



U.S. Trotting Association

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October 5, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders Schumer, McCarthy, and McConnell:

The United States Trotting Association (USTA) writes to commend recent legislative efforts aimed at prohibiting the transport of horses for purposes of slaughter for human consumption and to urge swift consideration and passage of this important policy objective. The USTA supports the following House and Senate legislative initiatives that would accomplish this objective, including:

- H.R. 3355, the SAFE Act of 2021, introduced by Representatives Janice Schakowsky (D-IL) and Vern Buchanan (R-FL)
- S. 2732, the John Stringer Rainey Save America's Forgotten Equines (SAFE) Act, introduced by Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and Susan Collins (R-ME)

The USTA is a national, 17,000-member, not-for-profit association of Standardbred owners, breeders, drivers, trainers, and officials. We were founded in 1939 with a mission to ensure the highest standards of safety and care for Standardbred horses; today, we have over 30 racetracks across the country and over 200 fairground racetracks. Our interest in horse safety and care extends to all breeds and all phases of life and is not limited to racing horses.

We strongly support congressional efforts to end the legal pipeline of U.S. horses being transported outside of the United States for slaughter and human consumption. This loophole enables bad actors to take advantage of horses and horse owners in vulnerable situations. The existence of this loophole also stymies programs and organizations working to provide more suitable options for care. For example, the USTA leads and supports programs for retired Standardbred racehorses, including programs that provide safety nets for horses in need of care.



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This includes USTA's Support Our Standardbreds program, our Full Circle program, and an organization we helped found, the Standardbred Transition Alliance.

Horse owners, breeders, and the like should not have to fear that selling or donating their horse might mean unintentionally placing them in the horsemeat pipeline. Likewise, potential horse buyers looking to provide for the long-term care of the horse should be competing against others with a similar goal. Unlike buyers for the horsemeat market, these individuals, businesses, and organizations must consider the long-term costs of caring for the horse when allocating capital toward the purchase price, putting them at an inherent disadvantage to the so-called "kill buyers." Closing this loophole will allow for the better protection of horses and those looking to provide them with care.

In July, the House passed this policy change as a bipartisan amendment offered by Representatives Troy Carter (D-LA) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) to the *INVEST in America Act*. The USTA applauds the House's action and encourages further activity in both chambers to see this policy change enacted into law.

Sincerely,

Russell Williams
President
United States Trotting Association

Mike Tanner
CEO
United States Trotting Association