



Support the Safeguard American Food Exports Act (H.R. 1094 / S. 541)

Protect America's horses from the cruelty of slaughter and protect consumers from toxic horsemeat.

The Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act was introduced by Reps. Patrick Meehan (R-PA) and Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) in the House and Sens. Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) in the Senate.

What would the SAFE Act do?

The SAFE Act will prohibit the slaughter of horses for human consumption in the U.S. and their export for that purpose abroad. This bill will protect our nation's horses from the predatory horse slaughter industry by ensuring American horses are not butchered in slaughterhouses, either on U.S. soil or abroad, while also protecting people from toxic horsemeat and protecting the reputation of USDA-inspected meat.

Why is horse slaughter any different than slaughter for other animals?

Horse slaughter is inherently inhumane. Horses are fractious by nature and are extremely difficult to stun. The methods used to kill horses rarely result in quick, painless deaths, as they often endure repeated blows and sometimes are alive and kicking during dismemberment. Previous plants under USDA inspection had rampant cruelty violations, as detailed in government documents.



Why is horsemeat any different than beef or chicken?

Horses are not raised for food in this country; they are routinely given hundreds of drugs and other substances, both legal and illegal, over their lifetimes that can be toxic to humans if ingested. Many of these substances have not been approved by the FDA for use in animals intended for human consumption. A [recent New York Times article](#) emphasized the hodgepodge of drugs regularly administered to American race horses and the resulting food safety threats. The shocking [discovery of horsemeat in beef products in the U.K.](#) and other European countries underscores the threat to American health that could result were horse slaughter proponents successful in bringing the grisly practice back to the U.S. Horse slaughter is bad for horses, bad for people, and bad for the communities that host them.

How do horse slaughter plants negatively affect the communities that host them?

Slaughter plants inflict environmental harm, drain local economies, and diminish local property values. The over-hyped employment opportunities related to the horse slaughter industry were vastly overshadowed by the direct harm to their employees due to hazardous conditions and the enormous burden and harm they inflicted on their local communities.

How do Americans feel about horse slaughter?

A 2012 national poll revealed that 80% of Americans favor a ban on horse slaughter and recognize that we have a responsibility to protect these intelligent, sensitive animals from being butchered. Horses are our companions and a historically significant part of American culture. They deserve a more dignified end to their lives than to be inhumanely slaughtered and served up for foreign consumers.

History of Horse Slaughter Legislation

- **May 2012:** The House Appropriations Committee adopted the Moran Amendment to defund horse slaughter inspections.
- **November 2011:** The Agricultural Appropriations bill was signed into law. Language that would have prevented millions of taxpayer dollars annually from funding USDA horsemeat inspections was not included, opening the door for slaughter to return to the U.S.
- **September 2008:** House Judiciary Committee passes ban on horse slaughter by voice vote.
- **September 2007:** U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit upheld the State of Illinois' decision to ban the slaughter of horses for human consumption, shutting down the last of the plants located on US soil.
- **April 2007:** Senate Commerce Committee passed S. 311, a ban on horse slaughter, by a 15-7 vote.
- **March 2007:** U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit upheld a 1949 Texas state law that outlawed the sale and possession with intent to sell horsemeat for human consumption. The Supreme Court denied a cert petition submitted by the horse slaughter plants.
- **September 2006:** A permanent ban on horse slaughter passed the House by a 263-146 vote.
- **September 2005:** Senate passed a funding limitation amendment to ban horse slaughter by a 69-28 margin, following a bipartisan House vote of 269-158 in June 2005. Funding limitations remained in place in the federal budget until 2011.