

Subject: Request to Rescind the Horse Protection Act Rule

Dear Representative/Senator _____:

I am writing to urge you to take immediate action to nullify the Horse Protection Act (HPA) Rule, which was finalized under the Biden Administration and is now set to take effect on April 1, 2025, following a 60-day extension announced by APHIS. The implementation of this Rule is not only flawed in its conception but also undermines due process as highlighted by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform under Chairman James Comer.

Chairman Comer's investigation into the USDA's enforcement of the HPA has uncovered alarming findings where USDA-APHIS attempted to enforce provisions of the Rule almost a year prior to its official effective date demonstrating a clear disregard for horse show participants and proper regulatory procedures. Additionally, the Committee found significant concerns with APHIS inspectors' decision-making process and lack of checks and balances to ensure fairness for horse show participants. The Tennessee Walking Horse industry horse show participants have long raised concerns about bias and retaliatory behavior by USDA inspectors, and the Committee's investigation substantiated these claims in their findings. Finally, the HPA Rule completely undermines fundamental due process protections for Americans, as noted in Chairman Comer's letter to the Trump Transition Team.

These findings reinforce what many in the equine industry have been saying for years—that USDA's enforcement of the HPA is overly broad, subjectively applied, and driven by an animal rights agenda rather than sound science or genuine animal welfare concerns.

The \$170 Billion American horse industry at large, encompassing a wide range of disciplines and breeds, is deeply concerned about the overreaching scope of the HPA Rule and its potential for a devastating impact. By subjecting a vastly expanded list of breeds and disciplines to USDA's burdensome inspections and vague enforcement standards, the new Rule risks discouraging participation in horse shows and events, increasing costs for organizers, and creating an environment of uncertainty for exhibitors and owners. This overreach jeopardizes the economic vitality and cultural heritage of equine industries nationwide. It will also impact smaller events, family-owned operations, and law-abiding participants who already comply with strict welfare standards, creating a chilling effect on the broader horse community.

Western Justice and the thousands of members of our horse industry coalition respectfully request that you join Congressman Comer and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in protecting the equine industry by abolishing the Horse Protection Act Rule.

Respectfully,