

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 6, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Vicki Christiansen  
Chief, U.S. Forest Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue and Chief Christiansen:

We are writing to express our concern with the U.S. Forest Service's plan to sell wild horses from the Devil's Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory in Northern California without restrictions on slaughter.

It is our understanding the Forest Service intends to sell some of these rounded-up wild horses without such restrictions—for as little as \$1 per horse—potentially starting this month. We are deeply troubled by this proposal as it represents a severe abdication of the government's responsibility to manage these federally-protected horses humanely.

The Devil's Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory, administered by the Modoc National Forest, is home to California's largest herd of wild horses, and represents a significant tourism draw to the region. More importantly, these horses are beloved icons in the country, and Americans overwhelmingly oppose horse slaughter. The Forest Service's proposal would put wild horses at risk of being killed for food, and goes against California's existing law prohibiting the sale or transfer of horses for human consumption (California Penal Code § 598c).

Congress's intent on this matter is abundantly clear. Through annual Department of the Interior appropriations legislation, Congress has passed unambiguous language protecting wild horses from destruction for commercial purposes. To our knowledge, the Forest Service has never attempted to sell wild horses under its authority without restrictions on slaughter. Rather, the agency has abided by the Interior appropriations language and Congress's clear position regarding the humane and appropriate management of federally-protected wild horses.

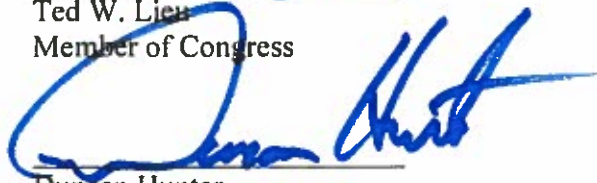
The process of slaughter presents serious welfare concerns as horses are typically transported extremely long distances in crowded trailers without food, water, or rest. Once at the slaughterhouse, horses, with their unique physiology and strong fight-or-flight reflex, may endure repeated blows before being rendered unconscious and killed. The U.S. Department of Agriculture itself documented appalling conditions and abuse when horse slaughter facilities operated on U.S. soil. Animal welfare concerns aside, ensuring consistency between how our federal agencies manage wild horses is paramount.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response.


Sincerely,



Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



Duncan Hunter  
Member of Congress



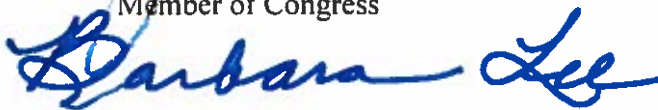
Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



Steven Cohen  
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



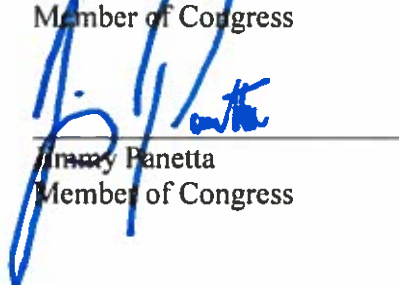
Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



Alcee Hastings  
Member of Congress



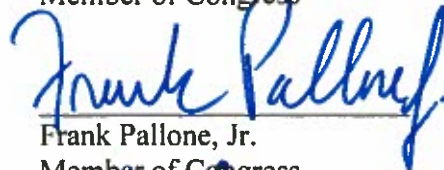
Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress




Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



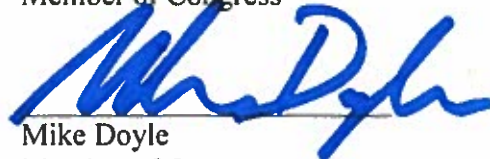
Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Paul Cook  
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle  
Member of Congress



Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



Stephen Lynch  
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



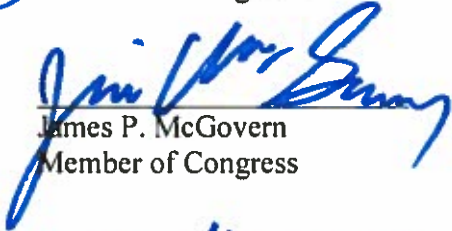
Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



Grace Napolitano  
Member of Congress



John Katko  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



Eliot L. Engel  
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress



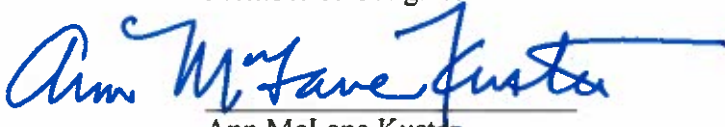
Scott Peters  
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



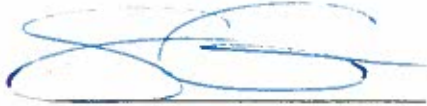
Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress



Andy Kim  
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress



Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan  
Member of Congress

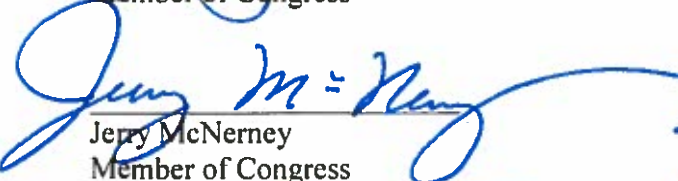



Karen Bass  
Member of Congress



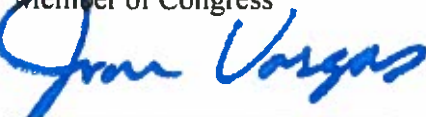
  
Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

  
Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress

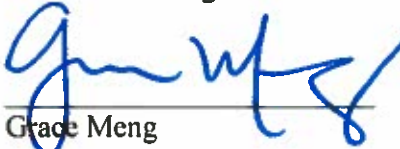
  
Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress

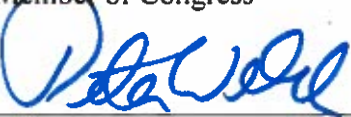
  
Susan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress

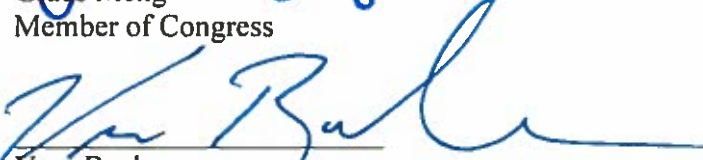
  
Al Lawson  
Member of Congress

  
Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress

  
Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress

  
Grace Meng  
Member of Congress


  
Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

  
Vern Buchanan  
Member of Congress

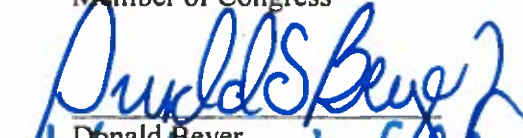
  
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress

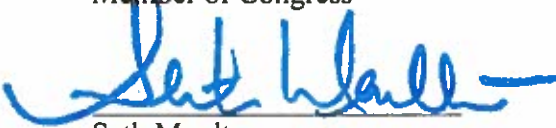
  
Donna Shalala  
Member of Congress


  
Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress

  
Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress

  
Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress

  
Donald Beyer  
Member of Congress

  
Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress

  
Katie Hill  
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas

Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress

TJ Cox

TJ Cox  
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier

Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore

Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman

Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress

Katie Porter

Katie Porter  
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier

Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress

Ami Bera

Ami Bera  
Member of Congress

Daniel W. Lipinski

Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress

Susie Lee

Susie Lee  
Member of Congress