

HUMANE ACTIVIST

JULY / AUGUST 2015

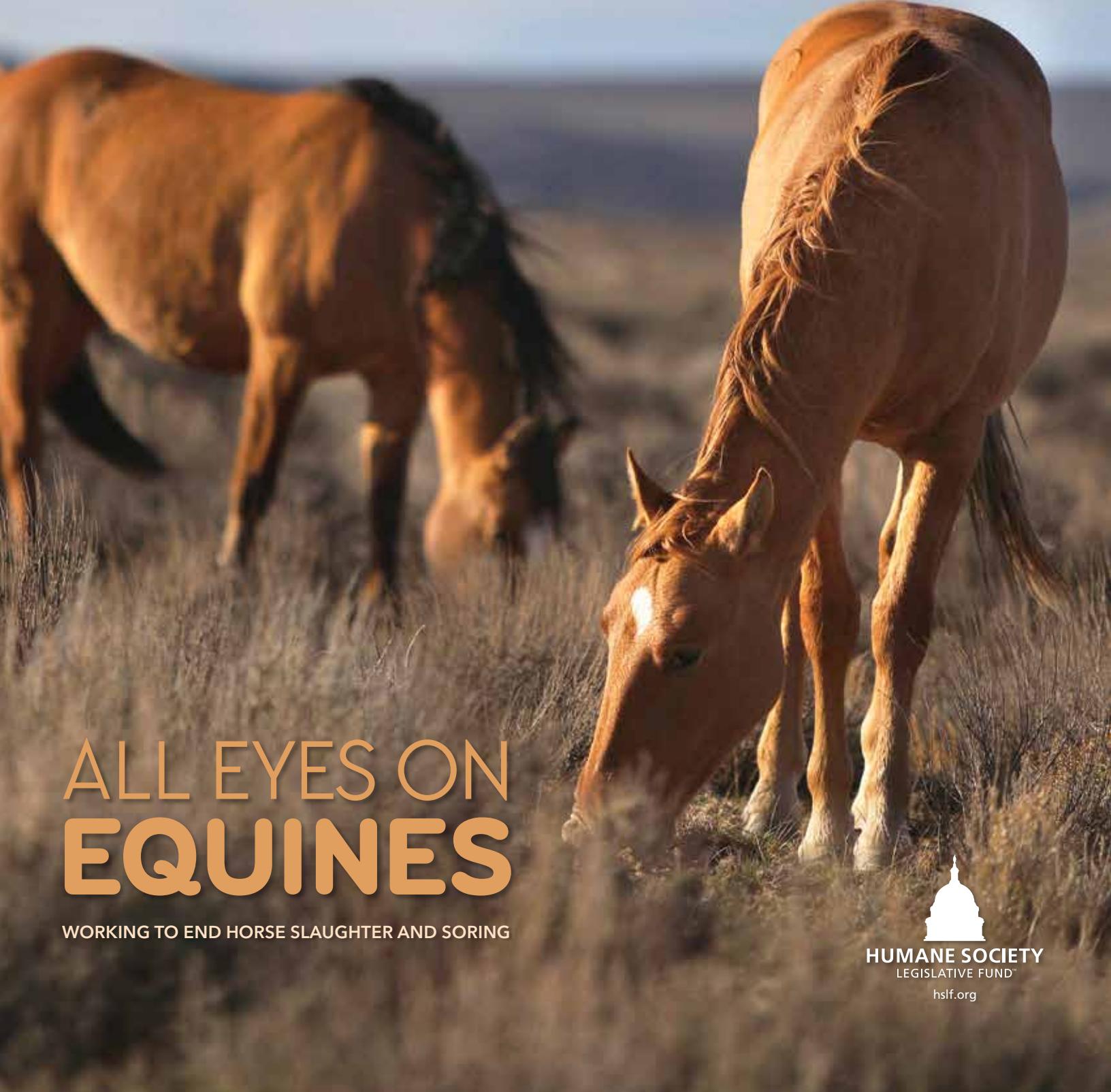
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WORKING TO END HORSE SLAUGHTER AND SORING



HUMANE SOCIETY
LEGISLATIVE FUND
hslf.org



The Humane Society Legislative Fund is a social welfare organization incorporated under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code and formed in 2004 as a separate lobbying affiliate of The Humane Society of the United States. HSLF works to pass animal protection laws at the state and federal levels, to educate the public about animal protection issues, and to support humane candidates for office. On the web at hslf.org.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER //



Dear Friends,

I'm pleased to report that the Animal Fighting Spectator Prohibition Act, which we worked with Congress to enact last year, is having a tangible impact in the field and helping to crack down on the entire cast of characters involved in animal fighting. In April, eight people were convicted under federal law for attending a dogfight in Akron, Ohio.

