



NEWS RELEASE

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Coalition for Horse Racing Integrity Welcomes ASPCA Support of Bipartisan Horseracing Integrity Act of 2017

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) has announced its strong support for the Horseracing Integrity Act of 2017.

The bill, formally designated as H.R. 2651, would require that a uniform, anti-doping and medication control program be developed and enforced by a private, non-profit, self-regulatory organization known as the Horseracing Anti-Doping and Medication Control Authority.

The authority would be governed by a board composed of the chief executive officer of the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), six individuals from the USADA board, and six individuals selected by USADA who have demonstrated expertise in a variety of horse-racing areas. The Federal Trade Commission would have limited oversight of the authority.

The ASPCA's support of the legislation was conveyed in a recent letter from Richard Patch, vice president of federal affairs for the ASPCA, to Reps. Andy Barr (R-KY) and Paul Tonko (D-NY), who introduced the legislation on May 25, 2017.

The letter read, in part, "By establishing a national, independent authority to govern medications administered to racehorses, this legislation will promote the safety of our equine athletes and encourage consistent enforcement of doping regulations across state lines."

The letter also made reference to the fatality rate of racehorses in the U.S.

In March, the Jockey Club announced that an analysis of data from the Equine Injury Database (EID) showed a reduction in the rate of fatal injury for a fourth consecutive year and a 23 percent drop since 2009. When comparing 2016 statistics to 2015 statistics across all surfaces, ages, and distances, the rate dropped from 1.62 per 1,000 starts in 2015 to 1.54 per 1,000 starts in 2016.

“The endorsement and support from a universally respected organization like the ASPCA speaks volumes about the benefits this legislation would bring to horse racing,” said Shawn Smeallie, the executive director of the Coalition for Horse Racing Integrity (CHRI). “The new regulations put in place by the Horseracing Anti-Doping and Medication Control Authority would put the U.S. on a path toward harmonization with international standards, where the use of therapeutic medications is much more stringently regulated.”

Smeallie said that 73 co-sponsors have signed on in support of the bill, and he expects the number to climb to 100 within the next few weeks.

Polling in recent years has shown widespread support for medication reform through federal legislation.

The CHRI represents a diverse group of horse racing and animal welfare organizations, including Breeders’ Cup Ltd., the Consignors and Breeders Association, The Humane Society of the United States, the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association, the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities, The Jockey Club, the Jockey Club of Canada, the Kentucky Thoroughbred Association and the Kentucky Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders, the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association, the Water Hay Oats Alliance. Other members include Arapahoe Park, Centaur Gaming, Keeneland Association Inc., Meadowlands Racetrack, Tioga Downs, and Vernon Downs.

The ASPCA is a national leader in the areas of animal rescue, adoption and welfare and has worked tirelessly for more than 150 years to put an end to animal abuse and neglect.

A complete copy of the proposed legislation is available at barr.house.gov/sites/barr.house.gov/files/HIA2017.pdf.