

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

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Ranking Member  
House Energy & Commerce Committee  
2322 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky  
Chairwoman  
Consumer Protection & Commerce Subcommittee  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Gus Bilirakis  
Ranking Member  
Consumer Protection & Commerce Subcommittee  
2322 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairs Pallone and Schakowsky and Ranking Members McMorris Rodgers and Bilirakis:

The American Horse Council (AHC), American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) have long supported the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act (H.R.5441/S.2295), as currently introduced in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress. We urge the committee to markup the PAST Act soon and approve it as introduced and already passed by an overwhelming bipartisan House vote of 333-96 in 2019. The current version of the PAST Act lays out a common-sense solution to prevent the continued practice of soring and is limited in scope to Tennessee Walking Horses, Racking Horses and Spotted Saddle Horses.

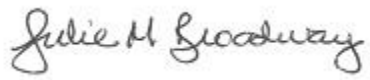
Certain segments of the walking horse industry have continued their 2020 efforts to introduce an alternative “compromise” bill which would substantially alter the PAST Act. When first introduced, after careful review and meeting with numerous industry stakeholders, the AHC, AVMA, AAEP and their members had significant concerns with the compromise legislation and are still opposed to these alternative proposals.

The PAST Act, as introduced, addresses several specific aspects of the business and competition concerns that are not replicated in any alternative presented historically. Any legislation that falls short of requiring USDA licensing of inspectors will fail to address the conflict of interests present in the existing inspection system. Additionally, any change in language that limits scientifically recognized inspection techniques should be called into question, including language to prohibit palpation. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine final report on Methods of Detecting Soring – released in January 2021 after a comprehensive 16-month study by experts – embraced palpation and observation of horse movement as the basis of all examinations for leg pain and lameness when performed by appropriately trained inspectors.

Our organizations are committed to the care and welfare of the horse. The PAST Act, as originally introduced, will ensure that the horrific action of horse soring will be addressed, and the practice a thing of history.



Dr. Janet Donlin  
CEO | American Veterinary Medical Association

Handwritten signature of Julie M. Broadway in a cursive script.

Julie M. Broadway, CAE®  
President | American Horse Council & AHC Foundation

Handwritten signature of David Foley in a cursive script.

David Foley  
CEO | American Association of Equine Practitioners