

FEDERAL STUDY OF HORSE WELFARE

(our voices were heard)

AHC WASHINGTON UPDATE

On October 8, 2009, the Senate passed the final version of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (H.R.2997). The House of Representatives approved the bill the previous day. This bill provides funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for fiscal year 2010 and contains two provisions of interest to the horse industry.

GAO Study of Horse Welfare

The conference agreement accompanying this bill directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study the status of horse welfare as it relates to the closing of horse slaughter plants in the United States.

The agreement requests the GAO to issue a report by March 1, 2010, on the current state of horse welfare in the US since horse slaughter facilities were closed. The GAO is instructed to consider how the horse industry has responded to the plant closings in terms of horse sales, exports, adoptions, and abandonments. In addition the GAO is instructed to review the impact the closures have had on farm income and state and local government organizations.

USDA Inspection at Plants

The bill also contains a provision prohibiting any funds from being used by the USDA to inspect horse meat for human consumption. While there are currently no plants operating in the in the United States that process horses for human consumption, this bill effectively bars any such plant from operating in the U.S. for fiscal year 2010.

This bill will now proceed to the President for his approval, which is expected.

If you have any questions regarding this bill please call the AHC.

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