



# American Horse Council Washington Update

## MEMORANDUM

To: AHC Organizations

From: American Horse Council

Re: Language in USDA Appropriations Bill

Date: July 25, 2007

### Timely Response is Needed

The House of Representative is scheduled to vote on the 2008 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration Appropriations bill (H.R. 3161), which would fund the U.S. Department of Agriculture for Fiscal Year 2008, early next week.

Section 738 of that bill would be devastating because it would cut-off funding for USDA activities important to the horse industry. It would eliminate funding necessary for USDA to operate quarantine facilities and to pay personnel to approve and facilitate the import and export of horses for exhibition, competition, sale or breeding. The bill would not only cut off direct funding to USDA, but also eliminate USDA's authority to impose user fees, which support the operation of the three major USDA Animal Import Centers and the land border ports along the Canadian and Mexican borders.

We are asking AHC member organizations to contact Members of Congress from their state asking that this provision be removed.

NOTE: Although the language is an apparent attempt by proponents of legislation to end the slaughter of horses for human consumption by taking the USDA out of the process, as was done last year, the language in Section 738 would have a far broader impact and would affect the movement of all horses.

While an individual's or organization's position on limiting USDA's authority to inspect horses for slaughter may be based on their position on the federal bill banning slaughter, the industry should be opposed to this overly-broad limit on USDA's authority and economic ability to protect animal health through inspection, quarantine and oversight of the movement of all horses.

The AHC is opposed to this language for animal health reasons and because it would have an extremely adverse effect on important equine activities and commerce. The AHC supports the effort to have it removed when the House considers the USDA Appropriations bill.

We are asking AHC members and individuals to do the same. Contacts are needed to all Members of the House. When contacting your Representative, please fax or e-mail your letter to him or her. If you do not know your Representative's contact information, you can find it at the House website at <http://www.house.gov/>. Type in your zip code and follow the instructions. Or you can call the AHC.

Attached is a draft letter that you can personalize.

Please fax or e-mail us copies of any letters you send to Congress. The AHC fax number is 202-296-1970. E-mails can be sent to [ahc@horsecouncil.org](mailto:ahc@horsecouncil.org).

Please call the AHC (202) 296-4031 if you have any questions.

Date

The Honorable

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative,

I am writing to you because of Section 738 in the 2008 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration Appropriations bill (H.R. 3161). That section would be devastating to the horse industry. It should be removed when you consider the bill.

I live in \_\_\_\_\_ and am involved in the horse industry [Describe your involvement, for example, owner, breeder, racing, showing, veterinarian, farrier, race track, etc. If you have economic information about the size of the industry in your state, include it. You can look at the AHC website - [www.horsecouncil.org](http://www.horsecouncil.org) - for some states. If you are writing for an organization, indicate how many members you have and what your activities involve. If you have any events, shows, races, sales, breeding or activities that could involve horses from other countries or your horses leaving the U.S., please note them since they would be affected by this provision.

Section 738 of that bill would be devastating because it would cut-off funding for USDA activities important to the horse industry. It would eliminate funding necessary for USDA to operate quarantine facilities and to pay personnel to approve and facilitate the import and export of horses for exhibition, competition, sale or breeding. The bill would not only cut off direct funding to USDA, but also eliminate USDA's authority to impose user fees which support the operation of the three major USDA Animal Import Centers and the land border ports along the Canadian and Mexican borders.

The welfare of all horses and the horse industry is based to a large degree on the many safety nets that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has set up to protect the health and well-being of our domestic horse population. This provision would dramatically impact the authority and ability of the USDA to maintain those protections because it would deny funds for the various inspections required under current federal law for all horses. It would also have an extremely adverse effect on important equine activities and commerce.

Please support any effort to have this onerous section deleted from the USDA Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,