

My name is Holly Reynolds. I bought my first TWH in 1989 and since that time I have been a member of TWHBEA. I have served here locally on the TWHEAO Board of directors since 1994 and have been an officer of this club serving as President or Vice President since 1995. I have served as a Director and officer for WIWHA . I currently own 4 flatshod TWH horses and actively trail ride as well as show.

In 2007 while serving on the TWHBEA Executive Board as an elective director from Oregon I stated what I clearly believe is a fact. The padded horse industry is dead. It has not changed in the last 40 years to conform with the HPA and in my opinion will not be able to. Since my time as serving on the TWHBEA National Board of Director duly elected representatives of our association are now being asked to sign an oath of loyalty before being allowed to vote on any matters. This oath will require directors to support all aspects of the breed pledging loyalty to support the padded horses . This pledge will eliminate any form of dissent or disagreement from our National Breed Registry and allow only conforming director to vote. (I have attached a letter from Kris Herman.) Currently the foxes are guarding the hen house and I do not believe self regulation will work in hot bed areas such a sTennessee. Self regulation works well here in the northwest.

I will continue asking my government as well as national, regional and state breed associations to finally step up with funding, enforcement, and education to help us help ourselves making compliance with the HPA a norm. Because currently nationwide are not meeting that goal. I do not believe self regulation to be possible after 40 years of horse abuse

I believe that the use of pads and chains was developed in collaboration with soring technics to produce what most we in the industry consider the modern TWH show horse. The elimination of these devices from our shows will revolutionize our breed. While I recognize all the ramifications that this may cause I truly believe this is a necessary step to compliance with the HPA. I also believe that hand in hand we must also regulate shoe weight limits on all of our horses. I don't believe we should fear "what if" we loss pads and chains but should ready ourselves for unprecedented opportunities in growth of our breed.

I do not believe that the padded/show horse industry has made any real attempt becoming compliant with the HPA. Furthermore I do not believe that this part of the industry want to be in compliance. Judges, owners,breeders, trainers and even spectators value a sore way of going and have had this type of artificial movement the desired standard of excellence. This part of the industry is tightly controlled by Middle Tennessee and dominates both our breed association, major horse shows, HIO's, rulebooks and judging. For whatever reasons soring is not considered inhumane treatment of animals and is both historically and culturally accepted and even

encouraged, and in fact is made a common practice with most if not all padded horses. When these practices are accepted as common practice peers justify it among themselves as being OK. I am unaware of any new training technics, or any desires to reduce pad sizes, chains or modify in any way how padded show horse are trained and presented from within the ranks of these trainers. Recent date show that masking agent used to hide soring is ramped and the practice of "stewarding" horses continues at large.

In my opinion data presented to me strongly indicated a higher incident of violations of the HPA with padded horses and their trainers than in pleasure horses. Much data has been presented at the recent sound horse conferences supporting my concerns about the effects of pads and heavy tungsten shoes on a horses movement. Similar data suggest that chains used on horses require soring to make noticeable difference in movement. While I do not have the ability to verify all this documentation personally I believe the sources to be accurate, as this is what my observations have been. (I have attached the data that I am referencing) This data also suggest the HPA has only been successful in pushing ~~soring~~ ^{soring} underground but is has not been ended.

I believe the following issues need addressing as well.

- * The practices of tail blocking/tail bracing/ tail mutilation.
- * Bands on pleasure horses to allow for extreme hoof length and extra shoe weight and size.
- * The practice of not stabling at show (hauling in and out) for performances to avoid detection when spring horses.
- * Inspection of training barns, horse show stabling, and trailers all locations where most abuse happen away from the eyes of peers and the public.
- * Banning tungsten shoes and applying shoe weight limits in all horses.
- * Developing Breed Standards for movement that do not include a sore going way of going for judging standards.
- * Education Programs for offenders.
- * Masking agents used to hide soring when detected should be a federal violation of the HPA.
- * Sales and distribution of chemicals for soring so be dealt with and treated seriously.
- * Membership as well Industry leadership including judges, with HPA violations should be suspension from TWHBEA and should not be allowed to represent, vote or conduct business. Our breed association must take a leadership role
- * USDA must continue all efforts of enforcement and prosicuction.

March 7, 2012

Members of the TWHBEA Executive Committee:

The mission of the Northern California Walking Horse Association ("NCWHA") is to build a Walking Horse Community in Northern California. NCWHA is a thriving and very successful organization that puts on horse shows, clinics and exhibitions in our region, and most of our members are also members of TWHBEA. TWHBEA has sponsored our exhibition at the Western States Horse Expo for the last few years, and we have enjoyed partnering with TWHBEA to promote the Tennessee Walking Horse.

