

AQHA STATEMENT OF POSITION ON LEGISLATIVE BILLS CONCERNING EQUINE PROCESSING

First and foremost, the American Quarter Horse Association unequivocally supports the humane treatment of horses and vigorous enforcement of state and federal laws intended for that purpose.

The AQHA Public Policy Committee acknowledges the sentiment attached to the processing of horses. However, the Committee believes that prohibiting any processing:

- would put at risk 100,000 or more horses a year;
- would lead to more horse abuse, not less; and
- would be an encroachment on an owner's rights to choose how to dispose of an unwanted horse.

End-of-life issues for horses are personal and should remain the right of the individual horse owner.

Additionally, horses are personal property protected under the United States Constitution. Any law that would result in "taking" of personal property without just compensation or valid purpose is a violation of an individual's constitutional rights. Furthermore, it is a violation of the Commerce Clause to unreasonably restrict interstate trade of property.

Therefore, AQHA continues its opposition to the provisions of state or federal legislation intended to prohibit the humane end-of-life process for horses.

It is also recommended that AQHA assist in the drafting, introduction, and passage of legislation intended to strengthen the humane treatment of horses that may be destined for processing. Such legislation should include provisions that address:

- enforcement of humane transport from the sale to processing facility;
- continued assurance for humane end-of-life processes;
- theft prevention provisions; and,
- provisions to protect an owner from unknowingly sending a horse to processing.

Additionally, AQHA will work proactively to educate its members and the general public on the consequences of eliminating a humane end-of-life process for unwanted horses and continue to educate horse owners on responsible ownership and breeding.