

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 19, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
The Capitol S-230  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
The Capitol S-221  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Chairman Cochran, and Ranking Member Leahy,

As negotiations for the final appropriations bill commence, we write in collective support of the provision (Section 758) in the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) Senate Agriculture Appropriations bill (S. 1603) that prohibits the use of federal funds for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspections of horse slaughter facilities. The Senate Appropriations Committee included the Udall Amendment prohibiting horse slaughter on a voice vote. This provision continues an overwhelmingly popular policy that prevents the slaughter of horses for human consumption.

Specifically, we ask that no funds be appropriated to pay the salaries or expenses of USDA personnel to inspect horses under section 3 of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 603); or to implement or enforce section 352.19 of title 9, Code of Federal Regulations. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2006 (FY06) with the inclusion of the defund language and in Fiscal Year 2008 (FY08) with the prohibition on user fees, Congress has prohibited the slaughter of horses through the annual Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill for many years.

Horses are companions, work partners, athletes and cultural icons. They are not raised as food animals in the U.S., and are therefore routinely administered drugs and medications throughout their lives that are unsuitable for human consumption. Even fly spray and routine de-wormers contain chemicals that would be harmful to humans. Many of these drugs are expressly prohibited by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration due to their toxicity to humans when ingested.

Horse slaughter is an inherently cruel practice that 80% of Americans oppose. In a time when Congress is facing difficult budgetary decisions, it is an irresponsible use of tax payer dollars to support a practice that so many citizens oppose. There is no domestic market for horsemeat in

the U.S. Furthermore, the two states that most recently harbored the last three horse slaughter plants, Texas and Illinois, have laws permanently preventing their return.

We appreciate your distinguished leadership in the ongoing work on the FY18 appropriations bill. For the many reasons described, we respectfully urge that you maintain current law and include Section 758 of S. 1603 in the final FY18 appropriations bill.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez  
United States Senator



Tom Udall  
United States Senator



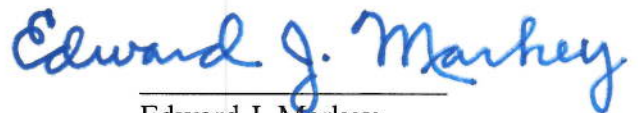
Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



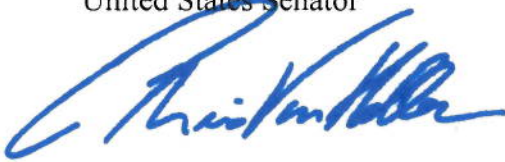
Gary Peters  
United States Senator



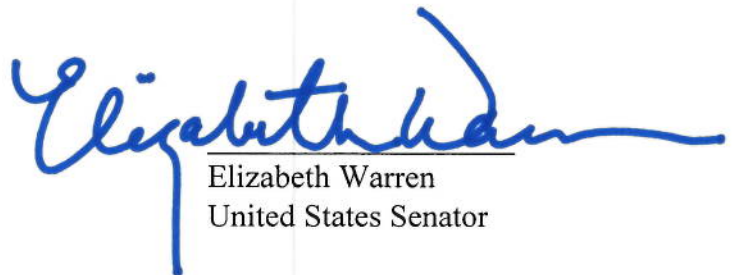
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



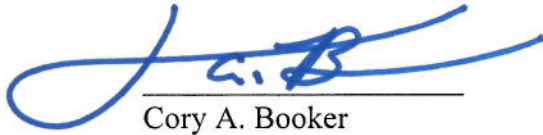
Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



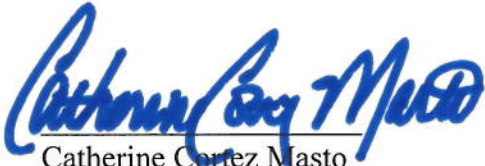
Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



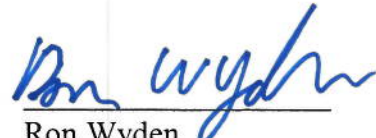
Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



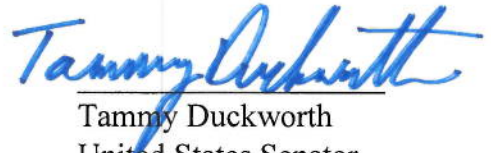
Kamala D. Harris  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Jack Reed  
United States Senator




Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



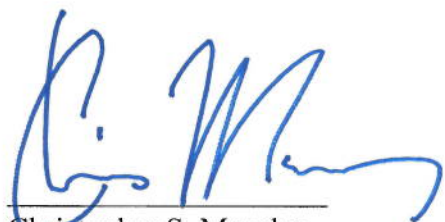
Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



Christopher Coons  
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Murphy', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator