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Prevent All Soring Tactics Act

Introduction

On March 30, 2017, Representatives Ted Yoho (R-FL) and Kurt Schrader (D-OR) re-introduced the Prevent All Soring Tactics Act of 2015 (HR 1847) (PAST act) in the House of Representatives. The bill is intended to strengthen the Horse Protection Act (HPA) and prevent the soring of Tennessee Walking Horses, Racking Horses, and Spotted Saddle Horses. The bill is identical to the bill introduced last Congress and is supported by the American Horse Council and most national horse show organizations.

Background

Soring is an abusive practice used by some to train Tennessee Walking Horses, Spotted Saddle Horses, and Racking Horses. It usually involves the use of action devices, chemicals, pads, wedges or other practices to cause pain in the horse's forelegs and produce an accentuated show gait for competition. Despite the existence of a federal ban on soring for over forty years, this cruel practice continues in some segments of the walking horse industry.

PAST Act

The PAST act would amend the HPA to prohibit a Tennessee Walking Horse, a Racking Horse, or a Spotted Saddle Horse from being shown, exhibited, or auctioned with an "action device," or "a weighted shoe, pad, wedge, hoof band or other device or material" if it is constructed to artificially alter the gait of the horse and is not strictly protective or therapeutic. These new prohibitions would not apply to other breeds that do not have a history of soring.

The legislation would also increase fines and penalties for violations, including the potential for a lifetime ban for repeat offenders.

The bill would create a new licensing process for horse show inspectors, eliminating the current often criticized designated qualified persons (DQPs) program. The bill would require the U.S. Department of Agriculture to train, license and appoint new independent inspectors for shows and other HPA-regulated activities that wish to hire an inspector. Licensed or accredited veterinarians would be given preference for these positions. The decision to hire and cost of an inspector would still reside with the management of a show, sale or auction.



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Many national horse show organizations have endorsed the PAST Act including;

The American Horse Council
The American Quarter Horse Association
The American Association of Equine Practitioners
The American Paint Horse Association
The U.S. Equestrian Federation
The American Morgan Horse Association
The Pinto Horse Association of America
The Arabian Horse Association
The American Saddlebred Horse Association
The United Professional Horsemen's Association
The Appaloosa Horse Club

Many state and local horse organizations also support the bill.

Congressional Action

The bill has been referred to the House Commerce Committee and currently has 335 co-sponsors.

AHC Position

Various efforts have been made since enactment of the HPA forty years ago to stop the soring of horses and they have not worked. This bill is focused on the problem it is intended to solve and does not adversely affect other segments of the show industry that are not soring horses and have no history of soring horses.

The AHC supports the bill and urges all members of the horse industry to contact their Representative and ask them to support the bill and become a co-sponsor.