NCWHA recently held its annual meeting of members, and as part of an industry update during the meeting, our members learned of the oath promoted by certain elements within TWHBEA, which would require all TWHBEA directors elected by their regions to support and promote all disciplines of our breed. NCWHA members at the meeting unanimously voted to oppose the new oath and send a letter to TWHBEA in strong opposition to it.

The vast majority of TWHBEA members are pleasure horse owners, and our region is dominated by pleasure horse owners. NCWHA members and other TWH owners within our region have pleasure horses, and the cultural and political sentiments of our region do not favor the performance horse. It would be very difficult to find anyone to run as a TWHBEA director here who would agree to the proposed new oath. That effectively would eliminate our region (and other regions, including many of our international regions) from being able to have representation on the national TWHBEA Board. The purpose of national board representation is to ensure that diversity in opinion is achieved, but the proposed oath mandates that the views of a minority be adopted by all. No one likes to be told what one must believe, and those promoting the new oath wouldn't like it if they were being told what to believe.

The recent convictions and arrests of prominent TWH trainers make our arguments even more compelling. To promote the breed we must disassociate ourselves from those individuals who have created a bad image within our industry.

The problems with the proposed oath do not end there.

What does "support and promote" mean? The language is so vague that it is meaningless and unenforceable. Oaths have been struck down universally by courts because the conduct proscribed is unclear, and this oath wouldn't pass muster, either. The vagueness of its prohibitions suggests it would be selectively enforced in witch hunts against those who do not share the viewpoints of those pushing this new oath forward.

What problems have occurred with the old oath that have caused this new oath to be needed? We are not aware of any problems caused by directors under the old oath, which stays within a permissible zone. Oaths to support the mission of an organization, like the old oath, are reasonable and supportable.

The TWHBEA Bylaws approved by its members list the qualifications for directors. The EC and even the full Board do not have the legal authority to change the criteria for directors without a member vote. The proposed oath, by requiring support and promotion of all disciplines, is not permitted under the laws of your state without a Bylaw change voted on by all members.

It is very ironic that this divisive oath is being proposed while there is a strong effort to achieve "industry unity." The proposed oath essentially pits pleasure horse people against performance horse people and creates unnecessary dissension within our ranks. It is unnecessary and wrong, and we will not agree to it. If it were attempted to be forced on directors, the outcry and resulting public relations nightmare that would result will be devastating for TWHBEA. Please don't let the personal misguided agendas of a few drive TWHBEA's future. If TWHBEA is an Association that truly represents all of us, the proposed new oath must go.

This letter was approved by a unanimous vote of the members and the board of directors of the Northern California Walking Horse Association at its annual meeting.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristin Herman".

Kristin Herman, M.D.
President
Northern California Walking Horse Association

USDA APHIS Horse Protection Program Listening Sessions, March 2012

We are not close at all. Soring is still prevalent today. The first prosecution in 20 years occurred only last month, February 2012 where Barney Davis testified that “every Walking Horse that enters into a show ring is sored. ... They’ve got to be sored to walk. There ain’t no good way to put it, but that’s how it is.”

Due to lack of enforcement, soring is still prevalent in some areas of the U.S. despite attempts by the USDA to have the Horse Industry Organizations police themselves. I have brought a geographic depiction from stopsoring.com to illustrate **Horse Protection Act suspensions from 1986 – 2011** and a **photo of Delightful Romeo, owned by Glenda Nichols, wife of President, Ted Nichols, of the Heart of America Horse Industry Organization from 2010 showing her horse standing in a bucket, a common sign of a sore horse. (SEE BELOW)**

The gaited horse is still being tortured and abused through soring after 42 years!! The USDA is nowhere close to eliminating soring because it has mediated soring for four decades instead of eradicating it by actually enforcing the Horse Protection Act with which it was charged by Congress.



**1 DELIGHTFUL ROMEO owned by
Glenda Nichols, wife of President, Ted
Nichols, Heart of America.**

Horse show in Iowa, May 2010

**Romeo lives in Ozark, MO and won first
place and passed pre and post show
inspections by Heart of America HIO.**

NO--Self regulation by Horse Industry Organizations has not worked and has been disastrous for the gaited show horse for the last 40 years, enabling the continued soring abuse of gaited show horses. The two sides are diametrically opposed—there are those who violate the HPA by continuing to cruelly abuse horses through mechanical and chemical soring and those who abide by the HPA, treating their horses with dignity and respect.

