

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

June 13, 2022

Ms. Kaitlin Kraska
Director of Federal Legislation, Government Relations
ASPCA
600 Pennsylvania Avenue SE
#450
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Ms. Kraska:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce on Thursday, May 26, 2022, at the hearing entitled “Legislative Hearing to Protect Consumers and Strengthen the Economy.” I appreciate the time and effort you gave as a witness before the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Pursuant to Rule 3 of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, members are permitted to submit additional questions to the witnesses for their responses, which will be included in the hearing record. Attached is a question directed to you from a member of the Committee. In preparing your answer to this question, please address your response to the member who has submitted the question in the space provided.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please submit your response to this question no later than the close of business on Monday, June 27, 2022. As previously noted, this transmittal letter and your response, as well as the responses from the other witnesses appearing at the hearing, will all be included in the hearing record. Your written responses should be transmitted by e-mail in the Word document provided to Ed Kaczmariski, Policy Analyst, at ed.kaczmariski@mail.house.gov. To help in maintaining the proper format for hearing records, please use the document provided to complete your responses.

Ms. Kaitlin Kraska

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Thank you for your prompt attention to this request. If you need additional information or have other questions, please contact Ed Kaczmarek with the Committee staff at (202) 225-2927.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank Pallone, Jr." in a cursive style.

Frank Pallone, Jr.

Chairman

Attachment

cc: The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
Chair
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

The Honorable Gus Bilirakis
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Attachment—Additional Questions for the Record

**Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Hearing on
“Legislative Hearing to Protect Consumers and Strengthen the Economy”
May 26, 2022**

Ms. Katlin Kraska, Director of Federal Legislation, Government Relations, American Society for
the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

The Honorable Gus Bilirakis (R-FL)

1. According to the U.S. Trotting Association, a not-for-profit association of Standardbred owners, breeders, drivers, trainers, and officials, a secondary illicit economy has surfaced in the last few years where “kill buyers” legally purchase retired horses and contact their previous owners to say they must either pay to buy the horse back or it will be transported to Canada or Mexico for slaughter. This illicit ransom economy is not only wrong and provides kill buyers with more revenue to continue the practice, but it is also bad for the horse racing industry.
 - a. Would the SAFE Act help solve the problem that I just described?

RESPONSE:

Yes, the SAFE Act would prevent this nefarious scenario from happening and a variety of other predatory behavior towards horse owners and breeders. The legal loophole that allows American horses to be exported abroad for slaughter has spawned an underground practice that has proliferated in the internet age known as “kill pen bailouts,” where kill buyers and kill pens post a horse online promising their sale to slaughter unless the public pays their ransom and bails them out. Those that sell horses to slaughter have discovered the lengths that the public is willing to go to protect horses from this fate. Sometimes, the horse is truly rescued. Sometimes, the horse is sent to slaughter regardless. Sometimes, the horse is reposted on another website and the deceitful bail out scheme occurs again. Kill pen bailouts have proven to be a lucrative deception for kill buyers who prey on the public’s aversion to such extreme cruelty, fetching thousands of dollars over meat prices, distorting the market and defrauding well-intentioned members of the equine

community in the process. The reason to ransom disappears as soon as the slaughter loophole is closed.

At two Equine Transition Centers in North Texas and Oklahoma, the ASPCA has helped more than 400 horses find new homes or receive safety net services. Of the owners that have brought their horses to these facilities, nearly 75 percent tell us they held on to their horses longer than anticipated, which was not a healthy situation for horses or their owners, despite the fact those horses might languish in their owners' care, because of a fear their horse will end up at auction in the slaughter pipeline - or fall victim to one of these slaughter bailout schemes. Horse slaughter is causing massive welfare risks to horses in the U.S., and passing the SAFE Act is the only way to ensure that organizations like ours can truly help them. SAFE would remove the existing ability of the bailout operators to dupe the public and to buy additional horses with the income they gain through these schemes while paving the way for rescue and rehoming groups to put more of their resources into more efficiently helping horses transition into new homes.