

BREAKING: U.S. HOUSE PASSES HISTORIC WILD HORSE PROTECTION AMENDMENT

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, July 23, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [American Wild Horse Campaign](#), [Animal Wellness Action](#), and the Animal Wellness Foundation today applauded the U.S. House for approving a wild horse protection amendment to H.R. 7608, the State, Foreign Operations, Agriculture, Rural Development, Interior, Environment, Military Construction, and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act 202. The



BLM Helicopter Wild Horse Roundup

amendment was led by a strong bipartisan team of lawmakers: U.S. Representatives Steve Cohen, D-Tenn., Dina Titus, D-Nev., Joe Neguse, D-Colo., Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Penn., David Schweikert, R-Ariz, Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., David Price, D-NC., Peter King, R-NY, Ben McAdams, D-Utah, John Katko, R-NY, Natural Resources Committee Chair Raul Grijalva, R-Ariz., and Public Lands Subcommittee Chair Deb Haaland, D-NM.

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The amendment directs the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to use at least \$11M of its annual operating budget for its Wild Horse and Burro Program on the humane and proven safe fertility control vaccine, PZP. The amendment is consistent with scientific recommendations and previous guidance from Congress urging the BLM to increase the use of PZP fertility control as a step toward moving away

from the current inhumane and unsustainable roundup program.

It also addresses concerns raised by the BLM's recent report to Congress outlining a plan to accelerate roundups and remove as many as 90,000 wild horses and burros from public lands at a cost of nearly a billion dollars. With no guarantee of funding for the lifetime care of wild horses and burros removed from public lands, the BLM's plan would increase the risk of mass slaughter of these American icons, something that 80 percent of Americans oppose.

“We’re sick and tired of the BLM’s failed bureaucracy and stubborn refusal to follow the science on wild horse and burro management,” said [Marty Irby](#), a lifelong horseman and executive director at Animal Wellness Action. “We applaud the House for sending the BLM a strong bipartisan directive to quit throwing away hard-earned tax dollars on draconian roundups and surgical sterilizations and begin implementing PZP birth control: a common-sense, science-based approach that will save taxpayers billions of dollars in the long run.

“Despite scientific recommendations and directives from Congress, the BLM spends zero percent of its budget on humane fertility control, while two-thirds is spent to cruelly roundup and remove wild horses from public lands and warehouse them for life at taxpayer expense,” said Suzane Roy, executive director for the American Wild Horse Campaign. “Today thanks to our compassionate members of Congress, change begins toward a truly sustainable and humane management program for these icons of the West.”

“I’m pleased this provision will force the Bureau of Land Management to move away from cruel and costly helicopter roundups toward humane management of these national symbols of our wild lands. It requires the Bureau of Land Management to utilize \$11 million of its Wild Horse and Burro Program budget to implement PZP -- a humane and reversible fertility control vaccine to manage wild horse populations,” said Congressman Steve Cohen, D-Tenn, sponsor of the amendment.

“I am grateful to my colleagues on the Appropriations and Rules Committees for bringing this important amendment to a vote before the full House. For too long, BLM has



Animal Wellness Action Executive Director
Marty Irby



Suzanne Roy, American Wild Horse Campaign

pushed dangerous and unpopular management protocols for our wild horses and burros. It's past time that we recognize that safe, humane and scientifically proven fertility control options are key to the future of wild horse and burro management on our public lands. I hope all my colleagues will support this effort and vote in favor of our amendment," said Congressman Raul Grijalva, Natural Resources Committee Chair, D-Ariz.

"I serve as a representative from the great State of Nevada, which is home to the largest population of wild horses in the nation. Taxpayer-funded roundups and removals are not only costly, not only an ineffectual management strategy, but they also endanger the lives of these animals, as evidenced by the horrific death of a young mare witnessed during a roundup just this past weekend in Utah. We can and should do better, and this amendment is a step in the right direction," said Congresswoman Dina Titus, D-Nev.

"I am pleased to stand with the vast majority of my constituents and the over 80% of Americans who want wild horses protected on Western public lands. I'm proud that Colorado has been leading the way for humane management of wild horses with PZP fertility control. This Amendment will improve stewardship of wild horses and burros in other areas of the West," said Congressman Joe Neguse, D-Colo.

"I am pleased to work with my colleagues on this bipartisan amendment to ensure humane methods are used to protect and manage our nation's beautiful wild horses. I appreciate everyone reaching out to offer their support of this amendment," said Congressman David Schweikert, R-Ariz.

While the amendment directs the agency to spend at least \$11M of its Program budget on the vaccine, it does not preclude the BLM from utilizing other forms of humane fertility control, it does not limit expenditures, and it does not prevent the BLM from using other forms of population management. The House is expected to move H.R. 7608 to final passage tomorrow.

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The American Wild Horse Campaign (AWHC) is the nation's leading wild horse protection organization, with more than 700,000 supporters and followers nationwide. AWHC is dedicated to preserving the American wild horse and burros in viable, free-roaming herds for generations to come, as part of our national heritage. In addition to advocating for protection and preservation of America's wild herds, AWHC implements the largest wild horse fertility control program in the world through a partnership with the State of Nevada for wild horses that live in the Virginia Range near Reno.

Animal Wellness Action (AWA) is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty. We champion causes that alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife. We advocate for policies to stop dogfighting and cockfighting and other forms of malicious cruelty and to confront factory

farming and other systemic forms of animal exploitation. To prevent cruelty, we promote enacting good public policies and we work to enforce those policies. To enact good laws, we must elect good lawmakers, and that's why we remind voters which candidates care about our issues and which ones don't. We believe helping animals helps us all.

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