People who intentionally sore horses are animal torturers. People who break the law and constantly look for ways to continue unlawful behavior without detection are criminals. **Criminals are incapable of self-regulation.**

Researchers at Eastern Kentucky University analyzed data from the USDA website and compared violation rates over 3 years for horse shows (2008, 2009, 2010). They compared results from shows that were inspected by USDA Veterinary Medical Officers (VMOs) with those inspected by the DQPs. This analysis included data from 1,400 shows and 240,000 horse inspections. The data indicated

NO--The USDA's has played mediator to the industry instead of enforcing the Horse Protection Act and actually protecting the horse. The USDA announced recently that it will reduce hundreds of HPA violations to only a Letter of Warning, instead of fully prosecuting those cases under the law. Letters of warning are meaningless—criminal prosecutions and lengthy suspensions of trainers and owners are what is needed to eradicate soring.

The USDA is charged with enforcing the law and instead, must strongly support the HIOs that are rigorously enforcing the HPA. Compliant HIOs are the only groups that should be involved in a consensus.

It is incomprehensible that the USDA continues to solicit consensus from non-compliant HIOs. These HIOs have had years to enforce the Horse Protection Act, have failed to enforce the Act and yet, the USDA continues to “babysit” those HIOs that permit sore horses in the ring, week after week, month after month, year after year. The USDA must stop being a “peacemaker” to HIOs that do not enforce the law and automatically decertify the non-compliant HIOs.

By enforcing the law. It does not matter the sport venue, or whether we call it compliance or rules. Those that break the rules are cheaters. Soring is cheating. Cheaters must be dealt with quickly and receive meaningful penalties. The United States Equestrian Federation requires compliance with its rules and is a competitive venue. Cheaters do not continue to return to USEF every year. The USDA must implement lifetime suspensions and criminal prosecutions for repeat offenders. Why must sound exhibitors compete with cheaters year after year in the show ring? Why are sored horses in the show ring year after year? Because the USDA fails to rigorously and consistently enforce the law with punitive penalties. The law and competition can successfully coexist provided punitive measures are consistently applied to every competitor that sores a horse.

There are several HIOs that consistently eliminate sore horses at the inspection point according to the HPA. Those show rings are compliant and competitive. These HIOs have proven that competition and compliance can coexist.

It is the responsibility of the USDA to enforce the Horse Protection Act and put an end to the cruel abuse of soring horses by imposing stronger penalties for animal abuse against trainers, owners and HIOs (including decertification). Stronger penalties include lifetime suspensions of individuals with multiple violations and suspensions of sored horses from the show ring. The USDA must also be willing to enforce punitive penalties for these violations and prosecute criminal cases quickly and efficiently.

Unless there are stringent penalties, soring will continue. A letter of warning is meaningless. Ten – twelve criminal prosecutions a year will significantly contribute to the demise of the sore horse industry.

The possibility of being federally prosecuted, sustaining criminal convictions—felonies and misdemeanors, and the prospect of jail time will serve to make people think twice before violating the law.

By decertifying noncompliant and nonperforming HIOs and imposing punitive penalties on those that sore. The USDA must establish new protocols to stop sore horses at the inspection. With violators developing new methods to sore, there is no reason the USDA cannot pull shoes and pads, establish weight limits for shoes, implement drug testing, etc. The USDA must also be willing to enforce punitive penalties for these violations.

The USDA should have the responsibility to implement stronger inspection rules, stronger penalties and enforcement of those penalties including criminal prosecutions. Inspections must include the pulling of pads and shoes so that a thorough inspection can be conducted on the winning horses. Stronger penalties include lifetime suspensions of individuals with multiple violations and suspensions of sored horses from the show ring. The USDA must enforce the HPA against trainers and

owners alike and determine the appropriate individuals to prosecute.

Yes, Action devices and pads should absolutely be outlawed.

In 1979, APHIS stated in a final rule published in the Federal Register that if the horse industry made no effort to establish a workable self-regulatory program for the elimination of sore horses, or if such a program were established but did not succeed in eliminating the sore horse problem within a reasonable time, the agency would seriously consider prohibiting all action devices and pads except protective boots. That was Thirty-three years ago, and we still have sore horses. In a 2010 proposed rule, the USDA said it will "seriously consider taking substantially more restrictive action, including, but not limited to, prohibiting the use of all action devices and pads, to accomplish the goal set forth by Congress in the Act." It's time!!!

