

# EXHIBIT 14



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES**

FEBRUARY 3, 2012

# USDA Threatened with Suit if Court Order Not Followed Before Horse Slaughter Resumes

The Humane Society of the United States cautioned the U.S. Department of Agriculture in a letter that the agency must comply with a 2007 ruling from the D.C. District Court prior to resuming the inspection of horse slaughter facilities—a crucial matter because such inspections could open the way to new horse slaughter plants in the U.S. The HSUS warned that it will consider taking aggressive legal action against USDA to enforce those obligations if the agency fails to follow the court's order.

Although Congress chose not to renew a prohibition on USDA funds being used for horse slaughter inspections, those inspections cannot recommence automatically, according to The HSUS. In *The Humane Society of the United States v. Johanns*, the D.C. District Court enjoined USDA from restarting horse slaughter inspections without first conducting an environmental review of the environmental impacts of horse slaughter operations, which can include a persistent noxious stench and the presence of horse blood in the plumbing of neighboring areas. USDA must comply with that order before restarting horse slaughter inspections, and before any horse slaughter plant can open in the U.S.

“The court's decision is crystal clear,” said Jonathan Lovvorn, senior vice president of animal protection litigation for The HSUS. “USDA must undertake an environmental review before inspections begin, and The HSUS will take appropriate legal action to ensure the agency carries out the court's directives.”

In 2005, Congress voted to prohibit the use of federal funds to pay for salaries and expenses of personnel to inspect horses being slaughtered for human consumption. By defunding horse slaughter inspections, horse slaughter facilities could no longer operate, and by 2007, all U.S. slaughterhouses were closed. Prior to congressional action, more than 100,000 horses were being slaughtered each year in the United States for consumption abroad. Horses are not bred or raised for food production, but were swept up in the pipeline of “killer buyers” who export horse meat or profit.

In a troubling decision, a congressional conference committee stripped the defunding provision, which had been in place for five years, from an FY 2012 agriculture spending bill, giving USDA the discretion to once again resume horse slaughter inspections, which could cost an estimated \$5 million in taxpayer dollars annually. A poll conducted in January by Lake Research Partners for the American Society for the

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals found that 80 percent of Americans are strongly opposed to horse slaughter.

“At a time when our nation is looking to cut spending, it is deeply disappointing that Congress added millions of dollars to the federal budget to enable the needless slaughter of America’s iconic horses to resume,” Lovvorn said. “Americans don’t eat horses, and don’t want them butchered, shrink-wrapped, and sent to France or Belgium as a high-priced appetizer.”

The HSUS’s letter also noted that USDA will have to make extensive changes to its existing regulatory framework to comply with new regulations for the export of horsemeat to the European Union, a top U.S. export destination in the past.

A full copy of the letter can be read [here](#).

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