

In reference to SB 790 & SB 835

I am writing to ask that you oppose the so-called “horse tripping” bills. I am addressing this issue from my association with the Jordan Valley Big Loop Rodeo and none others as I have not attended or witnessed their events. First of all, what we do is not “horse tripping”; it is horse roping with a 20 foot loop. It takes extremely skilled ropers to make a qualifying run with that size loop. Of the 90 teams that rope, usually less than 10 will complete their run. I am attaching our rules so you can see we do everything we can to avoid any stock injury. Any roughness of the stock causes immediate disqualification.

I understand that much of your emotion is based on the video taken last year at our rodeo. I have seen it and I can understand how it would affect you. First of all, the horse with the broken leg was not a roped horse; it was a rough stock saddle bronc. Yes, it could have been handled better, but it was such an unusual situation that it caught us by surprise. No one could understand why it happened. The video has that for “shock value” and then it is edited to put us in the worst possible light. In spite of what you have heard, there were no other stock injuries. Our arena is worked up so the ground is soft, so if a horse falls down they have a soft landing. Remember, this is the same ground the cowboys land on.

Another thing I would like for you to consider is that we have been doing the Big Loop event for fifty years and had thousands of people witness it from all walks of life and never had complaints about it like we had this year from an edited video. I think it would only be fair for you to witness it in person before you make a judgment.

My other appeal is from the economic side of the issue. In 1961 the Rodeo board wanted to have an event that would make Jordan Valley Rodeo unique, thus the Big Loop was added in 1962. It has been the highly skilled rodeo event that has put Jordan Valley on the map and has drawn thousands of spectators through the years from all parts of the United States and other countries. I am afraid that without the Big Loop Roping we just become “another rodeo”.

As Senators of Oregon, I would hope that you would also be concerned about the economic issues of small towns like Jordan Valley. Not only is the rodeo a boost for the businesses here, but also for volunteer groups, service organizations, schools and churches. Our rodeo brings us together as a community to put on one

of the best events in the area. A list of groups that I can think of are:

JV Lions Club

JV High School FFA and Booster Club

JV Catholic Church

JV Ambulance Service

JV EMTs

JV Methodist Church

JV Heritage Museum

Malheur County Sheriff's Deputies

Our trade show benefits several of our local artists as well as many from out of State.

Since the Big Loop horses are raised and rented from the Duck Valley Indian Reservation; it also affects them from an economic standpoint. Also, does it make any sense that anyone would supply horses if they were injured as portrayed in the video?

We as JV Rodeo Board members do not receive any personal compensation for our time; it is quite the opposite. We do it for our community and we take pride in what we have accomplished over the years. We think it is only fair to ask that you at least witness our event in person before you pass judgment.

One last thought: If I was a horse, I would much rather be a free range horse like we use than one standing in a stall or small corral year around, as I witness all the time.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jerry Raburn