

AMERICAN
QUARTER
HORSE
ASSOCIATION

February 22, 2011

The Honorable Jackie Dingfelder, Chair
Oregon Senate on Environment and Natural Resources Committee
900 Court St. NE, Room 453
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Senator Dingfelder and Committee Members:

On behalf of more than 5,000 members of the American Quarter Horse Association, I am writing to express AQHA's and the Oregon Quarter Horse Association's opposition to Senate Bill 613. Both AQHA and OQHA strongly believe this is an unnecessary piece of legislation veiled by animal rights activists as a bill to protect horses.

The American Quarter Horse Association and its affiliate the Oregon Quarter Horse Association are strongly dedicated to the welfare of all horses and all other animals used in competition. In fact, the welfare of the American Quarter Horse is paramount to all other considerations; and the continual development of procedures that ensure humane treatment of the breed and *of all other horses and all animals* involved with AQHA events supersedes all other concerns.

That stated, SB613 is nothing but an assault by the Humane Society of the United States to limit the legitimate sport of rodeo and ultimately other equine competitions.

Despite claims that "horse tripping" in Oregon is commonplace, the fact is it is non-existent, making this legislation superfluous thus wasting the valuable time of the Oregon Senate at a time when members can least afford that distraction.

The horse industry in Oregon is climbing out of one of the most difficult times ever experienced. Pointless laws disguised as attempts to protect the very animal to which we are all dedicated only create a greater burden and hardship on the people hardest hit by the economic downturn.

Senators, members of AQHA and OQHA believe horses should be treated humanely and with dignity, respect and compassion, which is why they supported a voluntary ban on "horse tripping" more than 15 years ago. These same members do not need government regulations allegedly designed to clean up an industry that has already established stringent rules designed to protect its equine participants.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE ASSOCIATION



Tom Persechino
Executive Director
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To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to acknowledge and recognize the sport of Charrerria and Mexican Rodeo as a recognized humane sport between cattle and horseman. The Charrerria and Mexican Rodeo have been maligned such as the American Rodeo has been maligned for the mistreatment of animals. These accusations of abuse and cruelty to animals are unfounded, derogatory and inflammatory to the Hispanic community and the Charrerria Heritage at large.

This is a violation of their 2nd Amendment rights as citizens of the United States of America for personal liberties and pursuit of happiness. They have been falsely accused time and time again for abusing their animals.

I, as a veterinarian, have kept the Hispanic community aware of anything that might be a potential mistreatment of their animals; both their cattle and horses. They do not abuse their animals because their animal's welfare is in their best interest. They are totally willing to adapt to any legislation that is presented to them; even when it involves changing events that they have been doing for years. For example; when it was said that it was inhumane to have a horse tripped with a rope; they then changed the event to involve a breakaway rope, so the animal does not fall to the ground. Thereby fulfilling the artistic ability to still rope the animal's front feet but not hurt the animal in any way.

The Hispanic communities are proud of their Heritage just as the Western cowboys are proud of their Heritage. In real life there are many places where animals can only be captured by roping them. The Tailing event is one of which was derived from chasing animals in the wild in a very brushy area where they could not be roped by the neck. And this was a technique that was found to be satisfactory for stopping the animal's forward pursuit and allowing them to be captured and corralled for the Mexican Rancher.

This method of restraint is no different than roping an animal by the neck or bulldogging the animal and twisting the neck. I'm sure that none of these are pleasant but they are no different than having a dog on a leash and having to jerk on him; or having a cat imprisoned in a cage for a long period of time. This is the way animals are cared for and it is much more humane here in the United States than anywhere else in the world. I feel these derogatory remarks are an encroachment on the welfare and the general well-being of this activity and to the Hispanic community at large.

Again I reaffirm that these animals are not being mistreated because it is in the owners best interest that these animals stay healthy and well cared for. I find that the animals are in excellent condition in the Charrería's that I have been involved in. The Hispanic people recognize that they are in the public eye and they want to make sure that there is no abuse occurring and that their animals are being cared for to the best of their ability.

Thank you,
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Robert Bradley, D.V.M.", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Robert Bradley, D.V.M.

March 10, 2013

Esteemed Committee Members,

Thirty years ago several members of my family and close friends joined together to begin the very first Charro association in the city of Midland, Texas with the name of Asociacion de Charros Miguel Hidalgo de Midland. I was a small child at the time but I vividly remember following my father to many Charreadas all over the United States. Those times molded my upbringing into the person that I am today. The time which we shared as family learning the value of caring for animals and showing care and dignity towards them made me one of the biggest animal lovers a person could possibly be. This did not change with time and I continue to be one of the biggest animal advocates in our sport of Charrería. Now I pass on the same love and care for animals to my own children just as I was once shown by my father. During the lifespan of the Charro team we participated in numerous civic activities all over the state of Texas and especially in our own city of Midland. Now I am proudly the President of the Association which my father began and I wear the traje Charro with great pride since I know the great responsibility that it brings. The same pride and responsibility that I feel when I wear the uniform of a Texas Peace Officer and Police Officer of the City of Midland, Texas.

