

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Powell at 3:30 p.m. on February 9, 2009, in Room 783 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Mike Corrigan, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Corey Carnahan, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Pat Matzek, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Mike Beam, Sr. Vice President, Kansas Livestock Association
Brad Harrelson, State Director, Governmental Relations, Kansas Farm Bureau
Tom Davies, Board of Directors, Kansas Quarter Horse Association
Jennifer Long-Hermesch, Diamond H Quarter Horses & Associates
Pattie Stalder, Administrator, Kansas Horse Council
Christine Mensch, FoxEye Ranch
Careen Cain, Shooting Star Stables and Equine Rescue, Inc.
Mary Pruitt, Lawrence, Kansas

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chairman Powell introduced Careen Cain, Shooting Star Stables and Equine Rescue, Inc., to begin opening testimony on **HCR 5004**.

Hearing on:

HCR 5004 - Urging Congress to oppose federal legislation interfering with a state's ability to direct the transport or processing of horses.

Opponents:

Careen Cain, Shooting Star Stables and Equine Rescue, Inc., (Attachment 1) presented testimony in opposition of **HCR 5004**, documenting web sites (<http://www.khou.com/vifeo/index.html?nvic=315146> and <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2008/12/prweb1704434.htm>), urging people to research facts on slaughter and inhumane treatment of horses shipped during transport and throughout the slaughter process.

Mary Pruitt, Lawrence, Kansas, (Attachment 2) spoke in opposition of **HCR 5004**, stating Americans do not eat horses and do not support the slaughter of horses for food. Ms. Pruitt further stated equine slaughter is never humane and is not an acceptable alternative for irresponsible breeders or owners unwilling to meet their ownership obligations, or wanting to make a few dollars at the expense of great animal suffering.

Opponents providing written testimony in opposition of **HCR 5004**:

Becky Meyer, Silver Lake, Kansas (Attachment 3)
Lou Guyton, Regional Director, The Humane Society of the United States (Attachment 4)

Proponents:

Mike Beam, Sr. Vice President, Kansas Livestock Association (KLA), (Attachment 5) presented testimony in support of **HCR 5004**, stating the position of the KLA is that livestock owners should provide proper care and nutrition for their animals, and believe that livestock (including horses) are private property. Mr. Beam further stated federal policies that prohibit livestock owners from transporting or selling unwanted horses are a violation of property rights.

Brad Harrelson, State Director, Governmental Relations, Kansas Farm Bureau, (Attachment 6) spoke in

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support of **HCR 5004**, documenting that legally, horses are considered livestock, not pets, and believes this is a reasonable and compassionate alternative to what is being suggested.

Tom Davies, Board of Directors, Kansas Quarter Horse Association (KQHA), (Attachment 7) presented testimony in support of **HCR 5004**, and the KQHA's position that first and foremost its concern is with the treatment of all animals, including horses. Mr. Davies further stated there has to be a balance with animals and while horses are not raised for meat purposes, all livestock is harvested one way or another, and KQHA feels this Resolution is the best choice for the sake of the horses.

Jennifer Long-Hermesch, Diamond H Quarter Horses & Associates, (Attachment 8) spoke in support of **HCR 5004**, stating that with any economic rule you have supply and demand and if you have more supply than demand, then it crumbles as in this case. Additionally, if this bill does not pass, it further jeopardizes the ability not only for people to show or to rodeo but to make a living with their horses.

Pattie Stalder, Administrator, Kansas Horse Council, (Attachment 9) presented testimony in support of **HCR 5004**, documenting this Resolution would be an effective tool to oppose the Burton-Conyers House Bill 503 which interferes with a state's ability to direct the transport or processing of horses.

Christine Mensch, FoxEye Ranch, (Attachment 10) spoke in support of **HCR 5004**, stating better regulation and supervision of slaughter in the U.S. makes more sense than criminalizing transport and eliminating a necessary and financially feasible method of disposal.

Proponents providing written testimony in favor of **HCR 5004**:

Ed and Kristy McKechnie, American Quarter Horse Association (Attachment 11)

Raymond, Diann, Scott, Steven, Brad and Blake Tucker, Tucker Quarter Horses (Attachment 12)

Donn Teske, President, Kansas Farmers Union (Attachment 13)

No questions were asked or comments made.

The hearing was closed on **HCR 5004**.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.