



News Release

~~~~~

## **National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Ratifies Policy Resolution in Support of the Horse Industry on a Unanimous Consent Vote!**

~~~~~

With a unanimous vote, the National Conference of State Legislatures granted its staff full authority to lobby against federal legislation that would restrict the market, transport, processing, or export of horses. Two such bills are currently before Congress: H.R. 503, the Prevention of Equine Cruelty Act, and its counterpart in the Senate, S. 727. The measures would make it a felony to transport horses for the purpose of processing for human food.

The full NCSL membership ratified the policy yesterday at its Annual Legislative Summit in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, without a single dissenting vote. The policy resolution was originally passed by an overwhelming majority at the NCSL Fall Forum in Atlanta, Georgia last November.

The policy resolution establishes that the States recognize, and that Congress should recognize the need for humane and regulated horse processing facilities in the United States. It also calls on Congress not to interfere with State efforts to establish processing facilities in the United States.

"This is a remarkable moment," says Wyoming State Representative Sue Wallis, who has championed this effort since the beginning, "when the preeminent national organization that all state legislatures belong to joins the National Association of Counties, the National Congress of American Indians, and more than 200 other organizations in supporting the rights and options of horse owners."

With the NCSL policy firmly established, the efforts of horse owners and concerned citizens who have come together from across the Nation to promote real solutions that ensure the humane care, management, and euthanasia of horses; to ensure the long-term sustainability and viability of the equine industry; and to restore the market for all horses are energized.

~~~~~

## **The United Organizations of the Horse Points Out the Problems Inherent in the Passage of the ROAM Act**

~~~~~

In a surprise move that was apparently designed to keep lawmakers in D.C. for votes on other critical issues, H.R. 1018 to amend the Wild Horse and Burro Act, passed the House on Friday, the 17th of July. Because of the sudden nature of this vote, the United Organizations of the Horse believes that many lawmakers cast their vote without realizing the true ramifications of the legislation.

The United Organizations of the Horse is a new organization that represents the horse owners of the United States based on a set of Core Principles that includes the proper management of wild horses. Central to this position is the idea that wild horse populations on public lands should be strictly controlled to ensure sustainable habitat for horses, wildlife, and livestock. Included in the Core Principle on Wild Horses is that the recommendations of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Committee should be implemented. Excess horses removed from public ranges should be disposed of either through sale or adoption. If the horses cannot be disposed of they should be humanely euthanized and processed and the meat and useful byproducts provided to the disadvantaged, or marketed and the proceeds reinvested in habitat enhancement and better management of wild herds. No wild horse should be held off of public land at taxpayer expense for longer than 90 days.

The Government Accounting Office (GAO) has published a report that clearly indicates that the methodology used to count wild horses is flawed, and undercounts population. ([Bureau of Land Management: Effective Long-Term Options Needed to Manage Unadoptable Wild Horses-Oct. 9, 2008.](#)) Actual experience in tragedies like Trail Springs in Nevada, where hundreds of horses died from thirst and starvation in a Horse Management Area where the BLM methodology estimated around 300 horses, and when they gathered the area after the disaster was discovered, they gathered over 1,100 animals not counting the ones that had already died. These indications and the fact that informal Google Earth photo counts indicate well over 100,000 wild horses on public range that can sustainably carry 27,000, and which is already overstocked with the 36,000 that BLM's flawed methodology indicates are on the land.

The ROAM Act exacerbates and intensifies the destruction of our public lands from too many animals, and offers no realistic solution to the problem. Without the ability to control populations, BLM's hands are tied, and we are left with a \$700 million dollar welfare program for old horses at a time of dire circumstances in this Nation.

The ROAM Act as passed by the House does not have a companion bill in the Senate, and it is our hope and intention to make sure that it does not progress. Included in several of its provisions is the ability of the federal government to preempt any multi-use of government land to establish single species sanctuaries that would allow every wild horse to live out its 30+ years of natural life without any ability to control the population.

The United Organizations of the Horse will continue to work with other livestock organizations, tribal governments, and public lands stakeholders to educate Senators and Congress on the pitfalls of this very dangerous piece of legislation.

To learn more visit their website, [**http://www.UnitedOrgsoftheHorse.org**](http://www.UnitedOrgsoftheHorse.org), and

subscribe to their free e-newsletter.

~~~~~

**Progress on the H.O.R.S.E. Act, and the Need for Constant Attention On-the-Ground in Washington, D.C.**

~~~~~

Things are progressing. We are still waiting for the bill language for the H.O.R.S.E. Act which is being drafted in Washington, D.C. We hope to have that to you soon. Please be patient.

The sudden and apparently fairly easy passage of the ROAM Act amendments to the Wild Horse and Burro Act through the House is a clear indication of how desperately we need to gather the resources to have on-the-ground representation in Washington, D.C. on a constant basis to protect the interests of horse owners, and horse owners rights. That is simply not possible now. We do not have the financial capability to provide what is needed.

We need the help of all interested citizens. We need you to become a member, and to do what you can to influence the horse organizations that you belong to to sponsor our activities.

On these issues, in particular, the issue of controlling and managing the wild horse population, and the issue of restoring our markets in the United States--which are connected by the need for reinstating humane and regulated horse processing in this country--we have benefited from the good work of our friends in the beef, pork, chicken, all of the animal agriculture industries, the sportsmen, dog owners, and animal advocates who understand the difference between animal welfare that we all support, and animal rights, which would eliminate our ability to own, manage, or enjoy animals in our lives. We continue to appreciate everything that all of these groups are doing on our behalf.

One group, the National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA) has just published an excellent newsletter which will be distributed to every Congressional Office, and to State Legislators, that is largely devoted to the issues surrounding horses. Read it at http://www.unitedorgsofthehorse.org/index_files/An_Pol_Rev_Summr.pdf.

While the assistance of like minded organizations and individuals is incredibly useful, and gratefully accepted...it is not enough. We, as a horse people, a horse industry, need to stand on our own two feet, and be our own best advocates. We are the people who know horses, know what it takes to keep them healthy, and know what it will take to keep both horses, the world of horses, and horse people vibrant and contributing members of our society.

~~~~~

**Contacts:**

~~~~~

Sue Wallis, Founding Leadership Team

United Organizations of the Horse

(307) 680-8515

sue.wallis@unitedorgsofthehorse.org

Dave Duquette, Executive Director

United Horsemen's Front

(541) 571-7588

info@unitedhorsemensfront.org