



February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013

To The Oklahoma Legislators: 2<sup>nd</sup> vote

Americans overwhelmingly oppose horse slaughter. Then why is Oklahoma's legislature voting in favor of horse slaughter with HB 1999 and SB 375? Lobbyists from the biggest equine trade organizations, representing breeders, the racing industry and others with economic motives are befriending, pressuring or inciting legislators to approve horse slaughter. In addition cattlemen associations, farm bureaus and even the Bureau of Land Management have their hands in this pie. It's short term economic gain at the expense of 80% of the voters, our communities and certainly the animal that has helped us own, plow and enjoy the very ground we now occupy.

Horse slaughter is a "back-end solution" to a "front-end problem" ...namely, irresponsible and incited breeding that exceeds market absorption rates. In short, horse breeders benefit from a horse slaughter exit strategy.

Mass slaughter of horses tilts the economic scales to the demand side as supply diminishes. This commoditizes one of the smartest and most useful animals on the planet. Last year, 160,000 of these young, healthy horses were shipped across the border to Mexico or Canada for slaughter-deaths. Ninety-two percent of the horse were reportedly in "good to excellent condition" (Chinese and Europeans don't eat, nor do they want us to ship them, old, diseased horse meat. Horse slaughtering is a meat factory.)

The rationale that inhumane horse slaughtering in Mexico or Canada will be replaced here in the United States by EU regulated plants that utilize a more humane "captive bolt" method doesn't solve the problem. A 2011 investigative video (<http://defendhorsescanada.org/investigations/pastures-to-plate>) demonstrates that a horse had to be shot 11 times in the head before collapsing.

We incent the very problem we're trying to eradicate! Federal government subsidies encourage a market where the horse is most valuable during the first two years of its life earning tax advantages and write-offs. After that, the breeder has to breed more horses and get rid of any horse over the age of four who can't race, show or breed and/or gets in the way of a cattle operation.



A few “upfront” solutions to the horse problem are:

- Discontinuing breeding incentives so herd-size is the responsibility of the breeder
- Grants and tax incentives for equine vets to assist with gelding, euthanizing and cremating horses
- Low-cost gelding clinics—so stallions not suitable for breeding no longer can
- A foal-fee to fund gelding, euthanasia and cremation for breeders who need assistance
- Incent rescue and rehab where possible
- Outlawing the export of horses for slaughter and the export of horse meat in favor of euthanasia
- Enforce penalties for abandonment, abuse or starvation of horses and prevent future ownership

Better solutions are needed and our legislators should focus on that. Oklahoma has a horrible track record of men murdering women and rampant child death from abuse. Now we want to add horse slaughtering to our legacy?

Crime rates in and around these animal slaughter plants soon double. A criminology professor compared slaughterhouse communities to those in similar industries, such as dangerous repetitive factory work, but which didn't include killing animals on a regular basis. Conclusion: “...workers exposed to the killing of large numbers of animals on a regular basis become disturbed and appear to lose empathy.” The Journal of Rural Studies, 2000 cites a 130 percent increase in violent crimes within five years after two slaughterhouses opened which could not be accounted for by population increase; and child abuse tripled.

You must alter your decision on HB1999 and SB375.

I ask you to stop horse slaughter now.

**Pam McKissick**

**CEO**

**Pam.McKissick@williamsauction.com**

**williamsauction.com**

**918.362.6702 direct**

EMPOWERING THE OPEN EXCHANGE OF REAL ESTATE WORLDWIDE