Research has shown that the only correct hoof angle for ANY horse is the angle that keeps the bones of the pastern and hoof in their correct anatomic alignment. Putting a horse on pads alters their biomechanical structure causing unnecessary and unnatural stress on joints, tendons and ligaments. A horse is designed to have a ground parallel coffin bone. Placing a horse on pads markedly deviates the coffin bone from ground parallel, pinching the circumflex artery that surrounds the edge of the coffin bone and nourishes the sole corium. An unbalanced coffin bone impairs the hoof mechanism, hindering the hoof mechanism's ability to assist with blood being pumped up the leg. These horses are on pads 24/7 with no escape from the coerced stance. (SEE BELOW—ground parallel coffin bone)

Research conducted by Dr. Molly Nicodemus at MSU demonstrated there is less than a 5% stride difference unless an action device weighs 10 oz or more. A stride difference of less than 5% is not perceptible to the human eye. This means that the exaggerated gaits of the performance horse must be achieved with something else. That something else is soring. With the action devices having no impact on the gait and stride of a sound horse, and only having impact on sore horses, the action devices must be eliminated. Pads, chains and soring go hand in hand.

http://s1084.photobucket.com/albums/j418/forthetnwalkinghorse/Gait%20Analysis%20by%20Dr%20Molly%20Nicodemus/?action=view&t=23_GaitAnalysisByDrMollyNicodemus.jpg

Olin K Balch, DVM, Sound Horse Conference 2009. <http://soundhorseconference.com/GaitedHorseBiomechanics&HoofStructure.html> With the weighted shoe, greater muscular effort is needed to overcome inertia at the start of the swing phase and to establish forward velocity. In the second half of the swing phase, momentum is transferred distally through the limb segments until it reaches the hoof, where it has a **WHIPLASH EFFECT** resulting in extension of the coffin joint and upward flip of the toe at the second maximum hoof height. Weighted shoes alter the landing orientation of the pastern and the hoof at the time of initial ground contact. The irregular limb positioning at initial ground contact may help explain the high incidence of ringbone and sidebone historically described in gaited show horses.

Dr. Stephen O'Grady, DVM. Sound Horse conference 2008. <http://soundhorseconference.com/PressureShoeing.html> Pressure shoeing is an "abusive, unethical method of farriery used to enhance animation in an attempt to gain a competitive advantage.

Kevin K. Haussler, DVM. 2008 Sound Horse Conference. <http://soundhorseconference.com/ProposedResearchfortheFuture.html> Posture and stance of Big Lick horses. Stance: Exaggerated pelvic limb retraction. Gait: Exaggerated thoracic limb flexion and protraction; exaggerated pelvic limb protraction; altered joint biomechanics and increased tissue strain; altered spinal movements—change from passive to active role. Rider: Altered rider position—change in center of gravity.

Above: Lateral radiographic view of the front left foot of a sore horse. Notice the large number of nails, which were added to increase the weight carried by the hoof and accentuate the gait, but can also place pressure on the sole, causing pain.
Courtesy of USDA

There should POSITIVELY be a weight limit on shoes.

The USDA must implement rules to address the growing problem of horses wearing tungsten shoes that can easily weigh over eight pounds each. The weight of these shoes can rip the hoof off a horse. A horse does not have the biomechanical structure to carry 8 pound shoes. At the time the HPA was enacted, no one would have dreamed a tungsten shoe would be possible weighing 8 pounds. It is the USDA's responsibility to enforce the HPA which means new rules and guidelines as new methods are continually being developed to sore horses and create exaggerated and unnatural performance.

Harmful effects of distal loading on front feet results in excessive stretching of muscles and tendons leading to injury documented by the study on **THE ENERGETIC AND KINEMATIC CONSEQUENCES OF WEIGHTING THE DISTAL LIMB** at California State Polytechnic University and Michigan State University.

The calculations aren't 100% correct, but to give you an idea...

Think of the limb as a pendulum. The shoulder is the pivot point. The hoof is the weighted end of the pendulum. For a reference point, we'll call a **barefoot horse = "0"**.

Say the limb = 3' in length. Say the horses running walk is 8 mph/ 11.7 fps (foot pounds per second). Theoretically, the horse's front leg would be traveling at the same 11.7 fps, then changing direction as it completes that segment of the stride. Hmm??? $E=MV^2$

11.7 fps squared = 136.89 x **1 pound "keg" shoe** = 136.89 foot pounds per second.

