

I am Sandy Cooper. I will go through your list quickly and not take much time, but I want to do a quick walk down memory lane first.

I have a 1998 letter here from the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. It threatens you (your APHIS budget) if you enforce the HPA. This is a political issue. Thanks to FOIA, we know what was bought and how much was paid for it.

With that in mind, I want to remind you that you have to keep moving now because of the politics involved.

I promise you that

1. We can and have raised money for research. A retired nurse raised \$40,000 mostly on the internet for UC Davis research on the use of thermography, and we can and will do it again, if we need to. There are scientists and engineers at the country's most prestigious universities willing to help.
2. We can and do follow donations to member of Congress from the industry on the internet. We will be doing that if you get interference or stalling from Congress, and we will be reporting that to the press and the horse welfare organizations. These days, we have the data bases that make that easy.
3. I.E., we have your back!!
4. So, please, use the IG and the US Attorney for as long as you can.

*Media
interest*

We are a cranky group of old broads who have stepped aside to let the young and powerful take over. But we are still here, looking at the pastures where our TWH rescues are buried, having died too young from acute arthritis, leg problems, shoulder misalignment, etc. – caused by this (*show stack*) and the pain associated with it and the training involved. We love this breed and aren't going anywhere.

USDA APHIS Horse Protection Program Listening Sessions

· Congress passed the Horse Protection Act in 1970 to eliminate the cruel and inhumane practice of soring horses. How close are we to achieving the goal?

Not even close.

· Can the industry achieve a consensus on how to carry out a self-regulatory program to enforce the Horse Protection Act in a consistent way?

No. Why would anyone think they could. Look at your own stats since 1998.

· What responsibilities should USDA-certified Horse Industry Organizations (HIOs) have within the industry?

None

· How can the industry reconcile its inherent competition aspect with ensuring compliance with the Horse Protection Act?

By recognizing that 1) if they violate the HPA, they can go to jail, and 2) the public is becoming aware of the torture and will not tolerate the "old ways" of doing things. If they don't change the image of the twh they show, they will be out of business. They can still enjoy weekends at the barns and shows without the hideous big lick gait.

- **What can USDA do now (and in the future) to ensure compliance?**

Keep working with the IG and US attorney. Get real penalties!

Keep asking for decent budget.

Get independent, background checked vets to be inspectors at the shows.

Get focus off the scar rule (Suspend the Horse Instead of the Trainer - SHIT). That is after the torture. You need to get it while it is going on. And, by the way, scarred and disqualified horses will be sent to slaughter, shipped to California, or sold to some unsuspecting kid. It isn't a good idea.

Use the technological tools to detect the use of chemicals and soreness.

- **What responsibilities should USDA have within the industry with respect to enforcement and what hinders oversight of the HIOs and/or industry?**

Investigations at barns as well as shows.

- **Should there be a prohibition of all action devices?**

Yes.

- **Should there be a prohibition of pads?**

Yes, except for one for therapeutic reasons, documented by a vet.

- **Currently the Horse Protection regulations have a shoe weight limit on yearlings. Should there now be a shoe weight limit for all aged horses?**

Yes.