

Good afternoon Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen

My Name is Teddi Smith and I live in Clackamas County.

I am here because I am in support for SB 835.

Why! Because I have horse tripping on my neighbor's property adjoining mine!

In August 2007 my family & I were eating dinner when we all witnessed a yearling trip herself from the lassoed rope that was on her left front foot. She went down hard! Fortunately she got back up and ran off. And unfortunately we will never forget!

I would like to address 4 of the testimonies we heard from Wednesday May 8, 2013:

1. A couple Gentlemen addressed that is their Culture (Couple different cultures that comes to my mind )
  - a. Incest – In Ancient Egypt it was to prolong lineage
  - b. Cannibalism – 19<sup>th</sup> Century it was widespread to eat the members of one's own culture!

WERE THESE CULTURES RIGHT?? NO

Culture should be growing and evolving for what is appropriate for the times.

2. A horses second chance
  - a. The yearling horses that I photographed with scars and wounds were born and raised at the property.
3. Catching your horse! I totally agree with the testimony of if your horse likes you, it is not hard to catch them. I have witnessed many unsuccessful attempts of my neighbors in their field trying to catch their horses.
4. The attendance to Rodeos would be jeopardized. Do their attendees only show up for big looping? Do they have any statistics on that!

I do feel that it is risky for me to be here testifying about this Bill 835.

Thank You for your time!

## Horse Tripping Facts

### Horse Tripping—"Break"-ing the Chain of Violence

#### Imagine the following situation:

*You're in the front row. A bony Arabian mare stands so close you can see the scars on her flanks, and the terror in her eyes. Three men on horseback swoop down on the mare, chasing her with swinging lariats, until she's galloping 25 miles an hour. Each time the mare races round the ring, a fourth man aims a rope at the mare's forelegs. The goal: to topple her to the ground, and win points.*

*This mare has already been lassoed several times - those scars you saw were rope burns that carved away inches of her flesh. But this time the mare won't get up again. She crashes head over heels, breaks her leg, and is euthanized.*

#### The Painful Reality

During horse-tripping events, also known as *piales en lienzo*, contestants score points for literally tripping horses, bulls, or steers. (1) With the use of electric prods, Mexican cowboys or "charros" force the animals into full gallop and then lasso their hind legs or forelegs, causing the animals to come crashing down to the ground. (2) Witnesses have noted that charros continue to trip animals until they're lame. (3)

Thousands of American horses are severely injured at Mexican-style rodeos each year. "Charros keep tripping horses until they're lame, or until the season's up and the go to the slaughter," says Cathleen Doyle, president of the California Equine Council, which promotes responsible horsemanship. "Horses break legs, necks and teeth. They fracture their shoulders, and batter their knees and hocks. You can see deep gashes on their faces, shoulders, hips, legs and heels. The ropes often burn their flesh down to the bone." Mike Ross, animal service director for Contra Costa County states, "It's unpredictable. There's an inherent risk of seriously injuring the horse's legs. When that happens, you may end up destroying the animal." (4)

Doyle, who has observed about ten *charreada* rodeos, kept tabs on 78 horses one *charro* group rented. "At the end of the five-to-six-month season, only two horses remained intact. All the rest had gone to slaughter." She adds that some *charros* buy their own horses, and trip them until they're lame. Injured horses rarely receive veterinary care.

Most *charreada* is private, "backyard" sport: 300 or fewer people watching six or seven horses dodge the rope. About 1,500 people typically attend the larger *charreadas*. *Charros* prefer small, lightweight horses like Arabs because they are easier to bring down.

#### Fighting for a Ban

*Charros* claim that they are not trying to harm the horses and that they only bring a horse down one out of every ten tries. However, horse-tripping is so cruel that it has been banned in several U.S. states, including California, Florida, Illinois, Maine, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas, in film and TV production, by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA), and by the American Quarter Horse Association. (4) Citizens are fighting for a ban in other states. However, like bullfighting, horse tripping has been a part of the Mexican culture for centuries. A tiny percentage of Hispanics have tripped horses in the U.S. for decades and claim cultural imperialism when confronted with the cruelty. However, Doyle responds, "If other industries were tripping horses and we told the *charros* they couldn't, we'd be discriminating. But movies and TV banned horse-tripping over 50 years ago. Even the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association and the American Quarter Horse Association don't allow it."

However, in the states where horse-tripping is banned, it's only considered a misdemeanor. The current laws have not eradicated tripping; they've only reduced it. While the \$1,000 fine and the risk of six months in jail has curbed the practice of horse-tripping at large *charreadas*, at the many small events, the practice has only decreased. (5) "Much of the horse-tripping that was going on in the large commercial venues has stopped," Doyle says. "Before, every week we were seeing mangled horses back from the *charreadas*. Now we see them only rarely." Doyle feels that more people would obey the law if horse-tripping were a felony.

Before Illinois outlawed horse-tripping, State Representative Terry Parke said, "In a few months, we legislators will attend a *charreada* to watch horse tripping. Once we see the tripping ourselves, we'll decide whether to bring the bill (to ban tripping) out of committee for a vote."

The *charros* would know when their lawmakers were watching - and Doyle predicted they'd be on their best behavior. However, Gabriel Lopez, lobbyist for the Illinois Federation of Charros, reassured, "We've invited lawmakers to come see that we don't hurt our horses. We'll conduct our rodeo the same whether they're there or not." Doyle counters, "In California, whenever the press or general public tried to witness tripping, the *charros* dropped the rope. They would not bring the horses down."

#### You Can Help:

To learn how to ban horse tripping and/or steer tailing from your area, contact:

Cathleen Doyle  
California Equine Council  
P.O. Box 40000  
Studio City, CA 91614  
Phone: (818) 771-0702  
E-mail: [savethehorse@earthlink.net](mailto:savethehorse@earthlink.net)

To provide a tax-deductible donation to provide food and veterinary care to horses rescued from *charreadas*, contact:

Equus Sanctuary  
P.O. Box 3273  
Glendale, CA 91221

Of the California Equine Council's achievement, Doyle says "We were only successful once we got the law enforcement and horse industries on our side. The first year, the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, cattle industry and state farm bureau opposed our bill. They saw mostly animal welfare groups behind, and so they were afraid they'd eventually have to give up the calf-roping too." Therefore the second year, the California Veterinary Medical Association co-sponsored the bill with Doyle's group. Many other groups endorsed the bill such as California breeder's associations, racing federation, police and sheriff council, district attorney's association -- even the Mexican American Chamber of Commerce and the United Steel Workers of America. "With this much support, the bill had to pass," Doyle says. "Illinois and New Mexico banned horse-tripping using that same strategy."

- 1 María-Cristina García, "Charrería," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, 23 Jul. 2002.
- 2 Kline, Chris. Mexico's charros are a breed apart. Cnn.com. Available [online]: <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9705/04/mexico.charros/>. Accessed 09 Jan 2004.
- 3 Kit Paraventi, "Horse Conversations: A Visit to the Equus Sanctuary," *Animal News*, 1998
- 4 Cuff, Denis. Mexican rodeo tradition under fire. *Contra Costa Times*. 7 August, 2004. Available from <http://www.contracostatimes.com/mld/cctimes/news/9344077.htm>. Accessed 13 August 2004.
- 5 Eric Mills, Why Rodeo. *Animal Issues*, Vol. 33, No. 1, Spring 2002.