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January 28, 2019

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman, House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Anna Eshoo
Chairwoman, House Subcommittee on Health
202 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Michael Burgess
Ranking Member, House Subcommittee on Health
2161 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Chairwoman Eshoo, Ranking Member Walden, and Ranking Member Burgess:

We are writing to express our support for the Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act, H.R. 961, led by Rep. Schakowsky (D-IL) and Rep. Vern Buchanan (R-FL), on January 29th, and to thank you for holding a hearing on this important bill. Our team at Animal Wellness Action and Animal Wellness Foundation has advocated tirelessly in support of this bill for many years. This Congress, the bill has been on our priority list since day one, and we've met with over 350 offices since January 2019 to garner cosponsors for the bill.

Public opinion stands firmly against the slaughter of American horses, and most are shocked to know that tens of thousands of horses – racehorses, show horses, and even companion ponies – are sent across the border each year to be slaughtered for human consumption. Horse slaughter is nothing but cruelty and suffering, from the long grueling transport without food or water, to the slaughter process itself where these frightened, skittish animals suffer multiple blows to be rendered unconscious. Not only are domestic horses subjected to this, but now some groups have put forth a dangerous proposal to roundup 130,000 wild horses, putting

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them at great risk of slaughter. It's a horrific end and a deep betrayal to an animal that has served us throughout history and stands as a symbol of freedom and our country's heritage.

It's far overdue time to pass this bill. In 2006, a bill to ban horse slaughter passed the House but was never taken up in the Senate. Even Vice President Mike Pence, then a U.S. House Member from Indiana, voted in support of the bill. Over the last few years, we've seen congressional support grow for the bill, which now touts well over 200 cosponsors. Congress has also routinely included language in the final yearly spending bill to defund horse slaughter, thereby keeping horse slaughter plants closed in the U.S. – but that is a temporary, partial solution. Instead of dealing with this issue every single year, Congress should pass the SAFE Act to permanently defund horse slaughter and stop horses from being sent over the border.

Thank you for holding a hearing on the SAFE Act, and we are also thankful for the hearing on the Horseracing Integrity Act on January 28th. We hope you will move both of these bills to the full committee and floor for passage.

Please feel free to contact us at holly@animalwellnessaction.org should you have any questions.

All the best,



Marty Irby
Executive Director



Holly Gann
Director of Federal Affairs