

Safe Commercial Transportation of Horses for Slaughter Act of 1995

After reviewing H.R. 2433 and S. 1283, The California State Horsemen's Association, who has successfully written and sponsored legislation for the protection of horses being transported to slaughter in California, wants and supports Federal Legislation for the protection of slaughterhorses, but finds that we need to express some concerns with the wording of these bills as they are presently written, and ask that they be strengthened and clarified.

Page 3, Line 3

The bill defines a foal as a horse that is not more than 6 months of age. We ask that this definition also include the wording, or less than 600 pounds. (This must be done to protect the welfare of older foals that are over 6 months of age, but small and unable to protect themselves, or withstand the weight of large horses falling against them during transport.) We also understand that some Slaughterhouse do not kill horses smaller than 600 pounds.

Page 3, Line 10

Horse for Slaughter. We ask that the wording to a slaughter holding facility, or feedlot be added in order to cover all points that slaughterhorses are assembled and held.

Page 3, Line 12

We ask that the wording, or any person engaged in the business of buying and selling horses for slaughter be added. (Note-There are Federal Regulations-The Stockers and Packers Act that should be reviewed also in formulating this legislation also.)

Page 3, Line 13. Definition of an 'Intermediate Handler'

We agree to this, but we feel that this wording while putting the responsibility on a 'Intermediate Handler', allows a giant loophole for dealers-shippers by not clearly defining them. A dealer or shipper is responsible for purchasing, selling, and transporting horses to slaughter, and the ones who benefit financially from the sale of these animals. Therefore, we ask that the definition of 'Dealer-Shipper' be included in the language of the bill, as follows. The term 'Dealer-Shipper' includes any person who is engaged in the business of buying and selling horses for shipment in commerce

Page 4, Line 4

Stallions are defined as any uncastrated male horse one year of age and older. The bill further states that all stallions will be segregated from all other horses. As we all know, horses being transported to slaughter must be sent in the most economical manner possible. It would not be cost effective to transport a number of horses in separate compartments, so these babies will be castrated to meet the requirements of this law. (This will be done in the cheapest manner possible, and because they are going to be killed in the near future, they will receive no care. It is cruel to castrate an animal so that it can be slaughtered.)

Page 4, Line 14

The words to a holding facility, or feedlot must be added to cover all places where a slaughterhorse may be transported to.