

## Equine Slaughter Legislation Reintroduced

**Media pay attention as the the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act is reintroduced.**

01-24-2008

Several lawmakers are pushing to get the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act (H.R. 503/S. 311) passed this year, so the legislation has been reintroduced to the 110th Congress. And this time around, the mainstream media is paying attention.

During the last session of Congress (109th), the slaughter legislation passed through the House of Representatives, but the Senate failed to act before the session closed. Without passing both sides of Congress, the legislation could not become law. While this was big news inside the horse industry, the general media barely took notice. Now, things have gotten even worse for slaughter-bound horses and the mainstream media is all over the story, as the legislation is reintroduced to the current Congress.

Last fall, Cavel International based in DeKalb, Ill., the last remaining equine slaughter facility in America, was forced to closed after an Illinois state law was passed outlawing equine slaughter. Two other U.S. plants--both in Texas--closed earlier in the year for the same reason. Good news for animal welfare organizations, but the closures have resulted in a cruel end for horses bound to Mexican slaughter plants.

While the U.S. slaughter plants were forced to adhere to USDA regulations, which meant killing horses with a captive bolt to the brain, several news reports have surfaced documenting horrific endings for horses shipped to Mexican slaughter plants. According to the reports, horses in the Mexican facilities are stabbed with knives until they fall to ground. The wounded horses are then hoisted upside down via chains, their necks are slit and they die by bleeding to death.

"The problem now is that people are moving more of the horses to Mexico, where the slaughter process is even worse than it was in the U.S.," Congressman Ed Whitfield (R-Ky), told the Associated Press. Whitfield is a co-sponsor of the H.R. 503. Canadian slaughter facilities are also taking a surplus of U.S. horses, but horses there are killed by a bullet to the brain.

While it's uncertain whether the recent media interest will spur the current Congress to act on the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act this time around, one thing is certain: The news coverage has prompted angry outcries from people on both sides of the slaughter issue who don't want to see U.S. horses in Mexican facilities.