R-S.C. and former Senator Bob Menendez, D-N.J., the companion bill also has strong bipartisan support in the Senate and is supported by major equine sanctuaries and leading national animal welfare groups and equine advocates including All Seated in A Barn, American Veterinary Medical Association, American Wild Horse Conservation, Animal Legal Defense Fund, Animals' Angels, Animal Welfare Institute, Animal Wellness Action, ASPCA, Dawn Olivieri, EquineIQ, Horses In Our Hands, Humane Society of the United States, Return to Freedom as well as the Thoroughbred racing and Trotting industries.

There is global movement away from exploiting horses and other equines, including an E.U. ban on the import of horse meat from the U.S. via Mexico. Canada's House of Commons is considering ending the transport of live horses for slaughter, while many European nations and companies are banning the slaughter of horses for consumption and other products.

At the forefront is Sonja Meadows, President, Animals' Angels who shared, "The demand for horse meat is diminishing. Now, our lawmakers need to call an end to the horse slaughter trade once and for all!"

"The American horse is synonymous with the American spirit and shouldn't be sold out," said Debra West, Founder, EquineIQ & Liberty Sanctuary. "Respectfully, it's time U.S. lawmakers stand up for the majestic American horse, or they will be left on the wrong side of American values, public opinion, and history. There are enough resources and homes to keep these horses SAFE in the United States. Let's work together and end this horrific practice."

Learn more and help petition legislators to pass the Save America's Forgotten Equines Act in 2024 at www.safeact.org.

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All Seated In A Barn We are a non profit equine rescue, sanctuary, rehabilitation, training and intake facility whose large ambitions include rescuing horses and donkeys who would otherwise be shipped across the border to be slaughtered for human consumption. We provide them with medical attention and most importantly, find them the loving homes they deserve. Furthermore, we use different community programs to further rehabilitate the horses, who in return help to rehabilitate the individuals in these programs. www.allseatedinabarn.com

Animals' Angels, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization with full-time investigators working to shed light on animal cruelty. Their documented reports and video footage are provided to the news media as a public service to raise awareness. They also present investigation results to auction and slaughter plant management to encourage positive improvements and share documentation of cruelty with all appropriate law enforcement agencies to ensure that violators of animal protection laws are being held responsible for their actions at all applicable levels. www.animalsangels.org

Animal Wellness Action is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) whose mission is to help animals by promoting laws and regulations at federal, state and local levels that forbid cruelty to all animals. The group also works to enforce existing anti-cruelty and wildlife protection laws. Animal Wellness Action believes helping animals helps us all. www.animalwellnessaction.org

Dawn Olivieri Actor by trade, and a lifelong animal lover and rescuer, Dawn Olivieri is at the helm of Moon Mountain Sanctuary and Rescue. From the sets of 1883 and Yellowstone to the Ouachita Forrest Boundary in Arkansas, this real life rancher has devoted her heart and land to help kill pen horses find their way to a new life. www.moonmountainsanctuaryandrescue.com

EquineIQ was established to develop innovative and sensible solutions nationally to benefit equines in need by bringing together stakeholders in the equine industry and collaborating with corporations and government officials. Their solutions-oriented approach to problems led to the development and launch SAFEACT.org. www.equineiq.org

Veterans For Mustangs Introduced in House in February 2023 by a dedicated group of veterans, the Veterans for Mustangs Act would deploy veterans to help manage the mustang population by directing the Department of the Interior to prioritize use of nonsurgical, medically safe on-range fertility controls to manage populations of wild, free-roaming horses and burros. The bill would give renewed purpose to veterans, save millions of dollars in tax-payer funds and save mustangs from treacherous roundups while helping to manage our public lands.