

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce Chair Janice D. Schakowsky

Markup of 24 Bills

September 21, 2022

Today we will consider 6 pieces of bipartisan legislation that will protect consumers, improve access to health care, and boost tourism in the U.S.

Two bills, the “Visit America Act” and the “PAST Act,” were ushered through my Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce with strong bipartisan support and I am proud of the work we did together.

The “Visit America Act” introduced by Representatives Titus, Case and the late Don Young will boost our travel and tourism industry.

The “Prevent All Soring Tactics Act” – or “PAST Act” – will finally end the horrific practice of soring horses.

I have been working on this issue for many years and I am proud to co-lead this bill with my colleagues Representatives Cohen, Fitzpatrick, and Buchanan.

For those who don’t know, horse soring is the intentional infliction of pain on horses’ feet and legs to create an exaggerated walk called the “big lick.”

What kind of pain?

They apply caustic chemicals, hard objects that cut into a horses’ legs, attach heavy chains and weighted shoes, and more.

These animals are tortured until they perform this “big lick.”

The practice is unconscionable and it’s about time that we say enough is enough.

The PAST Act will prohibit the abusive practice of horse soring and will eliminate self-policing within the industry.

It will also ensure that the USDA has a primary role in assigning inspectors and will meaningfully increase the penalties and consequences for those caught soring these animals.

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I am grateful for the diligent work of so many groups and advocates over so many years on this issue.

These steps are long overdue, and I look forward to moving the PAST Act out of committee and to the floor.

Thank you and I yield back.