RE: SB 364 (COPENING) - TO BAN "HORSE TRIPPING" - PLEASE SUPPORT!
SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Dear Senator Manendo and fellow Committee Members:

In 1993, then-Assemblyman Joe Baca, now a U.S. Congressman sponsored the original California bill to ban "horse tripping". Note: Mr. Baca is of Mexican descent.

Since the passage of this 'first' horse tripping legislation in the nation, eight other states have followed suit: New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Illinois, Maine, Florida, Arizona and Nebraska. Others are in the works. In all of the states, the majority of the Latino Caucus supported the bills, as did the State Horsemen's Association, the various Veterinary Medical Associations, the Thoroughbred Racing Association, the Deputy Sheriff's Association, the United Farm Workers, the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA), and practically every animal organization in the various states. Even the late, great Cesar Chavez was outspokenly opposed to this mistreatment of animals.

"Horse tripping" is not a standard ranching practice anywhere in the United States, nor is it sanctioned by any American-style rodeo association. Horse tripping and leg roping are events that are ONLY held in charreada rodeos.

Charreada features nine scored events, three of which involve the roping of running horses by the legs. This bill is not an attack on all rodeo events. This bill focuses entirely on the out-of-the-way, unadvertised 'rodeos' where horse tripping and leg roping are scored 'events'.

AGAIN, I URGE YOUR SPEEDY PASSAGE OF THIS HUMANE LEGISLATION

Beverlee McGrath
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Confronting Cruelty.........The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization with 11 million members and constituents and 92,890 located in Nevada. The HSUS protects all animals through legislation, litigation, investigation, education, advocacy and fieldwork.
March 27, 2011

Senate Natural Resources Committee  
Committee Members

Dear Committee members:

As an organization devoted to supporting political candidates that are understanding of animal protection issues, Paw Pac is in strong support of SB 364, a bill that would abolish the very cruel and inhumane event of horse tripping.

Horse tripping is an event that is very popular in the ‘Charreada’ rodeos and is held throughout Mexico in various rodeo events. Hispanics arriving in California and Nevada continue to have the horse tripping events in their rodeos even though laws have been passed and are in place that protects animals from cruelty. These ‘rodeos’ are held in rural areas that any law enforcement official would have difficulty finding.

Naturally, there is no vet on site at these rodeos, and horses that have broken necks, limbs, or/and shoulders as a result of the event are left to suffer in excruciating pain while the rodeo continues. Commonly, the horses are left to die on their own; at best, they are shot at the end of the day after all of the spectators have vacated the arena.

We urge you to SUPPORT SB 364 and prohibit this event throughout Nevada.

Sincerely

Beverlee McGrath  
Member, Board of Directors  
Ph.: (775) 815-1690  
BevDDAL@msn.com
Dear Senator Menendo and members:

Please forgive this out-of-state plea, but animal abuse knows no boundaries. I write in strong support of Senator Copening's SB 364, which would ban the brutal practice of "horse tripping" in your fair state. It should be self-evident that roping a running horse by the legs is not acceptable, and is potentially injurious, even fatal. I speak from experience. I am a big fan of cultural diversity, but NOT when it crosses the line into animal abuse.

The Mexican-style rodeo called "charreada" is found throughout the American Southwest (and spreading). I was the sponsor of the original 1993 California legislation to ban this cruelty, after seeing a charreada in my home county (Alameda). That bill was carried by then-Assemblyman Joe Baca (now a U.S. Congressman). The bill passed almost unanimously in 1994 (floor vote of 115 "AYES," 3 "NOES," and 2 ABSTENTIONS). Since then, eight other states have banned horse tripping: New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Illinois, Maine, Florida, Arizona and, most recently, Nebraska (2008). Nebraska also banned the even more brutal steer tailing event--others should follow suit. (Two California counties outlawed steer tailing in 1993--Alameda & Contra Costa.)

Be aware that charreada features nine standard events, three of which involve the roping of running horses by the legs: (1) "manganas a pie" (roping on foot - front legs); (2) "manganas a caballo" (roping from horseback - front legs); (3) "piales" (roping from horseback - hind legs). In
states where horse tripping has been banned (see above), the charros continue to perform the "manganas" events, now claiming that they simply let the rope go slack, and do not fell the horses. So they say. But horses can still become entangled in the ropes and fall, risking serious injury. In the "piales" event the horses do not usually go down, though they certainly DO lose their balance," a violation of California state law (Penal Code 597g). But veterinarians have told me that "piales" is even more harmful to the horses than the two "manganas," and I've NEVER met a veterinarian anywhere who condones any of these events.

I WOULD URGE THIS COMMITTEE TO AMEND SB 364 SO AS TO INCLUDE THE 2008 NEBRASKA LANGUAGE. Nebraska is the only one of the nine states to have gotten the language right, in my opinion. Their state law includes wording to ban "the intentional tripping or causing to fall, or LASSEING OR ROPE THE LEGS OF (emphasis added), any equine by any means for the purpose of entertainment, sport, practice, or contest, etc. That language, BY DEFINITION, entirely outlaws all three charreada events in which horses are roped by the legs. I would also urge you to strengthen the penalties for violations to further help deter this abuse.

The California legislation passed with the support of Cesar Chavez’s United Farm Workers, the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA), the California Veterinary Medical Association, the California Horsemen’s Association, the California Council of Police & Sheriffs, the California District Attorneys' Association, the California Thoroughbred Breeders Association, et al., and nearly every animal welfare organization in the state. The PRCA was officially "neutral" on the bill. There was NO opposition, other than from a few charro organizations.

Thank you for your consideration. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

Kind regards,

Eric Mills, coordinator

P.S. - For anyone still in doubt about the merits of or need for this legislation, I would encourage you to view the many YouTube videos on the Internet, a few of them filmed in Winnemucca. GOOGLE: "horse tripping" or "charreadas - winnemucca, nevada". I also have a horse tripping video made at a charreada in Elko a few years back.

ENCLOSURES