Last November, police raided what the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* called a nationwide dogfighting ring. Forty-seven people were arrested. Ten were charged in federal court, and the rest are being prosecuted in state court. Eight dogs were seized in the raid, including two who were already bloodied and were fighting in a 16-by-16-foot pit when law enforcement descended on the property.

Animal fighting routinely goes hand in hand with other crimes, and this was no exception. Narcotics and \$52,000 in gambling cash were confiscated. One convicted felon was charged with being in possession of a firearm. This was a highly organized operation, and fight organizers even sold concessions and dogfighting paraphernalia to attendees.

These latest convictions show that while much of our work involves passing laws to protect animals, it's equally important that those laws be properly enforced. Thanks to the Animal Fighting Spectator Prohibition Act, it's now a federal crime to attend or bring a child to an animal fight.

This was the fourth upgrade of the federal animal fighting statute since 2002, as we've worked to close gaps in the legal framework and strengthen the penalties for dogfights and cockfights.

With the FBI now tracking animal cruelty crimes in the Uniform Crime Reporting database, and agencies like the National Sheriffs' Association speaking out forcefully against animal cruelty, we should see more enforcement of all animal cruelty laws. Animal fighting crimes are particularly well suited for federal prosecution because animal fighting almost always involves interstate activity.

In another high-profile example last year, federal investigators closed down a major cockfighting pit in Pikeville, Kentucky, and found that participants in that operation came from dozens of states. Those out of state attendees even included members of organized criminal gangs like the Mexican Mafia.

The evidence is clear. Animal fighting is a lose-lose endeavor for the animals as well as for the communities where the crimes are staged. It also demonstrates why strong federal and state laws are both needed and complementary in the effort to crack down on animal fighting. Sometimes the fights are multi-state and multi-jurisdictional, and participants might be charged under federal law, or state law, or both. We are grateful to the lawmakers who helped shepherd through this new spectator animal fighting provision in the last Congress, thus providing one more important tool for law enforcement.

It's far too early to declare victory over dogfighting and cockfighting. Some states still maintain absurdly low penalties for cockfighting. And dogfighting is still pervasive in some quarters—Montana lawmakers recently rejected an effort to criminalize being a spectator at a dogfight. But we can take heart in the fact that animal fighting laws are getting tougher, law enforcement is paying attention and a growing chorus of voices is saying that this cruelty must end.

Sincerely,

Michael Markarian
President
Humane Society Legislative Fund



FRIENDS NOT FOOD

SAFE ACT WOULD PROTECT AMERICAN HORSES
FROM SLAUGHTER—HERE AND ABROAD

RICK DE LOS SANTOS' spent several years trying to open a horse slaughterhouse in Roswell, New Mexico.

De Los Santos, who owns Valley Meat Company, found those plans mired by legal battles as well as by considerable and loud protests from animal advocates. Then, in January of 2014, President Obama signed a budget measure prohibiting the use of federal funds to inspect horse slaughterhouses—a de facto ban on domestic horse slaughter. Without funds for USDA inspections, slaughterhouses are prohibited from operating.

By the following August, De Los Santos had announced plans to give up the fight. One headline about his statement went so far as to boldly proclaim “Horse Slaughter Fight Officially Over.”

Now, it appears the future of that Roswell horse slaughterhouse isn’t quite so cut and dried. In December, the New Mexico Attorney General’s office filed paperwork in U.S. District Court that suggests that some of the principals of Valley Meat created a shell company to open the same horse slaughterhouse, according to a report in the *Albuquerque Journal*.

Congress could put an end to De Los Santos’ and others’ horse slaughtering ambitions once and for all by passing the Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act. Introduced in both the House and Senate by a bipartisan team of legislators, the bill would ban domestic horse slaughter and end the export of American horses for slaughter abroad.

“This legislation would save horses from the cruelty of slaughter—a fate that is nothing short of a complete betrayal of an animal who has

stood by us throughout history and is revered as a symbol of the American West,” writes HSLF president Michael Markarian in a recent blog.

A majority of U.S. citizens agree. Polling shows that 80 percent of Americans oppose horse slaughter.

Congress first passed a bill that prohibited the use of federal funds to pay for inspections at horse slaughter plants in 2005. Federal money was restored in 2011. Before any horse slaughterhouses opened in this country, though, Congress once again put the spending prohibition in place in 2014 and 2015.

Americans have never harbored much of an appetite for horse. Before the last U.S. horse slaughterhouses closed in the mid-2000s, the companies sent their products to markets in Europe and Asia.

Canada and Mexico picked up those customers and continue to ship horse meat overseas, including from American horses. More than 100,000 U.S. horses are inhumanely transported to those countries for slaughter each year.

Long distance transport has always been inherent in this grisly enterprise. Horses suffer for more than 24 hours at a time in crowded trucks without food, water or rest and are often injured or die in transit. The SAFE Act would completely end the cruel slaughter of American horses by ensuring that horse slaughter plants can never reopen in the U.S. and by stopping the export of horses abroad for slaughter.

Until that law passes, HSLF will work tirelessly to make sure lawmakers continue to add an annual provision to spending bills prohibiting federal funds from being used for inspections of horse slaughterhouses like the one planned for New Mexico.

LEGISLATIVE LINEUP //

THE FOLLOWING is a sample of HSLF-supported animal protection bills before the U.S. Congress. It's vital that you call, email or write your federal legislators to let them know your views on these bills. To find out who your legislators are and how to reach them directly, go to hslf.org/leglookup or call 202-676-2314.

When you call a legislator's office, ask to speak with the staff person handling animal protection issues. Give the bill number and the name of the bill or issue. Be polite, brief and to the point. If you plan to visit Wash-

ington, D.C., make an appointment to meet with your legislators or their staff to discuss animal issues. We can help you with background information and may be able to accompany you on your visits.

Please note: Due to security procedures on Capitol Hill, regular mail to members of Congress may be significantly delayed. Telephone calls and emails are the best ways to contact your legislators about pending bills.

For the latest information about all animal protection bills, visit legislation.hslf.org.

PETS AND CRUELTY



Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act
H.R. 2293

To strengthen the animal crush video law and prohibit those same extreme acts of animal cruelty when they occur in interstate or foreign commerce. Sponsors: Reps. Smith, R-Texas; Deutch, D-Fla.; Marino, R-Pa.; Blumenauer, D-Ore.

Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act
H.R. 1258

To expand federal domestic violence protections to include safeguards for the pets of abuse victims on a national level and to provide grant money for domestic violence shelters to better accommodate families with pets. Sponsors: Reps. Clark, D-Mass; Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla.

Pets on Trains Act
H.R. 674/S. 1087

To require Amtrak to propose a pet policy that allows passengers to transport domesticated cats and dogs on certain Amtrak trains. Sponsors: Reps. Denham, R-Calif; Cohen, D-Tenn. / Sen. Whitehouse, D-R.I.

FARM ANIMALS



Animal Welfare in Agricultural Research Endeavors (AWARE) Act
H.R. 746/S. 388

To remove a loophole in the Animal Welfare Act that exempts farm animals used for agricultural research at federal government facilities, to ensure that these animals receive the basic care required under the AWA. Sponsors: Reps. Blumenauer, D-Ore.; Fitzpatrick, R-Pa.; Buchanan, R-Fla.; Slaughter, D-N.Y. / Sens. Booker, D-N.J.; Blumenthal, D-Conn.

Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA)
H.R. 1552

To phase out routine nontherapeutic use of antibiotics in farm animals—a common practice to promote growth and compensate for overcrowded, stressful, unsanitary conditions on factory farms—in order to maintain the effectiveness of these medicines for treating sick people and animals. Sponsor: Rep. Slaughter, D-N.Y.

ANIMAL RESEARCH



Battlefield Excellence through Superior Training (BEST) Practices Act
H.R. 1095/S. 587

To require the Department of Defense to develop, test and validate sophisticated human simulators for training members of the Armed Forces in the treatment of combat trauma injuries, with the goal of replacing live animal-based training methods. Sponsors: Rep. Johnson, D-Ga. / Sen. Wyden, D-Ore.

WILDLIFE



Wildlife Trafficking Enforcement Act/Global Anti-Poaching Act
S. 27/H.R. 2494

To allow prosecution for wildlife trafficking under federal racketeering and money laundering statutes, allow financial penalties from these crimes to be used for conservation efforts, authorize the Department of Defense to provide training and equipment to fight poaching on the front lines and pressure countries to step up their enforcement efforts. Sponsors: Sens. Feinstein, D-Calif.; Graham, R-S.C. / Reps. Royce, R-Calif.; Engel, D-N.Y.

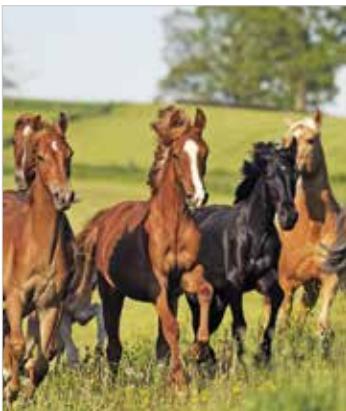
Refuge from Cruel Trapping Act
H.R. 2016/S. 1081

To end the use of body-gripping traps in the National Wildlife Refuge System. Sponsors: Rep. Lowey, D-N.Y. / Sen. Booker, D-N.J.

Federal Bird-Safe Buildings Act
H.R. 2280

To help prevent millions of bird collisions and deaths by incorporating bird-safe building materials and design features in federal buildings. Sponsors: Reps. Quigley, D-Ill; Griffith, R-Va.

EQUINES



Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act
S. 1121

To amend the Horse Protection Act to end the failed industry self-policing system, ban the use of devices associated with soring, strengthen penalties and make illegal the actual soring of a horse for the purpose of showing or selling the animal. Sponsors: Sens. Ayotte, R-N.H.; Warner, D-Va.

Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act
H.R. 1942/S. 1214

To ban domestic horse slaughter and stop the export of horses for slaughter abroad and to prevent human health threats posed by the consumption of equines raised in the United States. Sponsors: Reps. Guinta, R-N.H.; Schakowsky, D-Ill; Buchanan, R-Fla.; Lujan-Grisham, D-N.M. / Sens. Menendez, D-N.J.; Graham, R-S.C.; Mikulski, D-Md.; Collins, R-Maine

THE 2014 HUMANE LEGISLATOR AWARDS GO TO ...



HSUS president and chief executive officer Wayne Pacelle (left), Rep. Jeff Denham and HSLF president Michael Markarian at the 2014 Humane Awards.

HUMANE SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE FUND and its affiliate The Humane Society of the United States recently presented their 2014 Humane Legislator of the Year awards to Sens. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., and Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Reps. Jeff Denham, R-Calif., and Kurt Schrader, D-Ore.

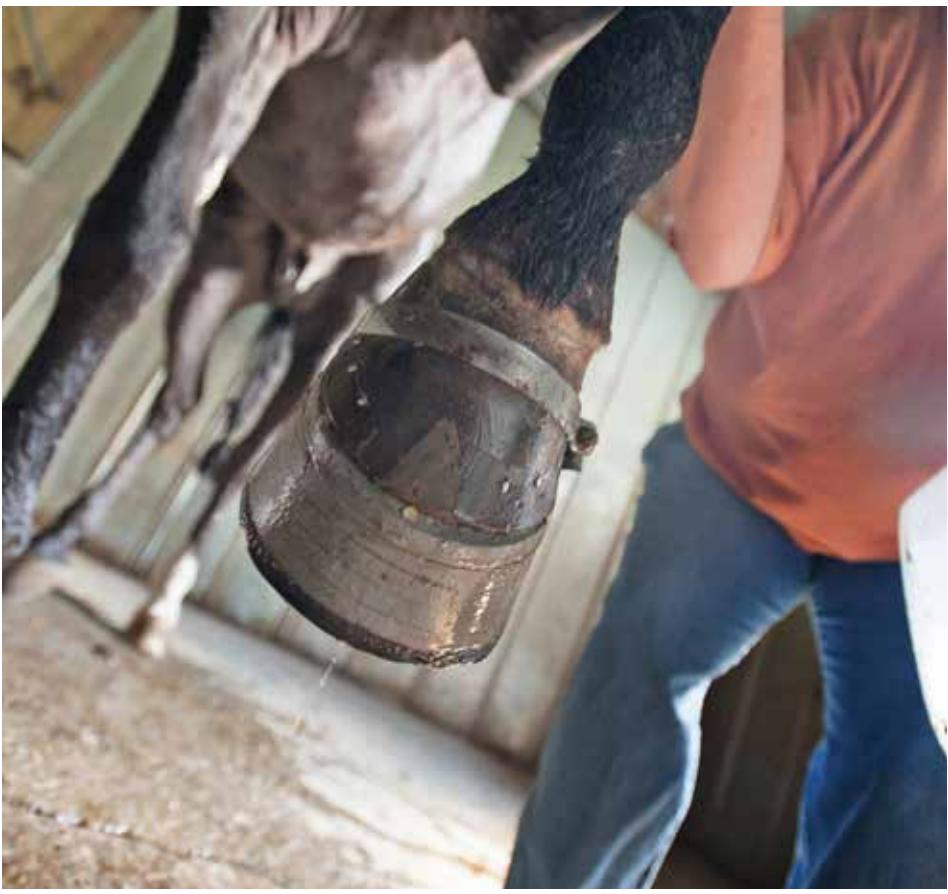
The honorees' efforts on behalf of animals include cracking down on animal fighting, providing sanctuary for laboratory chimpanzees and protecting farm animals, horses and pets.

At the awards ceremony, HSLF president Michael Markarian said, "Animal protection issues continue to bridge partisan divides

and give members of Congress the opportunity to work together to uphold core humane values shared by the overwhelming majority of Americans. We are deeply grateful to all these leaders for bringing their compassion to the halls of Congress and giving animals a strong voice."

In addition to the Legislator of the Year recipients, 141 other legislators—representing 40 states, Guam, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia—received awards for their humane work in 2014.

+TO SEE the complete list of recipients, visit hslf.org/2014humaneawards.



A STOP TO SORING

BIPARTISAN SUPPORT IN SENATE FOR ENDING ABUSIVE PRACTICE

THE 54 TENNESSEE WALKING horses seized by authorities April 14 in Giles County, Tennessee, lived in filth with little to no food. Their owner, Jeffrey Mitchell, was charged with animal cruelty.

Mitchell had prior convictions for cruelty to animals, according to reports. He also has a public record of citations for soring, the practice of intentionally inflicting pain on a horse's limbs in order to produce an artificial, high-stepping gait, known as the "Big Lick." Soring is a common practice at Tennessee walking horse shows, where Mitchell has been known to compete.

It was no surprise to see a name that had been connected to soring turn up again in news headlines about animal abuse, maintains Keith Dane, vice president of equine protection for The Humane Society of the United States.

"The Mitchell case underscores the attitude many people in the Big Lick Tennessee Walking Horse community have about animals," he says. "They see them as commodities that are there for their pleasure and use, and when they no longer meet their needs, they can either dispose of them or, in the case of Mr. Mitchell, just neglect them and abandon them."

To put an end to soring, a bipartisan group of senators recently reintroduced legislation to strengthen the federal Horse Protection Act (HPA). Their bill, the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act, S.1121, would do away with the failed system of industry self-regulation, outlaw the specific devices used in soring, increase penalties for the practice and make other necessary reforms.

Congress initially attempted to protect Tennessee walking horses from the cruel treatment in 1970 by enacting the HPA. It

didn't take long, however, before perpetrators found loopholes to allow them to continue their abusive practices.

Almost from the beginning, a lack of funding prevented the U.S. Department of Agriculture from sending agency officials to oversee all the Tennessee walking horse shows. Instead, horse industry organizations (HIOs) were allowed to train and license their own inspectors. Unfortunately, the majority of HIOs are made up of industry insiders. "It's literally like the fox watching the hen house," Dane says.

Under the PAST Act, the USDA would be responsible for licensing, training and overseeing inspectors that examine animals at Tennessee walking horse shows for signs of soring.

In addition, the law would ban the use of certain devices associated with soring, including metal chains and stacks and pads. Soring perpetrators apply caustic chemicals to the horses' legs, which makes them extremely painful. Metal chains are then attached to the horses' legs, which rub and strike against the sensitive tissue, causing the horses to walk with the trademark exaggerated gait. Stacks and pads, meanwhile, are nailed to the horse's hoof to conceal painful objects inserted into the tender foot and to add weight and height, which forces the horse to lift his feet higher, and at an abnormal angle.

The PAST Act would also strengthen the penalties against soring from a misdemeanor to a felony. Violators would suddenly face up to three years of jail and doubled fines. "Otherwise, there's no deterrent to keep people from taking the risk," says Dane. "Instead, they continue to practice soring."

A failure to enact PAST this session could have dire consequences for the breed, insiders warn. Soring would continue among the Big Lick crowd, while conscientious animal lovers could shy away from Tennessee walking horses due to all the controversy. "We absolutely need [the PAST Act] to end soring," said Teresa Bippen, president of the group Friends of Sound Horses (FOSH).

Already, according to Bippen, the breed is surrounded by stigma. "I know when I tell people I have a Tennessee walking horse, they immediately look at me with raised eyebrows," she said.



MR. MAXWELL GOES TO WASHINGTON

HSLF'S NEW POLITICAL DIRECTOR ADVOCATES FOR VALUES LEARNED ON FAMILY FARM

OVER A STORIED CAREER, Joe Maxwell has worn many hats. Beginning in the 1980s, he helped organize and run dozens of political campaigns. Later, Maxwell moved from behind-the-scenes into the spotlight running for and winning terms in both the Missouri House of Representatives and the state Senate. In 2000, Missouri voters elected Maxwell lieutenant governor of the Show Me State. After leaving office, he joined The HSUS as vice president of outreach and engagement, and we're pleased to announce that he recently agreed to apply his considerable expertise as political director for HSLF. As he's made the different stops on his career trajectory, Maxwell has also juggled working a fourth-generation family farm in Missouri along with his twin brother, Steve.

What will be your role as political director for HSLF? It's a great opportunity for me to be able to help the animal welfare movement have greater engagement in the political arena. We have millions of activists who clearly are on board with our issue advocacy work. My role is to understand how we can have those individuals begin to take action on behalf of animals as it relates to the ballot box. So, I'll be going out there finding those candidates who will do what's right for the animals and getting activists engaged for the 2016 election.

I'll be working more in Washington, D.C., especially through 2015, as we begin to develop candidates that we will support as well as the various ballot initiatives that we'll engage in 2016. Then I expect I'll begin to move out into the states and be on the ground in some

of these districts to make sure we're motivating our grassroots in a way that will have a positive impact on those elections.

What advice do you have for activists looking to build bridges to those skeptical of animal welfare advocates? You have to first meet people where they are. You can't talk over them. You can't stand over them. You have to come wherever they are and have respect for their position. If you can get people to be that open and honest with you, then you can build a relationship that is built on trust.

They have to also be able to find themselves in your organization. They've got to be able to see there's a place for them there.

There was some speculation in the press that you might be returning to elected office in Missouri. There were a lot of people who wanted me to run for governor in 2016. My family and I gave it a real serious look last fall and we made a decision that the best way we can serve our values that we have as a family is to come on board with HSLF.

There's a lot of great work that must be done when you're elected. Some of it you're more passionate about than others. It's all good work. You go there to serve. But on any given day, if you've had 20 percent of your time to do those things you're passionate about then you'd better count your lucky stars. At this juncture in my career, I get to get up everyday and actually work for the things that mean the most to me.





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THE AYES HAVE IT //



► **HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL'S** New England National Primate Research Center closed its doors in May, citing funding issues and the fact that primate research doesn't hold a profitable future. Harvard has also been heavily investing in the development of innovative research that doesn't involve harming animals. When Harvard initially announced the decision to close the primate center in 2013, the facility housed approximately 2,000 monkeys. The center was previously cited for a string of violations of the Animal Welfare Act, leading the USDA to open an investigation. With the closure of Harvard's primate center, there are now seven National Primate Research Centers supported by the National Institutes of Health.

► **WALMART** announced that it is adopting a comprehensive animal welfare policy, calling on its suppliers to shift away from confining hens in battery cages, sows in gestation crates and calves in veal crates, among other inhumane practices. The new policy applies for all of the company's U.S. operations and includes its subsidiary Sam's Club. This move by the nation's biggest food seller—which captures 25 percent of the grocery market—is a major advancement toward ending the most abusive practices in animal agriculture.

► **SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS** placed a ban on the transportation of endangered wildlife hunting trophies on the company's flights. A spokesperson for SAA, the continent's largest airline, announced the decision citing the toll that trophy hunting of endangered species has taken on Africa's wildlife, including rhinos, elephants and lions. The company's commitment to the preservation of African wildlife means that game hunters will no longer be able to ship their wildlife trophies back to their country of origin on SAA.

► **CARINO PROCESSING, LTD.** said "no thanks" to \$1 million of government funding to be used to purchase seal pelts. The company, Canada's oldest and largest buyer of seal fur, explained it hasn't been able to sell pelts already in storage. With \$2 million in government financing pledged to Carino and one other processor, animal advocates anticipated sealers would come out en masse, but the Carino decision seemed to put the brakes on much of the sealing. Even Eldridge Woodford, president of the Canadian Sealers Association, remarked that for the first time in two decades, he wouldn't participate in the 2015 seal slaughter because of a lack of buyers.

