



**Statements of Position  
Proposed Federal Legislation and Equine Welfare  
May 11, 2009**

**1. The Kansas Horse Council opposes abusive or inhumane treatment of horses.**

The Kansas Horse Council believes there are no circumstances where the abuse or inhumane treatment of horses is warranted. Appropriate authorities should be contacted if abusive or inhumane treatment of any animal is witnessed or suspected.

**2. The Kansas Horse Council opposes a legal ban on horse slaughter.**

The legal ban on horse slaughter will not solve the problem of unwanted horses. In fact, eliminating this option has made conditions worse for excess horses. Although certainly not the most desirable choice, euthanasia at a federally regulated and inspected facility is a practical disposal option. The Kansas Horse Council believes the decision to send a horse to a facility where it will be processed, like other livestock, is a personal one.

**3. The Kansas Horse Council supports efforts to establish alternatives to slaughter for unwanted horses.**

The Kansas Horse Council supports organizations with a mission to reduce unwanted horses and to improve the welfare of horses in general. The Kansas Horse Council encourages its members to support these organizations.

**4. The Kansas Horse Council opposes the legislation currently pending in the United States Congress that would prohibit the transportation of horses to be processed for human consumption.**

Processing horses is necessary for the overall health of the equine industry and provides an alternative to inadequate care and possible abandonment. Current legislation (HR 503) prohibiting or further restricting transportation of horses will compound the problem. HR 503 does not address how the care of an estimated 100,000 unwanted horses that formerly had gone to slaughter will now be maintained. Sufficient facilities, private or public, are inadequate to meet this demand. It is important to note that there are existing laws and regulations in effect to address welfare concerns regarding the humane treatment of animals, including regulations for the transportation of horses. The Kansas Horse Council understands that existing transportation standards are not perfect. We will continue to monitor efforts for their improvement and will support future transportation regulations that strive to insure the humane treatment of horses.

**5. The Kansas Horse Council encourages the general public to become educated on the subject of unwanted horses.**

There is much information from legitimate industry organizations available to the public regarding the unwanted horse and related issues. Individuals should be well-informed, particularly those who operate within the horse industry. Responsible horse owners and breeders should use sound practices and prepare for the inevitable "end of life" decision.