



**Testimony by Kendra Kimbirauskas in Support of SB 790
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
March 20, 2013**

Chair Dingfelder and Members of the Committee:

As an Oregon equestrian and horse enthusiast please accept my testimony in support of SB 790. I was born to a horse family and I have been around horses all of my life. I began riding as a toddler, literally before I was walking. I currently have four horses (photos above L to R Snickers, Patience, Loki and Demeter) and I am an active competitor in the sport of Dressage.

Horses are incredible creatures. They are highly intelligent, sensitive animals. And while horses are sturdy and durable, they can be equally as fragile and delicate. With such large bodies, and relatively small legs in comparison to their body weight, the slightest injury to a leg, neck or to the back can be career ending for these magnificent animals.

As horse owners, we know this about these creatures and we take careful steps to ensure that our equine companions remain healthy so that they can go on to have long, happy and productive lives.

I was horrified to learn, however, that at some local unsanctioned rodeos the sport of horse tripping was a regular featured event. Horse tripping is cruel, unnecessary animal abuse and should be banned from all rodeos immediately.

In horse tripping, a horse is let loose in an arena at a run. The horse's front legs are then roped, causing the 1000-pound animal to trip and fall violently to the ground. These falls may cause catastrophic injuries such as broken legs necks, and backs. Witnesses to horse tripping events in Oregon report young horses being so severely injured that they were unable to stand, and were dragged from the arena. If injured, these horses must be euthanized or live an unproductive life because of an injury that is career ending.

The event is psychologically traumatizing to the horses. The process of being chased and tripped is terrifying, and these young horses learn a deep-seated fear of people, making them unsuitable and unsafe as companion animals.

In Oregon, we love and respect our horses. Visitors travel to Oregon to visit our stables and our equestrian events. There has even been a significant effort lately to establish a viable tourism industry around our equine industry. The sport of horse tripping is a cruel and unnecessary practice and makes the horse industry look bad. Efforts should be made immediately to stop this form of horse abuse and Oregon should follow many other states across the country and ban the practice. **Please support SB 790.**