

AHPA NEWS RELEASE

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CONGRESS PASSES COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION OF EQUINE FOR SLAUGHTER ACT

Washington, DC -- On March 28, 1996, Congress passed the "Commercial Transportation of Equine for Slaughter Act," authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to regulate the transport of equines to slaughter. The Act was included as an amendment to the 1996 Farm bill (S. 1541). The legislation is supported by the American Horse Protection Association, the American Horse Council, the American Association of Equine Practitioners, the American Humane Association, and The Humane Society of the United States.

The legislation gives the Secretary of Agriculture the authority to regulate persons regularly engaged in the commercial transportation of equines for slaughter. Among the issues it directs the Secretary to review are food, water and rest requirements during transit as well as segregation of stallions from other equine. In addition, the Secretary may also require transporters to maintain appropriate records and reports, may conduct such investigations and inspections as necessary, and establish and enforce appropriate and effective civil penalties.

Although the original bill, introduced in the Senate by Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and in the House of Representatives by Congressman Bill Goodling (R-PA), contained more prescriptive language than the version included in the Farm Bill, the passage of this legislation represents the first step toward ensuring the humane treatment of horses transported to slaughter.

"The Act provides the statutory authority by which the Secretary will promulgate regulations governing the transport of equines for slaughter," said Robin Lohnes, AHPA's executive director. "Most importantly, it paves the way for interested parties to submit comments to the Secretary of Agriculture concerning the humane transport of equines for slaughter."

AHPA will continue its work on behalf of horses destined for slaughter by working with the Department of Agriculture to draft effective and enforceable regulations that will ensure the safe and humane treatment of equines transported to slaughter.

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