

**American Horse Defense Fund ♦ American Humane Association ♦ American Mustang and Burro Association, Inc. ♦ American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign ♦ Cascadia Wildlands Project ♦ Center for Environmental Education and Information ♦ Doris Day Animal League ♦ Forest Guardians Fund for Animals ♦ Humane Society of the United States ♦ Int'l Fund for Horses ♦ International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros ♦ Least Resistance Training Concepts, Inc.
National Horse Protection Coalition ♦ Return to Freedom ♦ Society for Animal Protective Legislation ♦ Vaquero Heritage Foundation ♦ Wild Horse and Burro Coalition
Wild Horse and Burro Freedom Alliance ♦ Wild Horse Observers Association
Wild Horse Preservation League ♦ Wild Horse Spirit**

May 17, 2006

**Support the Rahall/Whitfield Interior Appropriations Amendment
Stopping the Slaughter of America's Wild Horses and Burros**

Dear Representative:

We write to you, on behalf of over 10 million of our members and constituents, to urge you to support an amendment sponsored by Representatives Nick Rahall (D-WV) and Ed Whitfield (R-KY) to prevent tax dollars from being used to send wild horses to slaughter. Immediate passage of the Rahall amendment is critical to ensure these national treasures are not slaughtered. An identical measure overwhelmingly passed the House last year.

Fifty-five years ago on a highway in Nevada, Velma B. Johnston, later known as "Wild Horse Annie," was driving behind a truck and noticed dripping blood. She discovered it was packed with severely injured wild horses collected by the government in a roundup, and it was on its way to the slaughterhouse. Thus began Johnson's long crusade to protect the wild horses. With her help, the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act passed unanimously in 1971, and horses were finally protected from slaughter – or so we thought.

Two years ago, a last-minute stealth rider to the massive federal appropriations bill undermined the 1971 law by requiring thousands of "excess" horses and burros to be sold "without limitation." **Slaughterhouse middlemen frequent auctions to purchase animals for slaughter at one of the three remaining foreign-owned plants in the United States. The equines are transported and killed under appalling conditions, and their flesh is sent overseas to be served in fancy restaurants.**

Soon after enactment of this rider our worst fears and warnings were realized following the news that 41 of America's wild horses had been slaughtered as a result of the devastating rider. However, only Congress can stop this permanently as they thought was done over 30 years ago.

The wild horse is a symbol of America. As the opening paragraph of the law reads, *"Congress finds and declares that wild free-roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West; that they contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people; and that these horses and burros are fast disappearing from the American scene."*

We urge you to support this amendment to restore the prohibition on the commercial sale and slaughter of wild free-roaming horses and burros. Our organizations and supporters are committed to restoring these long-standing protections wrongly taken away, as we have been actively involved in the passage of all previous wild horse protection laws.

**Sincerely,
Wild Horse Protection and Humane Organizations**

Contacts:

Chris Heyde, Society for Animal Protective Legislation	703.836.4300
Nancy Perry, The Humane Society of the United States	202.955.3663
Liz Ross, The Doris Day Animal League	202.546.1761 x30
Ripley Forbes, American Humane Association	703.294.6690 x103