

TO: Members of Congress
FROM:
DATE:
SUBJECT: H.R. 503/S. 311, a bill banning the sale, transportation and slaughter of horses

As a livestock producer and horse owner, I am committed to providing humane care and disposal of my animals. Thus, I urge you and your colleagues in the U.S. Congress to oppose legislation that would remove an important tool for me in humanely disposing of horses that are no longer needed in my farming operation.

The awful result of H.R. 503 and S. 311 would be to seriously compromise horse welfare as many producers may have little recourse but to turn their horses out to suffer further injury, starve or do harm to others. This legislation also threatens to do serious financial harm to my operation as well as many other legitimate businesses dependent on the horse industry by markedly devaluing horses with no other marketable purpose.

The success of these legislative proposals so far appears to be based solely on emotional arguments, such as “We don’t eat horse meat here in the U.S.,” or “Horses are pets”. However, such arguments clearly don’t help me deal with the real world effects of having a humane, value-added disposal method for my horses taken away from me.

All other issues aside, I am particularly concerned with the Congress’ unprecedented intervention in my rights as a property owner to decide how I will dispose of that property. Experts estimate that nearly 100,000 horses each year are disposed of because they are no longer viable, are old, infirm, unmanageable or unwanted and that number could double within a few years. Thus it is very hard for me to understand why the U.S. Congress would choose to limit a horse owner’s options in determining what to do with his/her property, whether it is disposal by humane processing, or euthanasia and burial on farm.

Say NO! to H.R. 503/S.311 so I as a horse owner can continue to decide how I humanely dispose of my animals; so viable value-added disposal options remain open to my operation; and so legitimate businesses, whether it be a ranch or horse processing plant, are allowed to continue to do business in a free-market global economy.

Sincerely,