11.7 fps squared = 136.89 x **8 pound "heavy plantation shoe"** = 1095.12 foot pounds per second

11.7 fps squared = 136.89 ????? Probably about the same.

About an 87% increase in stress to the limb over a keg shoe!

Submitted by Steve to FOSH Friends yahoo Group on 8/22/2011 (ten_sc_walker@yahoo.com)

Dr. Tracy Turner, DVM, and equine lameness expert, Sound Horse Conference 2010. <http://soundhorseconference.com/conference/secured.php> In 1978 the Big Lick shoe package was 4.5 pounds, and in the mid 1990's it was 8 pounds. He conclusively showed through radiographs and thermography that performance horses were

imbalanced on 4 levels. Abnormal balance causes problems with movement and other physical issues. The act of shoeing directly affects the coffin bone and all associated structures. The effect of increasing the hoof angle: coffin and pastern joint flexion is compromised; minimal fetlock extension; decreases DDFT strain; increases suspensory strain; promotes heel first landing; increases the speed of break over; increases pressure on the hoof capsule. The length and weight of the stack package magnifies the biomechanics.

Additionally, the Tail set should be outlawed. As we learned from the undercover work and subsequent arrest of Jackie McConnell and his employees, "In some cases, their tails were mutilated with scissors and blades in order to make them appear flashier in the show ring -- leaving behind untreated bleeding wounds." (Marshall County Tribune, 03/07/12). A tail set is just another instrument of torture. The tail is part of the horse's spine and was designed to hang down. It is part of his ability to communicate and also to protect himself from flying insects. Mutilation of the tail and cutting the tendons in the tail to achieve a "look" for the show ring is unconscionable. Are humans really this barbaric????

I want to thank the USDA for it's part in the recent conviction of Barney Davis and the 52 indictments handed down for Jackie McConnell and his employees. I hope this trend of enforcement continues and that the USDA takes its responsibility for protecting the horse seriously from now on.

From: "Cris Van Horn" <cris.vanhorn@swpa.gov>
Subject: FW: TWHAO LETTER TO TWHBEA
Date: March 12, 2012 9:24:23 AM PDT
To: <canterlope_twh@yahoo.com>
Cc: "Teresa Bippen" <tbippen1957@yahoo.com>

1 Attachment, 28 KB

More listening session info.

For the period 2008-2010, the USDA attended 80 shows. Of the 80 shows the USDA attended, there was a total of 14,376 horse entries with 51% of these entries padded horses and 49% flat shod.

For 14,376 entries, there were 1,123 violations or 7.8% of the entries had violations. Although some would consider this a positive compliance rate, please bear in mind, that when the USDA arrives, some or all exhibitors leave the show grounds. This means many horses were not inspected. What if those horses had stayed and been inspected? Would the percentage of HPA violations have been greater?

How do these statistics look for the padded horse? Of the 7,349 padded horse entries, there were 1,012 violations which was 13.7% of the padded horse entries.

For flat shod, the violation rate was only 1.6%.

Regarding the actual violations found, I will review by type of violation:

For the 387 unilateral violations, the padded unilateral violation rate was 760% higher than for flat shod horses.

For the 150 bilateral violations, the padded bilateral violation rate was 900% higher than for flat shod horses.

The statistics are worse for scar rule violations—remember scars are evidence of the soring that is taking place in the training barn. Of the 417 scar rule violations, the padded horse scar violations were 1800% greater than for flat shod horses.

Although 51% of the entries were padded; 90% of all HPA violations were written on padded horses.

SUMMARY INFORMATION

VIOLATION ANALYSIS AT USDA VMO ATTENDED SHOWS 2008 - 2010

	2010 - 2008		
	Total	Padded	Flatshod
Number of Shows Attended by VMOs	80		
Number of Entries	14,376	7,349	7,027
Percentage:	100%	51%	49%
Number of Inspections		2,827	1,546
Violations:	954	873	81
Unilateral Sore	387	342	45
Bilateral Sore	150	135	15
Scar Rule	417	396	21

Illegal Shoeing & Chains	45	34	11
Foreign Substance	80	71	9
Other	44	34	10
Total Violations	1,123	1,012	111

From: CarouselFm@aol.com
Subject: HSUS Continues Media Attacks
Date: March 21, 2012 1:55:17 PM PDT
To: Carousefm@aol.com

HSUS Continues Media Attacks

Wednesday, March 21, 2012

Editor's Note: The Humane Society of the United States has issued another news release to media across the country attacking "illegal doping" of horses and petitioning the United States Department of Agriculture to make it a felony to use illegal numbing or masking chemicals on horses' legs.