Thirteen years ago I was sworn in as Police Officer of the city of Midland where I reside and now am currently a Sergeant here. Through my practice of the sport of Charrería I have invited several law enforcement professionals to a Charreada that we hold in any of our city venues or our very own humble Lienzo Charro Hermanos Grimaldo in Midland. All of them have left pleased to see such a unique and different sport in practice in their own community. Understand that my own code of ethics as a Police Officer would not allow me to take part in any type of activity where animal cruelty or abuse would take place. The sport like rodeo has some risks but I personally have witnessed hundreds of piales thrown and have never seen a horse intentionally injured. Rules and regulations within the sport are designed to prevent injury to animals. In the event of Colas steers are never intentionally or recklessly injured either. Charros are conscience individuals who care for the livestock used in Charreadas. So much so, that in the early 1990's they voluntarily gave up tripping horses in the United States in order to prevent any type of injury to horses during that event. I myself have taken several of the same horses used in piales and manganas and trained them into the saddle where they become some of our own riding horses. We do not allow or condone the intentional tripping of horses or any type of animal abuse in the sport of Charrería in the United States.

I hope as you read this you understand that the sport of Charrería involves a community of individuals whose western lifestyle goes far beyond what happens in the Lienzo Charro. Charros are great contributors to their community, teaching and relaying their traditions and personal involvement in animal care, *not animal abuse*. For those reasons I feel honored to be a part of an organization which instills good family values to their children while carrying on a wonderful tradition. It's especially honorable to be able to carry on this great tradition in the very country where I am so proud to have been born.

Respectfully,



Alfredo Grimaldo

Good afternoon mister chair; members of the committee. For the record, my name is Oscar Peralta, and I'm representing the Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus, which I will be referring to hereinafter as the Hispanic Caucus.

The Hispanic Caucus strongly believes in the fair treatment and welfare of animals and opposes any form of animal cruelty.

The Hispanic Caucus opposes Senate Bill 72 because this bill does not address any type of animal cruelty; the bill is premised on false, misleading, and unfounded claims. There is no independent, verifiable data that the activities targeted by this bill pose an unreasonable risk of harm or cause unreasonable stress to animals.

The Hispanic Caucus opposes this bill because it criminalizes, without justification, the cultural freedom of Hispanic Americans in our state.

The Hispanic Caucus does not believe that culture alone is ever an absolute defense; but an indictment on cherished cultural traditions should not be sustained unless it meets a high standard of proof.

We live in a country and a state where a rich diversity of cultures tapestries our larger identity. Our success lies in the respect and tolerance of cultural freedom and of all traditions that are compatible with the principles of our country and state. Horse roping and steer tailing events conform to our national standards of safety and due care toward animals. There is no scientific or empirical basis to distinguish these activities from accepted mainstream rodeo and equestrian activities such as cross-country or steer wrestling.

Horse roping and steer tailing are key events at Charrerias, also known as Mexican Rodeos. Charrería is the official national sport of Mexico, and Mexican-Americans throughout the U.S. celebrate the culture and heritage of Charrería, which pervades the music, art, traditions, and folklore of Mexican-Americans.

Horse tripping is not a part of Charrería, and it is strictly prohibited by all Charro organizations. Horse tripping is not happening in our state. Laws against horse tripping are therefore unnecessary and have proven to infringe on other charrería and rodeo events.

Horse roping and steer tailing events are safe. They are performed under extensive rules of competition and animal welfare very similar to those at the mainstream rodeo.

To condemn the right to tradition and culture in this land of freedom warrants compelling reasons supported by clear evidence. SB 72 does not meet this standard and is thus adverse to our appreciation for multiculturalism and freedom in Nevada.

Mr. Chair, members of the committee, for the foregoing reasons, the Hispanic Caucus asks you to oppose SB 72.

I would gladly answer any questions now. Thank you.

LIENZO!

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March 11, 2013

Nevade State Senate
Committee on Natural Resources
401 S Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada

Esteemed Committee Members,

On behalf of Lienzo Magazine, I would like to express our opposition to the proposed legislation of SB72. The concerns of the bill's supporters are unwarranted and the proposition is unjustified, leading us to believe of the existence of some type of ulterior motive. After extensive research, we have yet to find a case where an individual was prosecuted for animal cruelty under any of the anti-horse tripping laws and ordinances found throughout the United States.

In 2011, the Colorado State Legislature introduced HB11-1039 with similar language found in the current SB72 bill in Nevada. I personally witnessed the Committee on Agriculture, Livestock and Natural Resources decision to table HB11-1039 because it found the legislation to be unnecessary, sighting that the current Animal Cruelty regulations were sufficient to prosecute any individuals who neglected to give care to any animal or intentionally sough to harm or render useless any animal.

The passing of SB72 would directly affect four events within Mexican Rodeo that are derivatives of centuries old livestock management practices through the Americas. In 1995, the Federacion Mexicana de Charrerria in the US banned the practice of horse-tripping to comply with the original California anti horse-tripping bill AB49X and level the competitive plane; any member who intentionally engages in the practice is fined and reprimanded by a suspension or a possible expulsion from the organization.


Charros take this issue very seriously and the introduction of any legislation that would effectively further illegalizes their customs and traditions is an insult to the cooperation and consideration they have routinely demonstrated on a local and state level, with animal control departments and animal rights advocacy groups.

Animal cruelty generally falls into three categories: neglect, intentional cruelty and sexual abuse, so we can easily discard the first and the latter in regards to rodeo. Intentional cruelty then would be considered to be any harm or injury that would render the animal lame/useless, needing to be euthanized; neither of which is the intent of any rodeo event or participant.

None of the events in contemporary Charrerria are designed to intentionally harm any animal but like all rodeo, they do promote and sustain the livestock industry by providing a means to further capitalize on assets that otherwise only consume expenditures before they become profitable. We urge this committee to take the same action it took two years on SB364. The passage of SB72 would not do more than create a legal precedent accusing Charros of engaging in animal cruelty acts by participating in their three quarter century old rodeo.

Lienzo Magazine... Vive a caballo... Live the ride...

Cordially,



Miguel Escamilla
Editor in Chief