



## **Senate to Consider S 311 This Week, Humane Groups are Hopeful for its Successful Passage**

*Humane groups are hopeful for Senate Bill 311 as the bill moves through Committee.*

Washington, DC, April 26, 2007 --(PR.com)-- On April 26th the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation will meet in committee to consider the markup on S 311. The bill would make it illegal to transport horses for the purpose of slaughter for human consumption and effectively end horse slaughter in the US and the transport of horses across the border for the purpose of slaughter. A few groups oppose the bill, but all of the major humane organizations and most equine rescue groups support the bill. The American Horse Defense Fund supports the bill along with such respected organizations as the Humane Society of the United States and the ASPCA.

Those opposing the bill have portrayed many myths and the supporters of the bill have dispelled these myths. The most insidious myth has been that of the “unwanted” horse. In 1990 the number of horses slaughtered had reached an all-time high of 350,000, which according to those supporting slaughter were the number of “unwanted” horses. In 2002 the number of “unwanted” horses were 42,000. Between 1992 and 1993 the number of horses slaughtered dropped 79,000. The number of horses that are slaughtered or “unwanted” is simply a number determined by the ability of the plants to slaughter, not by the number of horses that were unwanted. Many stolen and fraudulently obtained horses are processed at slaughter plants and these horses cannot be called “unwanted” by any definition. In 2006 during a hearing in the House Commerce Committee a slaughter plant representative clearly stated that the plants prefer and process mostly young and healthy horses. This is not the description of the old, sick and unfit animals portrayed by the pro-slaughter contingent.

In early 2007 an Appeals Court ruled that Texas' longstanding law was in effect and the two plants in the state of Texas had to close. Offers were made to secure the horses the plants had in their pipeline. These offers were rejected, despite the fact that homes were ready to receive these horses. After a Federal judge ordered the plants closed due to a procedural mistake at the USDA in late March, many humane groups pulled together to take the horses caught on the floor and in transit to the remaining plant. These offers were turned down. The American Horse Defense Fund, working with the Humane Society of the United States and the Friends of Barbaro, made another attempt to buy some of the horses from a feedlot in Texas and once again offers of sale were rejected. The AHDF was informed, “No horses are sold from the feedlot and we will never sell them.”

“The refusal of the plants to accept reasonable offers to purchase or take responsibility for these horses show that these horses are not unwanted,” said Shelley Sawhook, President of AHDF. In 2004 the American Horse Defense Fund published a guide for owners to show all the options to slaughter and they are in the process of updating and re-releasing the guide called “Alternatives to Auction and Slaughter”. The guide will be available on their website later this week. “Our research shows that there is no need for slaughter,” said Sawhook, herself an owner of 3 horses rescued from slaughter. “I urge all owners who feel they have no option but slaughter to consider the humane issues and the options available to them,” says Sawhook. “There are other options, no horse needs to endure the torture of slaughter.”



For more information on the American Horse Defense Fund or the alternatives to slaughter please visit the AHDF's website at [www.AHDF.org](http://www.AHDF.org).

The American Horse Defense Fund's (AHDF) mission is to facilitate the protection, conservation, and humane treatment of members of all Equine species. AHDF works to address inhumane treatment of horses, ponies, donkeys, mules and burros, both wild and domesticated through education, advocacy and litigation when necessary in the state, federal and international arenas. Trina Bellak an attorney, a lobbyist and a horse owner and trainer founded the AHDF in 2000. After Trina's unfortunate death Shelley Sawhook was appointed by the Board to serve as President. Ms. Sawhook has over 25 years of experience as an owner and trainer and sees her tenure as president as a way to give back to the equine community and the horses that have shared their lives and talent with her.

###



**Contact Information:**

American Horse Defense Fund  
Shelley Sawhook  
202-609-8198  
president@ahdf.org  
www.ahdf.org  
1718 M St NW #191  
Washington, DC 20036

**Online Version of Press Release:**

You can read the online version of this press release at: <http://www.pr.com/press-release/37043>