In recent weeks, the HSUS has initiated a new effort to defame the Tennessee Walking Horse with little rebuttal from the breed. These kinds of stories are all that the public is seeing and, in the absence of a response from the industry, that is what they are led to believe.

New USDA Data Indicate Widespread Drugging of Horses

WASHINGTON (March 21, 2012) – The Humane Society of the United States filed a legal petition asking the United States Department of Agriculture to treat the use of illegal numbing or masking chemicals on horses' legs as a felony under the Horse Protection Act. These banned substances are used to hide evidence of illegal abuse of horses through the application of painful caustic substances on the horses' front legs to achieve an artificial high-stepping gait for show competitions.

The petition comes after USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service conducted random testing at various Tennessee Walking Horse competitions, and the results indicate that a shocking 97.6 percent of the samples tested positive for prohibited foreign substances in 2011. In 2010, 86 percent of samples tested positive. These substances included numbing agents and drugs that mask evidence of abuse. Most troubling, of the 52 horses tested at the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration, the largest and most prominent walking horse show in the country, every single horse tested positive for illegal agents.

"The horse doping data released by USDA is staggering, and shows that animal abuse continues to be a huge problem in the walking horse industry," said Jonathan R. Lovvorn, senior vice president & chief counsel for animal protection litigation at The HSUS. "The use of prohibited substances to hide the intentional infliction of pain is a felony, plain and simple, and those responsible should be prosecuted immediately."

Under the Horse Protection Act, any attempt to interfere with an official's inspections to determine whether a horse has been sore – the industry term for applying caustic substances – constitutes a felony punishable by up to three years in prison, in addition to significant financial penalties.

The HSUS is calling on the USDA to issue a new rule or policy establishing that any use of banned substances to avoid detection of underlying sores will be treated as a felony, and to refer all such cases to the U.S. Attorney's Office for prosecution.

USDA Testing Results from Tennessee Walking Horse Events

2011

- At the 2011 Celebration, 100 percent tested positive (52 tested, 52 positive)
 - At the 2011 Fun Show, 95 percent tested positive (20 tested, 19 positive)
 - At the 2011 National Trainers Show, 92 percent tested positive (13 tested, 12 positive)
- Total for 2011 - 97.6 percent tested positive (85 tested, 83 positive)

2010

- At the 2010 National Trainers Show, 90 percent tested positive (20 tested, 18 positive)
 - At the 2010 ETWHTA, White Pine, TN, 95 percent tested positive (19 tested, 18 positive)
 - At the 2010 Baileyton Horse Show, 100 percent tested positive (6 tested, 6 positive)
 - At the 2010 SSHBEA Mid Season Classic, 50 percent tested positive (10 tested, 5 positive)
 - At the 2010 Celebration, 86 percent tested positive (302 tested, 261 positive)
- Total for 2010 – 86 percent tested positive (357 tested, 308 positive)

Background:

- Following an extensive investigation into the walking horse industry by The HSUS, nationally known Tennessee Walking Horse trainer Jackie McConnell and several of his associates were indicted this month on 52 counts of violating the federal Horse Protection Act, including 18 felony counts, and also charged with numerous violations of the Tennessee Cruelty to Animals Statute. The HSUS rescued and continues to care for eight horses from McConnell's training operation.
- In 2011, a federal grand jury returned a 34-count indictment against Tennessee horse trainer Barney Davis and three others, charging them with violations of the Horse Protection Act and related financial crimes. Davis was further charged with fraud, wire fraud and money laundering. He pleaded guilty to several counts last November, and a federal judge sentenced him in February to serve more than a year in prison.
- A 2010 USDA Office of Inspector General audit exposed how those in the walking horse industry work to evade detection, rather than comply with federal law and train horses humanely. The audit stated that the USDA needs more funding for full enforcement of the Act.
- In 2010, The HSUS filed a legal petition with USDA that asked the agency to take steps to improve its enforcement of the Act. In a positive move, Congress passed a 2012 agriculture appropriations bill that increased funding for HPA enforcement by nearly 40 percent.

Media Contact: Stephanie Twining, 301-258-1491, stwining@humanesociety.org