



## THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

### Speak Out Against Horse Slaughter at Town Hall Meetings!

One significant way you can protect horses and help end the cruel slaughter of American horses is by attending town hall meetings to ask your federal legislators to co-sponsor the Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act, H.R. 1942/S. 1214. The SAFE Act will prevent horse slaughter plants from opening in the U.S. and end the current export of American horses for slaughter abroad.

Some town hall meetings are live while others are call-in by phone. You can find the times and dates of upcoming town hall meetings by visiting the websites of your federal legislators or by calling their offices. The U.S. Capitol Switchboard's number is 202-224-3121. Simply call this number and ask for the name of your senator or representative.

Check to see whether your federal legislators already co-sponsor the SAFE Act by visiting <https://www.congress.gov/> and typing in the bill number. If your legislator is already a co-sponsor, you should attend the town hall meeting, state your talking points, and thank them for being a co-sponsor. If, on the other hand, your legislator is not yet a co-sponsor of the SAFE Act, you should state your talking points and ask them to co-sponsor the bill. Remember, it is very important to always maintain a professional and polite demeanor.

You do not need to be an expert on horse slaughter or even a horse owner to attend town hall meetings. You simply need to care about protecting horses from cruelty.

Here are some helpful talking points you can use:

1. **Horse Slaughter is Inhumane and Cannot Be Made Humane.** Slaughter is a brutal and terrifying end for horses and is not humane. Horses are shipped for more than 24 hours at a time without food, water, or rest in crowded trucks in which the animals are often seriously injured or killed in transit. Horses are skittish by nature due to their heightened fight or flight response. As a result, the methods used to kill horses rarely result in quick, painless deaths; they often endure repeated blows during attempts to render them unconscious and sometimes remain alive and kicking during dismemberment. Before the last domestic plant closed in 2007, the USDA documented in the slaughter pipeline rampant cruelty violations and severe injuries to horses, including broken bones protruding from their bodies, eyeballs hanging by a thread of tissue, and gaping open wounds.

2. **Horsemeat is Unfit for Human Consumption.** American horses are not raised for human consumption in this country, and they are routinely given hundreds of drugs and other substances, both legal and illegal, over their lifetimes that can be toxic to humans if ingested. These substances have not been approved and many have been specifically prohibited by the FDA for use in animals intended for human consumption. Phenylbutazone (“horse aspirin”) is one commonly used drug that is known to cause potentially fatal human diseases, and there is no known safe level for residues of this drug in horsemeat. Horses are gathered from random sources at various stages in their life, and there is no system in the U.S. to track what drugs and veterinary treatments horses receive to ensure their meat is safe for human consumption.
3. **Forcing American Taxpayers to Pay for Horse Slaughter is Fiscally Irresponsible.** It makes no sense for the federal government to spend millions of taxpayer dollars to oversee new horse slaughter plants. At a time when Congress is so focused on fiscal responsibility and the budget of the USDA’s Food Safety Inspection Service is already stretched thin, USDA should not extend funding for a new program to slaughter horses – a practice that 80% of the American public opposes.

**To learn more facts about horse slaughter, visit our website:**

[http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/horse\\_slaughter/](http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/horse_slaughter/)