

## Montana Horse Slaughter Bill Becomes Law

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A measure promoting privately-owned horse processing plant development in Montana became law on Friday when Gov. Brian Schweitzer allowed the bill to lapse into law.

HB 418 insulates prospective plant developers from permit and licensing challenges on environmental and other grounds, and awards attorney and court fees to plaintiffs in cases District Courts deem harassing or without merit.

The measure automatically became law after Schweitzer declined to sign or veto it 10 days after it reached his desk.

Schweitzer previously vetoed the bill, and sent an amended version back to the legislature. But legislators returned the bill to its original form and sent it back to Schweitzer a second time.

"The Governor made his opinion on this bill known, the legislature did the same. No action was taken and the bill has now become law," said Schweitzer's Communications Director Sarah Elliott.

HB 418 sponsor Rep. Ed Butcher said he was not surprised Schweitzer allowed it to become law by default.

"People in rural areas really got behind this legislation. I think this was the best move he could make considering the spot he was in," Butcher said.