

Support the Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act (H.R. 113/ S. 1706)

Protect America's horses from the cruelty of slaughter and protect consumers from toxic horsemeat.

The Safeguard American Food Exports Act was introduced in the House by Reps. Vern Buchanan (R-FL), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Ed Royce (R-CA), and Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM), and in the Senate by Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and Susan Collins (R-ME).

What will the SAFE Act do?

The SAFE Act will prohibit the slaughter of horses for human consumption in the U.S. and their export for that purpose. This bill will also protect consumers from exposure to toxic horsemeat.

Does horse slaughter differ from other slaughter?

Horse slaughter is especially inhumane because horses are extremely difficult to stun. They often endure repeated blows to the head and sometimes are alive and kicking during dismemberment. USDA inspectors cited rampant cruelty violations at plants previously operating in the U.S.

How does horsemeat differ from other meat?

American horses are not raised for food. Over their lifetimes they are routinely given hundreds of drugs and other substances (legal and illegal) that have not been approved by the FDA for use in animals intended for human consumption. A [New York Times article](#) emphasized the hodgepodge of drugs regularly administered to American race horses and the resulting food safety threats: *"Laboratories cannot yet detect the newest performance-enhancing drugs [used in horse racing], while trainers experiment with anything that might give them an edge, including ... cobra venom, Viagra, blood doping agents, stimulants and cancer drugs."*

The shocking [discovery of horsemeat in beef products in the U.K.](#) and the European Union (EU) forecasted the threat to American health that may result if horse slaughter resumes in the U.S.

In January 2015 the EU banned imports of horse meat from Mexico following a scathing 2014 audit of EU-certified Mexican horse slaughter plants, which kill tens of thousands of American horses each year. The audit also found gross deficiencies in horse welfare protections throughout the Mexican horse slaughter

system. In March 2017 the EU acted again, this time implementing a six-month residency requirement for all horses imported into Canada from the U.S. for slaughter or live-export to EU member countries.

How do horse slaughter plants affect communities?

Slaughter plants inflict environmental damage, drain local economies, and diminish property values. The minimal number of low-paying, dangerous jobs that slaughter plants offer cannot compensate for the enormous environmental and financial burdens on surrounding communities. The last two states to harbor horse slaughterhouses, Texas and Illinois, now have explicit laws banning the industry because of the havoc it wreaked on their communities.



What do Americans think about horse slaughter?

A 2012 national poll revealed that 80% of Americans favor a ban on horse slaughter and acknowledge our responsibility to protect these intelligent, sensitive animals from slaughter. A 2016 study found that 2.3 million Americans are *willing and able* to adopt a horse; 70% of respondents said their motivation would be to save a horse from slaughter. Horses have served America faithfully and courageously throughout history. We owe them a humane, dignified end of life – not the terrors of the killing floor.

Timeline of Horse Slaughter Legislation

- July 20, 2017: Senate Appropriations Committee adopted Udall-Graham Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections by voice vote.
- July 12, 2017: House Appropriations Committee failed to pass Roybal-Allard/Dent Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections by a 25-27 roll call vote.
- December 12, 2016: Language continuing the horse slaughter inspection ban renewed by the FY 2017 Continuing Resolution signed into law.
- May 19, 2016: Senate Appropriations Committee adopted Udall-Kirk Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections by voice vote.
- April 19, 2016: House Appropriations Committee adopted Farr-Dent Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections by a 25-23 roll call vote.
- December 18, 2015: Language continuing the horse slaughter inspection ban renewed in the FY 2016 Omnibus signed into law.
- July 17, 2015: Senate Appropriations Committee adopted Udall-Kirk Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections by voice vote.
- July 8, 2015: House Appropriation Committee did not adopt Farr Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections due to 24-24 tie vote.
- December 16, 2014: Language continuing the horse slaughter inspection ban renewed in the FY 2015 Omnibus signed into law.
- May 29, 2014: House Appropriations Committee adopted Moran Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections by a 28-22 roll call vote.
- May 22, 2014: Senate Appropriations Committee adopted Landrieu-Graham Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections by a 18-12 roll call vote.

- January 17, 2014: Language reinstating the horse slaughter inspection ban was included in the FY2014 Omnibus signed into law.
- June 20, 2013: Senate Appropriations Committee adopted Landrieu-Graham Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections.
- June 13, 2013: House Appropriations Committee adopted Moran-Young Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections.
- June 2012: The House Appropriations Committee adopted the Moran Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections.
- November 2011: The Agricultural Appropriations bill signed into law omitted inspection defunding language, opening the door the return of slaughter plants to the U.S.
- September 2008: House Judiciary Committee passed a ban on horse slaughter by voice vote.
- September 2007: U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit upheld the State of Illinois' decision to ban the slaughter of horses for human consumption, shutting down the last of the plants located on US soil.
- April 2007: Senate Commerce Committee passed S. 311, a ban on horse slaughter, by 15-7 vote.
- March 2007: U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit upheld a 1949 Texas state law that outlawed the sale and possession with intent to sell horsemeat for human consumption. The Supreme Court denied a cert petition submitted by the horse slaughter plants.
- September 2006: A permanent ban on horse slaughter passed the House by 263-146 vote.
- September 2005: Senate passed a funding limitation amendment to ban horse slaughter by a 69-28 margin, following a bipartisan 269-158 House vote in June 2005. Funding limitations remained in place in the federal budget until 2011.