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April 22, 2005

The Honorable Gale Norton
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

BY HAND

Re: Wild, Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act
Sales Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 1333(e)

Dear Secretary Norton:

I am writing on behalf of the American Horse Defense Fund, the American Horse Protection Association, the American Humane Association, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign, the Humane Society of the United States, the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros, LRTC Wild Horse Mentors, Return to Freedom, the Society for Animal Protective Legislation, and the Wild Horse and Burro Freedom Alliance, which have combined membership and supporters totaling 10 million.

As you know, six wild horses sold by the Bureau of Land Management on April 15 pursuant to last fall's amendments to the Wild, Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act were re-sold to slaughter on Monday, April 18. This news is tragic, but not unexpected. The above organizations have warned the Department repeatedly since last fall that the amendment would become the mechanism by which slaughter buyers would profit from America's wild equines.

Although the Bureau has publicly acknowledged its core mission of finding homes for the animals affected by the amendments, and its desire to place the animals in good care, its actions have fallen far short of its words. I note, for example, that the Interior Department has not responded to the petition for rulemaking these organizations submitted on March 2, nor has it



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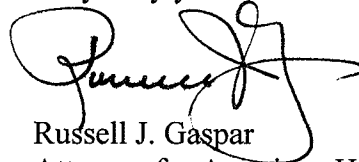
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even acknowledged during the past seven weeks that a rulemaking is necessary to prevent the abuse that just occurred.

Under the circumstances, to preserve the purposes and integrity of the Bureau's wild horse and burro program, the organizations demand that the Interior Department:

- (a) suspend immediately all sales of wild horses or burros pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 1333(e); and
- (b) support efforts by the Congressional sponsors of H.R. 297 and S. 576 to restore the original language of the Wild, Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act by deleting the amendments enacted last year through H.R. 4818, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2005.

Very truly yours,



Russell J. Gaspar
Attorney for American Horse
Protection Association, Inc., on behalf of
the aforementioned organizations